



When you're bound to
LOVE

Introduction

I introduce myself as uSiphosenkosi Ngudla. Most of my friends usually call me Spho. Some call me ubhabha since I'm the youngest one in my squad and the only one not married. The rest of who I am will be unfolded in my story as follows. Molweni manene namanenekazi. I met my boyfriend, Simphiwe, 3 years ago while I was still a junior at work. As unusual as some might think we met at a club one night and kept in contact since. We moved in together after a year and that's where we are. His business is up and running. Our relationship.....well thenthat's down and crawling. I never minded helping him start his business, providing capital.....from my own savings, taking care of his son. Our life had never been better. Ekhaya as far as my memory serves, I grew up with both parents, I remember mama esithi I had an older half-brother somewhere out there. His name was Sibulele. He never visited, I don't even know what he looks like. My parents fought a lot, often my father would beat my mother after arguments and I had to pretend I couldn't hear anything. We depended on him for everything whenever I asked umama why singahambi she would ask me who would pay for my school fees and put food in my belly, and so wanyamezela. She went through all the pain. I also went through my own pain where my mother turned a blind eye and deaf ear to everything....

Chapter 1

It's a Friday afternoon, my favorite day of the week. I packed my things from my work desk into my bag and walked out my office. "Spho." I heard my annoying boss call me. Me: "ewe bhuti." I turned and went to his office. Me: "Harold." H: "Hi. Please close the door and sit." he looked like he was about to pass out. I did as told and sat down. Me: "are you okay?" I asked with the least bit of interest. Honestly? I just wanted to get home. H: "yeah..I just need to talk to someone." ndaske ndabhidwa. He did not at all befriend anyone in this office ever since he arrived now xa exakekile he needs to talk? Look at God's amazing work. Me: "about what? Don't you want to call your-" H: "no...look I know I'm a jerk okay? It's just...I've just worked so hard, to get this company to come around and its impossible. I can't let people go, I....all I've been trying to do is save everyone else from getting fired. I cut my salary in half just to compensate for the cleaners salaries. I sold my second car. I'm, I can't do this anymore. So....the head office called. He said we're merging with Cell-com." Me: "but There's going to be retrenchments. People are going to lose their jobs." H: "no. I couldn't let that happen. They're only letting go of the dead weight. Cellcom is doing the retrenching to come join us." Me: "well...it all worked out. So it's a good thing right?" H: "yeah...but you'll have a

new boss. I'm not going to be part of it." Me: "you can't leave. Ever since you got here nobody has lost their job, the company is in good hands-" H: "Hun, I'm old. The CEO that is joining is younger and more advanced than me. You'll be in great hands. I'm counting on you to help him. Okay?" Me: "what about you?" H: "I'll be fine. I'm moving back to Australia." Me: "when?" H: "this is my second last week." Me: "so next week Friday is your last day?" he nodded. I went over to hug him. Me: "I wish you all the best." H: "thank you Spho. Enjoy your weekend." Me: "you too." I took my bag and went to my car. Well, I didn't like Harold but it was sad seeing him like that. Usually he's bold and head on, right now he looked so weak and defenseless. I felt so sorry for him, simultaneously hating my new boss already. I don't even know who he is yet he's already on my last nerve. I drove home listening to Metro FM trying to block out my thoughts and focusing on getting home. I finally parked my car inside the garage. My honey was home. His red Audi was parked in its spot. I got out my car and walked into the house. "mamaaa!!!" Buhle came running. Me: "my baby!" I picked my little boy up and kissed him. Me: "Unjani uBuhle wam?" Buhle: "uright. Look mama, look what I made for you." I gasped. Me: "this is sooo beautiful baby! Who did this? You?" he blushed. "hey.." the older version of him appeared. Me: "Uyaphi? All dressed and ready?" he kissed my cheek. Me: "Simpfiwe." Him: "babe. Ndisaya apha eFinnezz. Ndizobuya kwangoku." Me: "but I just got here." Simphiwe: "babe. Trust me. Ndifuna uyolanda intwana yam. Isuka eDubane baby. He doesn't know his way. We're going to have a few drinks, then come back here. Ok?" Me: "okay." he kissed my lips. Simphiwe: "I love you." Me: "I love you too." he bent down and tickled his son. Simphiwe: "ndiyeza kwedin. Ungagezi." he went out. I put my bags down, ndakhangela into yopheka while Buhle was watching cartoons. I decided to make something quick because I was tired and a bit lazy today. I made pap and wors with spicy tomato gravy. While doing the cooking I tidied up the house and cleaned. Once I was finished cooking I joined Buhle with his cartoons. Soon after that Simphiwe came back with his 'friend from Durban.' I will stop right there. You might notice a bit of tension in the household, if not, that's okay. We've been trying to play it off. Buhle is Simphiwe's son, with his ex. He comes over every Friday to Sunday. He calls me mama and enjoys every

second here with me. Simphiwe on the other hand thinks it's confusing for the boy to have two "mama's" in his life. Hmm.... I don't know if that meant I should pay less attention to the boy or tell him to call me sisi. I was confused, anyway, Khange kuphinde kuvanwe. Back to the story. Simphiwe: "baby." he came to me. He was drunk. Simphiwe: "nanku lomjita bendithetha ngaye. Lakhe, this is my woman." he smiled. Lakhe: "molo sisi." I shook his hand. His

eyes fixed on mine. Me: "hello." Lakhe: "it's a pleasure to meet you." Me: "same here." I let go of his hand before it got too awkward. Me: "so, I'll dish up." Simphiwe was already in the kitchen with his head peeping in a pot. Simphiwe: "andiselambe." Me: "suka ndiphake." Lakhe: "do you need help?" ndanentloni ngulombuzo. I don't know why. Me: "no I'm fine. You can have a seat." they went to sit so that ndiphake. While they were talking, I eavesdropped. Simphiwe: "so....iphi la cherrie yakho? U-Banger?" Lakhe: "andina cherrie mna." Simphiwe: "come on, you had a girl, we called her Banger eskeemin because ebeyi flame lamntana. What happened?" Lakhe: "we broke up." Simphiwe: "oh? So, ubusithi ulapha ebhayi for how long?" Lakhe: "for good I hope." he looked up and I diverted my eyes back to my task. Simphiwe: "ushiye i-durban for PE?" Lakhe: "yeah. I have a new job lined up. Its a bit hush hush for now but ke, that's the deal." Simphiwe: "great. Awuy'fun i-beer?" Lakhe: "no." he looked over at Buhle. Simphiwe: "I'm confused." Lakhe: "andizokwazi usela kukho umntana apha." his phone rang. Lakhe: "excuse me." he got up waphuma. I took out the trays ndabeka plates on them. Simphiwe: "he's changed. He's not the same crazy guy I know. Spontaneous and wild. Uske wanyaba ngoku. Buhle uqhelile mos ubakho ndisela." Me: "maybe he hasn't changed but perhaps Grown." Simphiwe: "what are trying to say?" Me: "I said what I wanted to say. I'm not trying to say anything else." Simphiwe: "so ndim lo ungekakhuli?" Me: "akhange ndithethe ngawe ke mna." Simphiwe: "but that's what you're implying. That mna since ndisela phambi koBuhle andikhulanga." Me: "I didn't even mention uBuhle. I was referring to the crazy and spontaneous friend you used to have. Perhaps he has grown out of that." Simphiwe: "I know exactly what you mean Siphosenkosi. Ndikuvile." Lakhe came back in the house. Simphiwe walked out. Lakhe: "and now?" I just shrugged and put the trays on the table. Me: "Iza Buhle my love. Come pray and eat." he got up and closed his eyes, with his little hands joined together in front of his chest. Buhle: "God please bless our food and family. Amen." Lakhe: "Amen." Me: "amen honey." Lakhe: "uhm...let me check up on Simpra. Make sure he's fine." Me: "ok." he walked out after his friend. Me and the boy ate our supper. Then washed our dishes. We went to the bathroom to have our night bath together bengekabuyi abo tshomi. I put Buhle in his pajamas and I got into my gown sayobukela i-TV in the lounge together. It was around 1am when I heard a knock on my door. I'd fallen asleep with Buhle on the couch. I checked who it was and it was the retard plus his friend. Drunk to death. I opened the door. Me: "don't you dare make a sound and wake up uBuhle or I swear -" Simphiwe: "shhh. Hleli nje ungunywe nywe nywe. Khathule." andakhubeka. Me: "put him on the couch." I took Buhle to the room ndabuya for uzovala. Me: "and wena? Where you gonna sleep?" Lakhe: "I'll go to....the hotel." Me: "unje? You barely

know PE and you're going to drive around drunk? Ubanjwe apha or get hijacked or even worse uwe nalemoto. Sizothini kokwenu? Nxx! Lonto anizikwazi man nidibane." I locked the door. Lakhe: "you're gorgeous naxa uvuka." I was dumb for a few seconds and a bit motionless. I don't even know when last I was complimented. Plus bendivuka and a bit groggy. Also, Lakhe was light brown, caramel skinned stunner. Easy to look at with a bit of a meaty bone body. And fit. Me: "I...uhm...enkosi. There's a room. You can share it netshomi yakho." I opened the spare

room and noticed I forgot to put in the sheets. They were neatly folded by uSis Thobeka on Thursday when I insisted that I will take care of it since elega i-meeting yeskolo somntanakhe. Me: "Oh my Goodness." I made the bed as quick as I possibly could. When I finished I turned around and found him right behind me. My heart beat raced rapidly at this point. I was suddenly afraid of him. I began shaking involuntarily. He looked as sober as a judge and unshaken. Not even blinking. Me: "Lakhe." I breathed. Lakhe: "Yes." Me: "you didn't drink did you?" Lakhe: "nope." I didn't know whether to sprint for my life or slowly escape. How could I let a man I didn't even know come into my house and offer him a place to sleep. He could be a rapist. A serial killer! What if he cuts off my boobs? Lakhe: "why are you scared?" Me: "I'm not." Lakhe: "Don't lie to me. You're nervous. You're shaking. Do you.....think I might hurtyou?" that last sentence was as broken as my heart. Whispered yet screaming for help. Me: "no." I lied. I know you're about to. Lakhe: "hm." he looked at the bed. Lakhe: "thank you for your hospitality." he stepped out of my way and I fast paced walked out that room to my own and locked myself in there with uBuhle. What the fucking hell was that all about! Hebethuna Simphiwe brought home a psychotic killer? What was this?

Chapter 2

I struggled to sleep all night kwade kwabetha u6am. I got up and brushed my teeth then went to the kitchen. The house was a bit dark, a little bit of light was seeping through the closed curtains. I checked the kettle with my hand and it was steaming hot. Me: "ouch!!" I blew into my hand. "I thought I'd make you some coffee when you woke up. I'm sorry." andothuka I almost fainted. Me: "Can. You. Stop!" Lakhe: "stop what?" I looked at the cup in his hand. Me: "being weird! You're freaking me out!" he looked disappointed. I felt bad suddenly. Me: "look, xa uvuka, uthi good morning. You have a bit of light in the house. You don't loiter in the dark and have hot cups of coffee ready." Lakhe: "noted." I took a deep breath. Lakhe: "can I start over?" Me: "how is that possible?" Lakhe: "go back to bed." his tone confused me so much. Was it an order or a special request. You see, he sounded like he was mad, his

voice. But his facial expression was the sweetest smile in Babylon. How? Tell me how? Me: "ok." I went to my bedroom and sat in bed impatiently waiting for my poison. It was almost 30 minutes later when he came in carrying a tray. It smelled so nice. Did I have this in my fridge? Lakhe: "and breakfast is served. This is for the little one." Me: "Lakhe, this is amazing...but you can't be doing this. Kukho u-Simphiwe who is jealous of everything even himself." he smiled. Lakhe: "he's asleep, uzovuka around in a while. Besides, I won't tell if you don't." oh what the heck. A little appreciation did no harm. This was so nice of him. Lakhe: "I'm sorry I scared you ekseni. I was just...." Me: "just what." I nibbled on the food. Lakhe: "mesmerized. I don't know what came over me. You were making that bed and all I could think of was you sleeping on it. Same as emini, while ubuphaka, all I could see was you sitting down and eating. You work too hard." Me: "Lakhe-" Lakhe: "I know it sounds crazy....and I know uyicherrie yetshomi yam. Its just that sometimes my feelings overpower my pride. It happens rarely, but when it does I express it. That's what my doctor said." Me: "doctor?" Lakhe: "yes, abazali bam bandisa kwi psychologist because I didn't show empathy or emotion for anything when I was growing up." Me: "why?" Lakhe: "its just the way I am." Me: "sounds scary." Lakhe: "it is for me too....I have to watch people walk out of my life and not feel a thing for them. I know it should hurt but it doesn't." Me: "so, unabo oo-sister and brother?" Lakhe: "a sister, yes. Uhlala emonti." Me: "oh that's lovely." Lakhe: "and you?" Me: "never met my brother." Lakhe: "oh..." Me: "so this doctor, he still treats you?" Lakhe: "yes. once a month I have a session." Me: "why don't you show emotion?" Lakhe: "doctors say it could be caused by a continuous case of post traumatic stress I suffered years ago that might have affected part of my brain." Me: "how is that even possible?" Lakhe: "if you can't live down a certain event that happened. Become afraid of certain things. Like attaching yourself to people, pets." Me: "what happened to you?" he looked around. Lakhe: "Simphiwe uyavuka. Enjoy your breakfast." he walked out the room kanye xa ekhwazwa yitshomakhe. I wonder what scarred him so badly that he can't even function his emotions himself? After eating my breakfast wavuka uBuhle and ate his. Wangena Simphiwe looking grumpy as usual xenze ububhanxa. This time I wasn't going to bother to ask. He took out his clothes wayovasa then came back wanxiba. Black shorts, flip flops and a white vest. I bathed Buhle ndamnxibisa brown short shorts and his white all star. Ebengafuni ke unxiba phezulu since it was hot. I applied sun screen on him and let him play outside with his top off. I made the bed ndayovasa nam finally. Decided on wearing my military green short jumpsuit. I combed my hair, tying it in a pony tail and wore my brown gladiator sandal that had laces to my calf. I went to the kitchen to clean up the breakfast dishes. Simphiwe ehleli kwi

lounge with a cold one probably for ibhabhalaza. Simphiwe: "and then? Ngamasimba anton anga uwanxibileyo?" no he wasn't mad, he was just rude like that. I ignored him. Simphiwe: "heeee...ayisandikhwazi indutsu ngeloxesha ufane awandihoya." he stood behind me holding my waist. Simphiwe: "iyabatyiswa lento uyinxibileyo. The way this ass is popping out....I don't know if ndizobanayo enyi focus namhlanje. Kutheni ungathethi nam baby?" Me: "I have things to do Simphiwe. No time for your sexual fantasies." Simphiwe: "okwe round eyi 1." Me: "No." I dried my hands finished. He walked away. Lakhe appeared from the bedroom. His cologne made my tummy tremble with butterflies. He was dressed in tight denim shorts, a plain white t shirt and moon rock Yeezy Boosts 350's with a navy Fabiani cap. His Rolex hung on his wrist carelessly while clicked on his iPhone 6s Plus. Lobhuti was so damn relevant, it actually stung deep in my heart. He looked up at me ndabalekisa amehlo. Me: "I have some errands to run." ndayolanda bag yam neskipa sika Buhle. Me: "come honey boo boo, let's go." Simphiwe: "uzomenzi moffie lomntana." Me: "better that than a drunkard." I muttered. Unfortunately he heard me. Simphiwe: "mxiimm." I dressed the boy saphuma sahamba. It was after 3 when we came home. Me: "what in the world." I turned down Buhle's duck song which made him sulk. Buhle: "mama kaloku!" Me: "yima baby." the yard was parked with 6 cars and I had no space. I stopped my car, taking Buhle out the car sayongena. It was a madhouse of laughter, marijuana smoke, hubbly bubbly, cigar, cigarette, alcohol. I was just dumb. Funny enough, imoto ye-owner of this house was nowhere outside! I looked around ndaphuma phandle eback. I didn't know these people, Lakhe wasn't here even. I went to Buhle's room ndayothatha his changing clothes and left the house. Just as I reached my car, yamisa Audi ebomvu. But it wasn't Simphiwe driving. Me: "Lakhe what is This?" he got out the car and looked at the cars. Lakhe: "kwenzeka ntoni?" he looked confused. Me: "ubuza mna? Wena?" Lakhe: "I left after you did. Ndisiya ebankeni and had a meeting with an estate agent who showed me a few houses then ndaye Bay west. I left Simpra esithi uzondilinda ngeculo. Which I thought would be a couple of beers." I put Buhle in my car ndamfaka amabhanti. Lakhe: "Spho, wait. Maybe There's an explanation. Suveske uhambe. Let me find him." Me: "akekho pha." I don't know why I was being emotional. Lakhe: "maybe he's asleep besithi udiniwe. Ima apha. I'm coming." he disappeared in the house. I rolled down my car windows and went after him. He was standing by the bedroom door. Then shut it closed with his head down. Me: "ngubani lo ulapho?" he almost got a fright. Lakhe: "maybe we should give him space. He's not doing too well." Me: "uthini ngababantu balapha!" Lakhe: "let's just go." he pushed me out the house. Lakhe: "let's have some dinner and a movie with Buhle." Me: "no I'll be fine." I got into my car and drove away. I

stayed at my friend's house, Zingisa. She was married to Dumisani, top lawyer at his own firm. Zingi owned her own salon. They had two kids one of them being Buhle's age, the other was 2. It was just a 4 year gap, with kids that didn't even count. They all played together. Dumi and Zingi sat with me in their huge lounge sipping wine. Dumi: "have some wine wethu, uzivise kamandi, awuyi ndawo. You're sleeping here tonight. Lamakhwenkwe enu awanambeko yazi." I laughed. He was older yes. Too much older when he drank and somehow thought he was part of the girls. Zingisa made him like that, she included him everywhere because he didn't have that many friends. Sometimes I think none at all. But he was a nice man and supportive. Non-judgemental and honest. Zingi: "I want to know more about lotshomi umtsha." Dumi: "uwoah...usiswakho. Khawuve." I laughed. Me: "There's nothing to tell." Dumi: "like hell there isn't. Did you see her eyes sparkle baby?"

Everytime he's mentioned. Mjonge." Zingi: "ndimjongile. Spill. Do you have feelings for him?" Me: "no." Dumi: "you find him attractive?" Me: "maybe." Zingi: "uyambawela?" Me: "no." Zingi: "we know you haven't had sex in the past 4 months." Me: "okay. That's good to know." Dumi: "I suggest you don't fall for the trap. Here's what I think. Simphiwe has stopped paying attention to you, goes out late, comes back when he wants, has a password on his phone which is a common sign of cheating." Zingi: "wait...unayo nawe password." Dumi: "babes, you send me the nasty ndisemsebenzini everyday. You know abantwana play with my phone. Anyway, this isn't about you. Bhabha wam, why do you think all of a sudden, Simphiwe brings home a hot friend umazi ngumntu oneskhwele hleli nje but doesn't even mind this man around you. Its like he doesn't care at all. Think about it. Ulinda MNA. This friend makes moves on you, makes you feel appreciated and fuzzy inside. They're waiting on you to slip. If you fall for the trap, if you go ahead and open your legs to this Maps Maponyane, he will go back to his friend amxelele. Ushiywe wena ibengathi nguwe ihule when he throws you out your house ngeloxesha Nguye oqalileyo. This is a common man trick. Don't fall for it." I swallowed hard. Is that what they thought of me? Bedibene nje bona they are planning me. Zingi: "ungalibali uthandaza babe. Aba bayazibhanxa subahoya tu." Dumi: "I never liked that Simphiwe to begin with to be honest. Qha ke uyamthanda wena so andingen ndawo." Me: "I didn't ever look at it this way. Thanks Dum." Dumi: "akhongxaki tshomi. My time has come. Goodnight ladies." he got up and went to bed. I felt like someone punched me in the stomach. To think I felt comfortable with Lakhe. That I began to trust and like him. Now I was just disgusted. Zingi: "friend. Suyicinga Yonke lento okay? Just focus on your work and development. I know its hard but don't you think maybe you should be focused more on yourself. You've been with Simphiwe and supported him all

this time. Has he done that with you? No. So don't waste too much of your time again. Focus baby girl." she got up and went to bed.

Chapter 3

The next morning I bathed Buhle and myself preparing us to go home. Zingi and Dumisani were going shopping as a family although they insisted we went with them I declined. I drove home ndafika noko ku-empty. I went inside the house, finding Lakhe in the kitchen with plastic gloves on and a black plastic bag. He looked up and I could've sworn he sighed in relief. I don't know why he was acting. Buhle: "mama!" he ran to the opposite direction. I looked over and saw his mother sitting on my couch. Simphiwe sat on another watching TV. Me: "molweni." all of them were snaky. I didn't know who to greet and who to leave. And why was maka Buhle here ngelixesha? Why was she here at all because Simphiwe fetched and took him home. I went to my bedroom ndayonxiba a navy maxi dress. Ndabuyela ekhithshini. Lakhe: "I was worried when you didn't come home." Me: "cut the bullshit act Lakhe and continue nalento uyenzayo." I took Still water from the fridge ndaya eroomin. The little family sat in the lounge without moving an inch. Every part of me was breaking. How could Simphiwe bring this woman into our house? I walked into my en suite bathroom, lifting up the seat to pee and there. Right there were used condoms floating about. I could feel the bile working up inside me. I threw up in the sink multiple times. "Spho?" Me: "get out!!" I rinsed it and my mouth. Lakhe: "but you're sick." Me: "don't act like you fucking care Lakhe. Hamba!!" I could hear laughing all the way from the lounge. I was the fool. Lakhe: "Spho, ndiyak'cela. Don't shut me out." Me: "Lakhe. Get the fuck out of my sight man!" he stood still as rock. Lakhe: "I'm not going anywhere." Me: "you knew he was cheating on me and you kept quiet." Lakhe: "it wasn't my place. I did all I could to make him sto-" Me: "don't lie!" I pushed past him to the bedroom. I took out my suitcases and packed my clothing. Lakhe: "Spho. Don't do this now. Don't give this girl the power endlinakho. You can't show her defeat." Me: "you are the last person to pep talk me Lakhe. You saw it happen. You were here. You did nothing. You said nothing. I'm the fool apha! Nangoku kumnandi mos." he walked out the bedroom. I continued packing my things. My shoes. My underwear. Every single piece of item I owned in this house. "Uyaphi kengoku bra?" I heard Simphiwe say. Lakhe: "ndiyahamba Simphiwe." and I heard the door slam. The bedroom door opened. Simphiwe: "utheni kwi tshomi yam?" I kept quiet. While I bent down next to the bed to open the drawer, I saw a pink panty. I didn't own any pink underwear. Simphiwe: "Spho ndithetha nawe." I took it and threw it at him. Me: "maybe you should flush those down the toilet too." Simphiwe: "baby-" Me: "uvale lomlomo Simphiwe. Umvale vingci." I zipped closed my suitcase. Simphiwe:

"you can't leave me like this Spho. Ndiyak'cela mntuwam. I made a mistake. Please ndicela sithethe." Me: "you better get the fuck away from that door Simphiwe or I will smash your head in it I swear." Simphiwe: "Baby. Cela undimamele." I lifted up my suitcase and swung it at him he ducked quickly but it scraped his arm. Simphiwe: "baby. Please? We can talk about this. Ndicela undixolele." he took my suitcase and put it down. I opened the door, he closed it. Me: "Simphiwe." Simphiwe: "ndiyakucenga Spho. It was a mistake. Bendinxilile. This is our life you're throwing away." Me: "andiva?" Simphiwe: "we built this home together, njani uyekelele after one stupid mistake." Me: "had I been the one who did this stupid mistake would you be so willing siqhubekeke?" Simphiwe: "baby ndiyakuthanda. I know that unomsindo, I understand but please don't leave." Me: "ebhedini yam Simphiwe!! This is my home!! You couldn't even use the spare room?? You couldn't even wait ukuba ke ndingabikho ebhayi? You did this ndiyobhatala i-swimming lessons zika nyana lo wakho!! What is your problem??" Simphiwe: "baby....andinayo i-problem. Ndicela undixolele please

Spho." Me: "ndiyabanda Simphiwe? Is that it? I don't satisfy you?" Simphiwe: "you do....everytime-" Me: "kengoku Kuthen ungandityi mna ufuna uyotya onondindwa estratweni!!! I'm always in this damn house!!! Andiy'fumani mna lencanca uphisa ngayo!!" Simphiwe: "ndicel uxolo Spho. I will never do this again." Me: "you're right. You're never doing this again! EVER." he sighed. Simphiwe: "ndiyak'thanda mntu wam. I'll do whatever it takes. Enkosi For-" Me: "You think ndizohlalela lekaka? You must really think ndidom ne? That's what you think of me? You'll never do this to me again because I'm leaving you Simphiwe." Simphiwe: "ha.a man Sphosenkosi bra, yinton ngoku?" Me: "who was it?" Simphiwe: "ubani?" Me: "lomntu uleli naye ebhedini yam. Ngubani?" "Ndim sweetie!" she laughed. Noma: "xa ungakwazi uyiphatha indoda funeke ithini dear? Kunini ndincedisana nawe? Hayi sisi please. khasinyathelele bekukdala ngoko. Baby? We have to go to umama, usilindile." I stared at him. Me: "why? Ndikwenze ntoni Simphiwe?" that's when the tears came. Simphiwe: "ayinguwe Spho." Me: "then why would you do this!!" I screamed. Noma: "yohh, hayi sana ide uncame. Tshini bawo." she opened our door. Me: "I did everything for you Simphiwe. All of me, was invested kuwe! Nomntanakho. All along ndim isibhanxa." Simphiwe: "ndicel uxolo Spho." Me: "that's all your dumb ass can say?" Noma: "jonga man Spho. Haha! Lonto unegama lendoda. Don't you think that's a bit of a turn off. No wonder uvinjwa, jonga sweetie, akho need yocenga ububhanxa. Awufunwa-" Me: "I think ubhidiwe. lizperm zise ntloko. I am leaving. You with your broke man. NGUYE umntu ondicengayo because I know he will never survive without me! Watch." Noma: "haha! Lonto u-bitter-" Simphiwe: "Khavale umlomo man

Noma!! Spho....can we please talk about this." Noma: "talk about what?" Me: "nanku mntu wakho. Thetha naye." I pulled away my suitcases and loaded them on my small Renault Clio. Buhle: "mama!" Noma grabbed him and held him tight on to her. Simphiwe: "babe..." Me: "goodbye Simphiwe." Simphiwe: "baby please don't do this to me. Ndiyak'cela Spho." he cried. I took everything of me and drove away. The hardest part was seeing Buhle for the last time. This was why ebengafuni andibize mama, he knew all along, I was just a guest in my own house. I drove out on to the freeway wiping away my tears. I did not know where I was going but I knew I couldn't go home. I stopped at Tops and got myself a bottle of Vodka. With a lot of ice. I got 3 other bottles of wine. Ndabhatala ndaphuma. I drove to the Radisson Blu hotel. I felt like being alone and not seeing anyone where if it were the other hotels, I might bump into a client. I booked myself in and went up to the 18th floor. All my suitcases piled in the wardrobe and I sat with my ipad on the bed looking through property websites. I poured a shot of vodka and gulped it down. The bitter taste was no better than the one in my heart. Every shot went straight to my heart until I couldn't feel anything anymore. The time I woke up was with a ringing sound in the background. My mouth was dry. It felt like my head was replaced with a tavern. I stunk. Not stank or stinked. STUNK. And bendizisinda. I looked around the room. My head was pounding. I took the phone and stared at it. A number I didn't know. Me: "hello." "Spho?" I wasn't sure of the voice. Me: "speaking." I took my iPad to check the time. "are you okay? I've been trying to call you since last night. I thought something bad happened to you." Me: "ndithetha naban?" stupid iPad was off. "ndim uLakhe. Uphi?" where did this psycho get my number? Me: "ufuna nton uLakhe bawo? What does he want now?" I complained. Lakhe: "please hear me out." Me: "why???!!" my phone beeped, I checked it. I had another call coming in. Me: "I have to go." Lakhe: "at least tell me uphi. Can we meet for dinner?" Me: "Lakhe. We're not friends. You don't have to feel bad for what happened." Lakhe: "I don't feel bad. I feel great. Ndonwabe ukufa as a matter of fact. I'm glad you left him. He doesn't deserve you. You're an amazing

woman Spho. You deserve happiness." Me: "enkosi. That's the last thing I need right now. I have to focus on myself." Lakhe: "that's a good idea. If you need a friend, I'll be here for you. Uyeva?" Me: "I have enough friends." Lakhe: "I'm sorry Spho." Me: "you don't waste time do you." Lakhe: "I've always been efficient and effective." Me: "you can't even wait until I'm okay." Lakhe: "There's no reason for you to wallow in self pity for a man that didn't know your worth. Oyena mntu suppose uyakhala nguye, if I were you I'd be in the club making it rain. Undi-invite ke qha ndifuna uncedise ngemvula nam." I

chuckled. Me: "goodbye Lakhe." I hung up and checked my other missed call. Shiitt!! It was 10am. Monday morning. My phone rang again. Me: "hello?" I tried sobering up. H: "where are you? The new CEO is here. I thought you'd like to meet him before everyone else. Just for today though." Me: "uhm...I'm a bit busy at the moment H. I have meeting in a few minutes." H: "okay. That's fine. Mr Sobukwe will be here next week Monday for the official start of business." Me: "okay, i'll meet him then. Thank you Harold. Goodbye." I hung up and sunk back into bed. My head was heavy and face was swollen ingathi bendibethwa. I went to take a shower deciding to go buy breakfast plus a few things for food while I'm at it because I didn't want to be seen. I also needed headache pills. I threw on a tracksuit and went about my business. Bought what I needed then went back to my hiding place. It was impossible. I still had to work. Emails came in every 2 minutes and I wasn't coping at all. Finally my phone rang. Me: "Zingi?" Zingi: "hi friend. Unjani?" Me: "I'm fine." Zingi: "what's wrong?" Me: "nothing. I'm just busy with work." Zingi: "okay. Ndizoza ke later on vha." Me: "I'm not home." Zingi: "okay. Uphi?" Me: "can we please talk later babe? I'm really busy." Zingi: "okay. Later." I hung up and focused on my work. At 4pm. I closed down everything ndabuyela kwimbhondlela yam ye-wine because the vodka was finished. I had 8 missed calls from Simphiwe, I wasn't even about to check my whatsapp. I had the first glass of wine while running myself a hot bath. When I went in I had another. I relaxed in the warm water. What was I to do with myself after work? Huh? Sit? I was so used to getting home, cooking for him, sibukele TV andibalisele about work. Ahambe while I watched my ratchet shows abuye ndisahleli, cuddle and sleep. Now what? As much as I enjoyed Zingi and Dumi's company, they were married and I didn't want to be in their space. 3 whole years of my life had just been wasted. Yi-diploma leyo bethuna. Ngendine honors mos ngoku or better yet a PhD. Kumandi uba ngamadoda ne? All you have to do is find a good woman who will breastfeed you through life. Isn't that just amazing? While I put my life on hold, for him to start up his business. Spending my savings on him. My time. My resources. Data bundles zam busy researching for him! Hebethuna do you understand the cost of data bundles are equivalent to i-lobola these days? Senditshuba, iinkomo ezimbini ke? I did everything to make sure he was sorted not even once ndava u'enkosi mntuwam'. I never did it for that though. I wanted him to be proud. Kodwa namhlanje uyakwazi undenza oluhlobo? Wow. Just wow. And Noma? Hayini guys uNoma? Uyay'qonda la-lifestyle bendiyi maintainer kulandlu, constructing that family? Does she know the expenses? In fact ndinayo ne-feeling ethi ndizocengwa Nguye ba ndibuye because Simphiwe ngunxilayo and uyathanda izinto eziduru u-brothers. Its a pity now uzosela i-Milk stout nembhambha. Shame uswine. I drank my remaining

expensive wine kalok ndiya afforda mna. My phone rang disturbing me from my thoughts. I got out the bath to fetch it ndabuya ndangena kwakhona emanzini. Me: "hello?" Lakhe: "its me again...." Me: "Lakhe honestly. Please torhwana. Ndisazihoya." Lakhe: "uyazihoya? Ngantoni?" Me: "I'm in the bath, talking to myself. Ufuna nton?" Lakhe: "heheheeee!!! Yuuh andihleki. Just dinner. I promise I won't bother you again. Just once." Me: "I wonder yinton e-funny." Lakhe: "bendithe kuwe I'm

here for you, andinayo picture yakho uthetha wedwa mna ugqagqanisela idonga. Busenothetha nakum. Qha u-stubborn. Uphi." Me: "I don't feel like being outside around people. So...please." Lakhe: "okay ndiyakuva. Well, I bought a new house. I'm moving in ngomso. Please help. I am hopeless when it comes to decor. I beg you." I sighed. Lakhe: "please?" Me: "fine. I'll help you." Lakhe: "great! I'll send you my new address." Me: "okay." Lakhe: "uyeke uthukisa apho ukhe uyolala and enjoy your evening uyevha?" Me: "enkosi. You too." I hung up. I wonder where he got my number. I finished with my bath ndaya ezinguben. Thinking what did I just get myself into. I took two pain killers and I was off.

Chapter 4

The next morning, I woke up to a text. "Good morning gorgeous. I hope you slept well. I am looking forward to seeing your smile today. Here's my address below. Have no breakfast please, it'll be served right here by yours truly." I have to admit. There was a bit of a grin on my face. I quickly wiped it away when I remembered Dumi's speech. But what reason would he have now to play me? I was done with Simphiwe anyway. I got up, took a shower and looked through my suitcase for clothes to wear. I didn't need to be fancy. It was windy outside. I took out thigh ripped skinny jeans ndanxiba. My all black Adidas Superstar which Dumi bought me in Amsterdam for my birthday last year. I also wore my black Adidas sweater and my silver Michael Kors watch. Most of the items of clothing I wear are bought by Zingi and Dumi. Everytime those two go overseas they bring back presents for everyone. I specified on clothing and watches and perfumes only. Anyway, I took my bag and drove Piglet to Kragga Kamma. Piglet is my car's name. Its cute and small and red instead of pink. I followed my GPS thoroughly until I stopped in front of a mansion. "You have arrived at your destination." said uMaVero on the navigator. Me: "What The Hell." I stared in awe. How many armies live in this house? The gate opened and I drove into the vast yard which looked like a rain forest in Spring. Oh God, was it beautiful. The grass was rich green and thick. At the far end I could see a beautiful garden with blossoming flowers. There was a mini water fountain in the middle of it ndaske ndakhamisa. Were

those ducks? Someone pinch me please? You know how rich you have to be to have a pond right? With ducks? WOW. The gracious house stood high like a castle of a royal family. It looked magical. He opened his front door. Dressed impeccably as his front lawn was mowed. I felt so small and awkward. I got out the car. Lakhe: "hi. Sorry man, I was in an early meeting. I'll change quick and we can get to business." Me: "you told me not to eat breakfast." he smiled. Lakhe: "of course. I'll be with you shortly. Welcome inside my cute shack." Me: "you have a sense of humor I see. Ngubani omnye ohlala apha?" Lakhe: "just me." Me: "why such a magnificent house?" Lakhe: "I like to move around. I'm claustrophobic." Me: "uh huh. Yeah I'd probably get lost in here. You'll need to paste signs on the walls." he laughed. Lakhe: "as long as I know where my bedroom is, I really could care less about the rest of this house. I'll be back. Make yourself at home." I stared at the boxes all over. There was no furniture. No chairs. Nothing. The only thing set up, I saw was the kitchen. Spik and span. Not even a crumb on the floor. He came back less formal and opened his fridge. Lakhe: "had a look around? What can we do with it?" Me: "its gorgeous. You have ducks in your pond? Are they real?" Lakhe: "yeah. They're so cute. Did you see the one that has a limp? Ahhh my favorite. Her name is Zanno. The other is Titi, omnye ngu Kaylen, she has the big eyes. Those are my babies." I looked around with a half sarcastic, half amused look on my face. His pets are ducks people. Me: "first you need to buy furniture." Lakhe: "I'm having that imported from China. What I need here is TV and home theatre system. Speaking of theatres, I have a mini cinema just down the passage. I also need to buy gym equipment for the gym. And Some bedroom things." Me: "how many bedrooms?" Lakhe: "15." Me: "Good Jesus! That's half a month of bedrooms." he giggled. Lakhe: "yeah. Also 6 toilets. 2 kitchens. 3 lounges. A play room. A gym. A basket ball court. An indoor swimming centre." Me: "how about a shopping mall? Do you have that too?" he laughed. Lakhe: "mxim. As I was saying. A sauna room, a wine cellar, a bar and gentleman's corner, a laundry room. I've lost track of what else." Me: "you have a bar? Is it stocked?" Lakhe: "not yet unfortunately. I'll have to go to the store later in the week. I'm

flying my wines in on Friday." Me: "for a second there, I thought you said wives." Lakhe: "I'm single. No relationship. No kids." Me: "same. What's outside?" Lakhe: "you'll think I'm bragging." Me: "oh please. Enlighten me." Lakhe: "well, There's a tennis court. A put-put course. A braai-ing area. An outdoor swimming area. A go-kart racing track and mud slide." Me: "so...how much could this cost? You don't have kids. No wives. Who will play here?" Lakhe: "you...hopefully." he looked up at me. Lakhe: "we're friends right?" Me: "right." I liked it here. My own little playground. Plus we have ducks. Lakhe:

"breakfast is served. He made me a cheese omelet. French toast and beef sausages. I ate. He poured me juice. Me: "wine please." Lakhe: "for breakfast?" Me: "Yes." he shrugged and poured me a glass." Me: "what kind of job do you do?" Lakhe: "I own a few hotels. I'd like to go into property and clubs if possible this year. You?" Me: "what else." Lakhe: "its a bit of asilent job." Me: "tell me." Lakhe: "no." Me: "fine. Then ndiyahamba." Lakhe: "hawu. Just like that?" Me: "I feel we should be honest with each other. From now onwards. whether you think it would hurt or not. I want you to tell me. If that's not going to work for you, then we won't work." Lakhe: "okay. I understand. I will be honest. All I need is a little respect and patience. Then we will work. I don't intend on hiding my occupation for life but that's a contract I signed. I can't let anyone know until its finalized. I promise you'll be the first to know." Me: "I respect that." he looked at me with that look. Ya'll know that look. It was a hungry dog, rip them jeans off look. Lakhe: "I want you." I gulped my glass of wine finished. Lakhe: "I'm just being honest." Yaphuma inyani eSouth Africa. Me: "is that all you see?" Lakhe: "definitely not. You're a smart woman, extremely beautiful, caring and respectful. I still want you.....in my bed." Me: "if you promise not to bother me again." Lakhe: "oh I can't promise. We have a house to decorate angel. Nobody has to know." he gave me his phone. Lakhe: "you can delete all threads of messages, phone calls directed to you. I just want you." I deleted everything of mine and double checked. Me: "done." Lakhe: "wonderful..." he pulled me closer to him and kissed my lips. Lakhe: "are you comfortable?" I kissed him back. He picked me up and walked to the bedroom. His lips never leaving mine and he placed me on his bed climbing on top of me. He fondled and squeezed my breast gently then suddenly stopped. Me: "why are you stopping?" Lakhe: "because you're not ready..." Me: "what? Lakhe please don't play games." Lakhe: "Spho, you're shaking. You're not ready to be intimate with another man. I don't want you to regret yourself after this. I don't mind, I'll wait." Me: "please don't make me think about this Lakhe." Lakhe: "baby I can't do this. I don't want to feel like I'm forcing myself on you. You're vulnerable and andicing ndithathe advantage yalonto." Me: "so nawe awundifuni?" I sobbed. God I felt so embarrassed. He sat next to me and held me in his arms. I burst into harder sobs right then, just breaking down. I held on to his t shirt wishing he wasn't him. Why didn't he just do me and forget about it. Why was he so nice? He was rubbing my back and curling my hair around his fingers as much as I hated it, I began calming down. Lakhe: "of course ndiyakufuna. I want you to be strong and able. I will never take advantage of your pain. Ndizobalapha at every turn. It'll be okay." Me: "I feel so dumb. I gave everything. My all into that relationship, and I am the fool." Lakhe: "babe you'll need to understand that not all men are like this." Me: "he wasn't like this either. He was a good man." Lakhe: "yes. I

remember that he was a good guy. Honestly andiyazi kumoshakele phi." Me: "its me. Maybe I bored him." Lakhe: "yeah probably." I smacked him. Me: "you're supposed to make me feel better!" Lakhe: "I'm also supposed to be honest." he kissed my forehead. Lakhe: "I'm sorry uyeva?" Me: "its fine. Do you have any more wine?" Lakhe: "unfortunately not. Let's go shopping. They say something about retail therapy." Me:

"argg..." Lakhe: "Iza." he pulled me out of bed. Lakhe: "so uhlala phi ngoku? At home?" Me: "no...I'm at a hotel. Which I need to get out of soon before I go bankrupt." Lakhe: "ngey'phi lo hotel?" Me: "Radisson." he smiled. Lakhe: "great choice." Me: "uncumele nton kangaka?" he shrugged. Lakhe: "ndizofownela cab so long. You freshen up." Me: "we can take my car." Lakhe: "uhm...no babe. We're taking a cab." Me: "itheni moto yam?" Lakhe: "ayithenanga. Qha ndibawela uphumle. Let someone else do the driving." Me: "then why don't you drive it." he stared at me then at it and giggled. Lakhe: "freshen up." Me: "I wonder iphi eyakho imoto ulibele uhlekana neyam." Lakhe: "you can ask me that same question ngomso. We're putting it on hold." he spoke on the phone when I went to wash my face and dry it. In 20 minutes the cab arrived and we went to Walmer Park. Me: "and then?" Lakhe: "ndibawela ukuya eBay West kodwa mna." Me: "kwathini ungatsho kengoku?" Lakhe: "cela ukuya eBay West." Me: "I'm not the driver." the driver took off again. Me: "kutheni undijamele." I could feel his gaze even though I was looking out the window. Lakhe: "ndifuna ukonwabisa. I want to make you so happy you forget how pain feels. I love seeing your smile, its like a morning sunrise. A new chance. A new day." Me: "wow uyiyo ne poet ngoku." Lakhe: "unje ke wena." Me: "ndiright." Lakhe: "how about..." he moved closer to me and whispered in my ear. Lakhe: "you move in, while you're looking for a place of your own." Me: "uhm...no." Lakhe: "you'll have your own section of the house. And me...." Me: "that's cute." Lakhe: "please?" Me: "I'll think about it." we arrived at Bay West and walked in. He held my hand. Which surprised me a bit. I wasn't sure what we were. Lakhe: "I want to check something here." he went in a shop called Levisons. I looked around ndadibana ne-price tag. My throat went dry kwaphela ukuqava. He bought a few shirts and pants. Lakhe: "what do you think babe?" Me: "I don't think you need my help. You're already doing well by yourself, 'babe'." he put the clothes on the counter to pay then turned to me. Lakhe: "yinton kengoku ingxaki?" Me: "can we drink now?" Lakhe: "no. Masiye kwa G Star." Me: "exciting." he paid and we left with the paper bag. Sayongena kwa G Star. Lakhe: "what size jean are you love?" Me: "34." Lakhe: "perfect." he took two jeans and a t shirt that matched his wayobhatala. Me: "I don't see how this is helping me." Lakhe: "ina. Go out there and buy something and bring it back to me. I don't want you back here without at

least 10 items of clothing in your possession. That does not include shoes or make up. 10 is minimum. Go." he gave me his black card and I walked out the shop. I was already so damn annoyed. Why does he have to be so insistent. Wait....he didn't mention liquor. I turned around with the hugest smile on my face. Lakhe: "No Alcohol." Me: "and I'm the boring one." after my shopping spree, I found him standing on one of the balconies. His back faced me so he didn't see me coming. Lakhe: "everything is in order, I'll knock this one out by the weekend.....No, ndise bhayi.....this has to be the final one, I can't fuck it up.....andiyazi ke Loco ufuna ndithini? I've had enough.....Look, I'm getting old man. I'll come in on Friday... Don't fucking G me, don't do that. I said I'm done." I had to come up with something that made me not seem as though I was eavesdropping. Me: "honey, I'm done." I bumped into him. he stood up and stared at me. Serious look. Scary look. Did I disturb him? Lakhe: "none of your fucking business." he hung up and smiled. Lakhe: "I see your hands are full. Ndizofumana a fashion show endlini." Me: "I'm hungry." Lakhe: "of course. Its just....the restaurants here are a bit...." Me: "a bit what?" Lakhe: "a bit stale." Me: "what do you suggest then?" Lakhe: "anything you want my lady." Me: "then you cook." Lakhe: "I'd be glad to." he called up the Uber and we went back to his house. He placed all our shopping bags in the bedroom. Me: "ina ke. Enkosi." I gave him back his card. Lakhe: "keep it. whatever you need, use it." Me: "I have my own money." Lakhe: "I know. But just

keep it." Me: "but I dont-" Lakhe: "do you always have to fight me? Love, Keep it. Okay?" I nodded. He walked to the kitchen and started preparing our dinner. Me: "do you need help?" Lakhe: "ewe babes, if you could sit down and stare at me. That would be great." Me: "sit where? You have no fum-" he picked me up and placed me on the counter while I giggled uncontrollably. Lakhe: "there." Me: "uyathanda upheka ne?" Lakhe: "ndithanda ukonwabisa wena more. I'm just going to make something quick." Me: "make pizza." he smiled. Lakhe: "okay." he took out the dough from the fridge. Lakhe: "any favorite toppings?" Me: "lots of cheese and pepperoni." Lakhe: "nice." he prepared the pizza while the oven pre-heated. Lakhe: "so I thought, I'd get you something for putting up with me today." Me: "another present?" Lakhe: "this is the first nje." he put the pizza in the oven and set a timer. Me: "so your credit card is just paying me to keep you company?" he smiled. Lakhe: "maybe." he came around to me and kissed my chin. Me: "so..." Lakhe: "you'll get it...tell me...why ungandithembi?" Me: "because, I just don't. You're my ex's best friend even." Lakhe: "okay. I want you to know that I don't want to hurt you. Secondly, ingenaphi eyoba ndiyi tshomi ka Simphiwe? Worse ude um'upgrader umse kwi premium uthi Best friend." I rolled my eyes. Lakhe: "I'll never do you like that. Look at me." I looked at him. Our eyes locked into a

strong gaze. Lakhe: "I'm not going to hurt you." Me: "awuthakathi Phof?" he smiled. Lakhe: "mxim." he kissed my lips...this is why I asked if akathakathi. When I was staring at him all I wanted to do was kiss him. Wrap him around my body. Lakhe: "uzolala?" Me: "I have work tomorrow. Khandiye today and izolo." Lakhe: "so?" Me: "Summerstrand is moons away, funeke ndivuke ngentseni ndiye pha ndiphinde ndiye msebenzini?" Lakhe: "for the last time kaloku. Then you can move in here." Me: "uzama ukwenza ntoni?" Lakhe: "nothing." Me: "I said I'll think about it." Lakhe: "There's plenty of space here." Me: "hm...I'll tell you ngomso." Lakhe: "great. How about undibonise ke impahla oyithengileyo. I hope There's underwear." I laughed. Me: "aren't you just nasty. Khasuke." I went to the bedroom and fitted on my clothes, showing him every outfit. Lakhe: "its beautiful baby...so ayikho lingerie for real?" Me: "no..." Lakhe: "I bought you wine." Me: "haha! Is that your bait?" he smiled. Lakhe: "cela ubona kaloku." he sulked. Me: "just a peek." I took off my clothing. One by one. Turning around in a circle until I faced him again. I could see his little buddy was standing at attention. Lakhe: "you look stunning." his voice a bit low. Lakhe: "but There's a problem with the... Turn around babe." I turned my back to him. Lakhe: "its just the..." my bra snapped off and fell on the floor. I felt so shy. Lakhe: "and then..." he whispered in my ear with his right hand holding my breast. Lakhe: "loosen a bit of tension here.." his left hand slowly moving with the tip of his fingers around my body to the front. Lakhe: "this area also needs a bit of attention." he kissed my ear while his fingers slid into my panty and found the clitoris. I couldn't speak. Me: "La-" Lakhe: "shhhh.....I got you." I touched the hand that still held my breast gently. The other was rubbing softly in between me. Me: "justI...." Lakhe: "relax baby." Me: "I want to climax." I moaned. Lakhe: "hayi baby...so quickly." Me: "faster." he stopped and walked away. Me: "Lakhe?" he pressed something on the oven and came back to me in full force. Dragging me against the wall. He kissed my lips and neck then kneeled before me. My panties were off. He lifted my leg and hung it on his shoulder. Soft, gentle kisses were placed on my thighs and finally without warning he began sucking on the clit. His tongue flipping back and forth making me scream!! Me: "Lakhe!!!" he lifted the leg higher holding it up and went at it. Ohhh it felt sooo dammmnn goodddd! Me: "don't stop baby! Oooooohhh!!!" my legs were shaking, and something was moving inside of me. Me: "Lakhe...." I held on to his head. Me: "babbbby!!" he held on me tighter and I finally

climaxed on his face. I breathed slowly and he stopped, staring up at me. his face was dripping wet. A slow naughty smile crept up on his face. Lakhe: "oko wawunxibe la jumpusit yamajoniI've wanted to do this." Me: "unezimanga." he stood up. Lakhe: "dinner is served." then kissed me. I was

naked in the middle of the empty lounge. He took off his t shirt and fitted it in my head with arms. Lakhe: "ima apha." he left and came back with a towel and slippers. Wandisula. Lakhe: "time for you to eat, uvase sizoyolala. And by ulala I mean more of this." he kissed my lips. Me: "can't we skip dinner?" Lakhe: "no." serious look again. He held my hand to the kitchen wakhupha the finished pizza and placed slices on our plates. Wayikhupha nyani i-wine yam and poured me a glass. We ate our dinner and talked for a while. I haven't felt that light in forever. The oral was just new to me kuba ibingeyonto yenzekayo with Simphiwe. Now this new thing made me excited and I just want more. After our dinner I almost ran to the bathroom. Umntu wabe ephole engqondweni. Lakhe: "no shower. We're bathing baby. Ungxamele phi?" ukuba ebesazi indlela endimbawela ngayo. We sat in the bath together and before I knew it I felt something literally vibrated beneath me. Me: "what the fuck is that?" Lakhe: "just relax baby. The bath has 16 pulsating jets and its floor vibrates with something called Swedish release." Me: "that is intense." Lakhe: "just listen to it." Me: "this is getting me drunk." Lakhe: "its getting you to relax." he held me in his arms. Me: "what's your full name." Lakhe: "Masilakhe. But you can call me Lam." Me: "aww." I giggled. Me: "how come you're single? Everything you do is...amazing. You're attractive...rich...sweet...good God your tongue game is out of this world...so why are you single. What's wrong?" Lakhe: "I'm not a relationship person." Me: "hm...so you're using me?" Lakhe: "no babes. You're ..." Me: "its okay...everyone uses me kakade. Caba ndiyindawo yonyela. Its okay though." Lakhe: "you're officially drunk now." Me: "but andixoki. You can use me all you want wena....at least your sex is satisfying." Lakhe: "I haven't even fucked you yet. What if ndinencanca eshotayo?" Me: "ndizay'lenca kaloku ayisecace." he laughed. Me: "if we not in a relationship then what are we doing? I'm unclear." Lakhe: "we chilling nana." Me: "chilling?" he stuck his finger in my mouth. Lakhe: "shhhh." Me: "thetha.." Lakhe: "I'm trying to get you to relax yazi." I stopped right there and sat still. I was afraid of the tone of his voice. I don't know what it was about it but jonga it shook me qha. After our bath we got out ndasulwa and led to the bedroom. He took out lotion and started massaging my back then onto my ass and thighs. Down my legs and to my feet. Wandirabha kamandi. I was so sleepy and dizzy. Not sure if it was the bath and Swedish nton nton or the wine. Kodwa bendiziva kamandi. His hands were coming up again to my thighs. Lakhe: "phakamisa umzantsi Kancinci." I lifted up and placed a pillow under me. He opened my legs and sat in between them. I knew better than to question him. His hands freely roamed over my legs and squeezed my ass. I was perfectly comfortable and sleepy. Out of nowhere I felt him penetrate my pussy with a finger, it went deep inside. He pulled it out and went in again. Pacing faster. His thumb

massaged the entrance of my butt and I held onto the sheets. Me: "Lakhe..." I breathed into a pillow. He went on and spanked my ass. Ndaminda into the pillow below only to arouse my clit. Me: "baby.....again..." I whispered ashamed of myself. Where had my morals vacated to? He spanked me again ndaphinda ndaminca. Sensationalizing my clitoris. Me: "faster!!" he did it again and again then stopped. Lakhe: "baby?" Me: "please don't stop.." Lakhe: "please forgive me..." Me: "wha-" he penetrated deep inside of me. Lakhe: "ohhh....yesss..." and he pounded on me. I bit into the pillow. He held me tight and thrust through harder. Me: "Lakhe!!!" I could barely move. Lakhe: "ahhhh!!" he crushed into me one more time and stopped. Lakhe: "I'm soo sorry." he breathed. I couldn't speak.

He pulled out and out came the liquid from me. Lakhe: "baby?" Me: "what happened?" Lakhe: "I don't know..." Me: "no, please explain because my pussy is throbbing." Lakhe: "the view baby....it was the view. Your ass. Your moans. the little squirts....yuuuh. I just lost control of the situation. I needed uba ngaphakathi qha." I turned around and lay on my back. Me: "u-dangerous shame." Lakhe: "xolo baby." he kissed the neck. Lakhe: "ndiyaxolisa vha..." he was climbing on top of me again. Me: "awuxolisi tu...nako uphinda." Lakhe: "emnandi iyaphindwa nje." Me: "but you're-" he entered me again. Lakhe: "I'll be gentle I promise.." he said kissing my lips. My thighs already shaking. Me: "love....khayibambe apho vha." it felt like it was itching a hard to reach spot. He kissed my lips while stroking in and out. That made me come closer to my orgasm. He kept staring at me and kissing me. Me: "baby..." Lakhe: "hm." he kissed my lips. Me: "I'm almost there." Lakhe: "ndilinde kaloku baby.." he groaned. Me: "but baby..." I cried. He went faster. I clawed onto his back biting his shoulder he drove faster. I kissed his neck feeling my orgasm closer again. I opened my legs wider..... finally.... Me: "yesss!!" he kept going and finally it dropped. I melted underneath him and he stopped. We were wrapped in each other's arms. I was sleepy and wanted to go at it right that second. I just didn't want to let go. That was the best sex I've had in my lifeand I was becoming suspicious. Something wasn't right here. Everything was too much on point. He was perfect. Why? He got up and went to fetch a towel. Lakhe: "wachama ebhedini omnye umbala." I smiled just for entertainment. then he wiped himself. Me: "iphi condom?" Lakhe: "I don't have babe." Me: "we didn't use it?" Lakhe: "no." Me: "Masilakhe. You did-" Lakhe: "babe. There's no big deal. Sizothenga morning after pill Ksasa." Me: "and what about disea-" his facial expression changed. Lakhe: "uzam'ukuthi ndine Aids Siphosenkosi?" that was the first time I've heard him call out my full name and that voice convinced me he was officially pissed off. Me: "no, not you...not i-AIDS. I'm just saying. Sobabini we

don't know-" Lakhe: "I KNOW that andina AIDS mna. Do you?" Me: "uhm...I.."
Lakhe: "I ntoni? Une AIDS wena?" Me: "no." I squirmed like a little mouse.
Lakhe: "kengoku ingxaki iphi?" I was shaking from head to toe. I couldn't keep quiet about my health. I was scared. Why was he so defensive? Me: "I just felt you should have asked me beforehand. Its not an ideal conversation to have right after uve kamandi but I'm concerned about my health and yours. So xandibuza its not accusations. Nam I'm to blame. Ndaziphi njebe ndihlel kulandlu being faithful Simphiwe undiphathela Std after Std and I don't even know. I'm just saying....we should be more careful." Lakhe: "then masiyo tester ngomso, usele uhlaba kuphele ingxoxo. We'll go to your preferred doctor and have all tests done qha." Me: "thank you." he got into bed. Me: "suqumba kaloku." Lakhe: "andiqumbanga." Me: "then why unje about this topic?" Lakhe: "can you just fucking drop it?!" it felt like a knife was stabbed straight into my heart and twisted and turned. Only I wasn't dying. It felt so much worse. I've never felt so dirty even on my worst day. It was cold under the blankets and I held back my tears. How could I have been so utterly stupid? Dumi utshilo clearly and I didn't listen to him. Lonto Lakhe didn't bother wasting time. Uye wa-naar ndim immediately after sex. I closed my eyes waiting for morning to dawn and the alcohol to level down in my system. I couldn't drive in this state. I would most likely break down and crash my car killing myself. And I wouldn't mind. I don't know what was keeping me alive anymore.

Chapter 5

I heard the sound of birds chirping, light in the room. Morning had come. I got out of bed and starting picking up my clothes. Mr Man wasn't in bed. I don't know where the hell he was and I was glad bendibawela abuye sendemkayo. I put on my clothes, ezi bendize ngazo. He could keep the ones he bought. Everything ebisithi mna I took. What was missing was my car keys. I don't remember where I put them and what frustrated me was that i-empty Le shit yendlu so they should be bloody visible! I went through the kitchen, the bedroom. Everywhere. Dololo Piglet keys sana. "Good morning baby. What are you doing?" he appeared at the door way. Me: "leaving." Lakhe: "without saying goodbye? I thought I'd feed the ducks while you were asleep, awubawel uzothi hi kubo? Zanno is giving me problems today, akafun ukutya. I'll make breakfast." I ignored him nokok'loqa kwakhe and looked through the bags of clothing ndade ndasifumana. Lakhe: "Spho." I looked at him. Lakhe: "kwenzeka ntoni ngoku? Why am I being ignored?" Me: "look, I was stupid to let you in. Letting you convince me you were different. Last night you showed me your true character. Xa undonyanya kangaka after being concerned for the both of us, I won't be in your life any longer. Don't

call me. Don't text me. You can go back to your stupid friend umxelele you fucked me. I don't care. Just get out of my life." Lakhe: "Spho. Yima. Baby you don't unders-" Me: "Suka phambi kwam Masilakhe!" Lakhe: "wait!! Spho, can you just listen to me!" he held my arms and I bit him. Lakhe: "ouch!!!" he let go. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi!!" I ran out the door to my car and drove away. I was a coin away from breaking down. I couldn't do this here. I put on some radio and listened to Metro before I got to the hotel my phone rang. Me: "hello." H: "please tell me you're coming in today-" Me: "I'm on my way H, just give me 45 minutes." H: "okay. We'll talk when you're here." I got to my room and showered quickly ndanxiba. I tied my hair up. Slapping a little make up on and I went to the office. Just as I parked, there was a crowd of people. Carrying cameras and recorders. What was happening? I hurried inside ndaya kwi office ka Harold. H: "finally. How are you today?" Me: "I'm fine. What's happening outside?" H: "I don't know. Our PR just upped and left. A lot of people are quitting Spho. I feel like I'm sinking." Me: "why are they quitting?" H: "they're afraid they will lose their jobs. When people hear mergers they think retrenchment. Which is probably true but not in this case. Please hun. Call them, hold a meeting and explain what is happening. The new CEO wants to meet me in an hour. Our CFO is also nowhere to be found and I can't begin to explain what that is doing to the rest of our accounts." Me: "I'll sort it out." I went to my office and started on a job that wasn't even mine. With the list I was given by Harold, I tracked down my colleagues and then went out to meet with four of them. By the time I was back in the office it was after lunch time. My landline rang. I answered. Me: "Good day, you're calling Spho at G-com, how can i-" Zingi: "start by explaining unyamalele phi and why phone yakho i-off! We thought you were dead! Simphiwe Uhleli ne nkazana esileyo endlinakho!! Where are you?" Me: "my phone probably died, but I'm alive....and...I broke up with him." my focus was simply on my work today, I couldn't think about my love life at all because it simply did not exist. I instantly had flashbacks of last night. That man's sex was oxygen. Spho, Focus. Zingi: "oh sweetie. Kwathini ungatsho? Uphi kengoku? Uhlala phi?" Me: "I'm at a hotel. Looking into a new place." Zingi: "ungazi apha nje? We have plenty of room." Me: "no babe. I'm good." Zingi: "hayi man Spho! Utheni na." Me: "please don't insist. I'm not in the mood to be around anyone. So ndiyakcela." Zingi: "oh ok." Me: "I have to go. I'm a bit

busy. Ku-hectic emsebenzin." Zingi: "alright. Goodbye then." I hung up. It was only after 6 when I finished my work. I got up and left the office, driving back to the hotel. I just wanted to sleep. The minute I got to my room I took off everything and snuck into my bed and I dozed off. It felt like a few minutes later when I was woken up by a knock on my door. Nobody bloody knew

where I was so who was it? I looked through the small peep hole. Room service. I opened. Me: "yes?" the lady rolled the tray in. Me: "I didn't order anything." she smiled. Lady: "one of my bosses insisted." and she walked out. Andazi noba bendisozela okanye. I went back to bed and slept. Days later, it was Sunday morning I woke up and packed all my belongings. I'd found a flat on Friday and was moving in today. It was in Humewood and far from all I knew. All I had was my bags anyway. I bought a bed which was already delivered and had to buy a sheet and duvet. Now, I was running low on funds. I couldn't spend anymore on luxury, bekuzofuneka ndibe basic for a few more days and lay off the alcohol, which was probably a good idea, given that I was to meet my new boss and have to put up a front of good work for him. It was almost month end anyway I'd survive till then. After I'd moved everything of mine in I sat in my new living room. Only Zingi noDumi knew ndihlala phi. And as if on cue, I heard a knock on my door. I opened for them bangena with a green bean bag and flopped it on my floor. Zingi: "at least you have something to sit on." I smiled. Me: "this is so cute. Enkosi." Zingi: "so ...uziva njani ngoku?" Me: "one puzzle at a time. I'm happy I finally got a place. Now I just need to focus back on umsebenzi. I missed too much this week. Worse ukuba that new boss is starting ngomso." I did not dare tell them about the Lakhe saga. I didn't feel like any more pity. Already bendisenziwa umntana. Being called every day to make sure I didn't commit suicide. It was bad enough. Zingi: "did you google him?" Me: "why would I want to do that?" I picked at the packet of chips in my hand and chewed. Dumi: "as we speak." he clicked on his Note 5. Me: "why? Ndizom'bona mos ngomso." Zingi: "aren't you curious? I am. Did you find anything babe?" Dumi: "nope. Not even Google knows. Ithetha nge merger qha. No new bosses appointed." Zingi: "what if its still Harold? Maybe they changed their minds!" I started to get excited again. Is this why Harold's been in a lovely mood lately? Me: "I hope and pray its him! We worked so well this week together, it would be a great business relationship." Dumi: "okay. We have lunch reservations my ladies, if you may ..." he opened the door for us saphuma. On our way to the car I bumped my breast with my wrist while trying to reach for my hair. My nipple almost stung. Me: "alisebhlungu bele lam." Zingi: "utheni? Periods?" Me: "they're due some time this week. But Kuthen ezoba sensitive kangaka amabele am?" Zingi: "it happens sometimes...its not like you have sex anymore." Me: "I trust you to keep pointing that out." she giggled. We drove to our spot for lunch satya and had a few drinks. I went home around 5. feeling a bit crampy on the tummy. I started at the toilet ndachama. My period had started. Almost a week early. I looked for my tampons ndafaka enye ndayolala... I was up by 4am. I started reading the news on the net then went on Facebook. I hadn't been online for a while. In my newsfeed,

while scrolling, I stumbled upon Simphiwe's latest picture. The caption: "She said Yes! My wife to be.. Thank you God." it was a picture of the mother of his child and him. Her left hand visible with the ring on it. Ndakhubeka umphefumlo. All over again. It clearly didn't matter to him Yonke into endamenzela yona, why should it matter to me. Ndayenza ndimthanda at the end of the day and he chose another woman to be his wife. I was drowning in heart ache ingathi nditshizwa ngetyuwa engxebeni. I got up ndayovasa and looked for clothing afterwards. I found a red tight fitting dress that was long sleeve and had a tiny turtle neck. I wore my Christian Louboutin

nude heels. Pushed back my hair and wore make up. I made my bed then went to fetch my bag ndaphuma endlini by 6:30am. I drove to work, going inside my office and setting up my desk. At 7:30 Harold arrived. And the rest of the staff. I was in a foul bitter mood but I need to put on big girl panties and work. H: "Spho." I looked up at the door. H: "your new boss is here." I smiled at him. Me: "cut the act Harold." H: "I'm serious." he laughed. H: "come meet him. He's in my office. You look absolutely stunning by the way, is that a new perfume?" Me: "uyadika yazi. Yes. It is." H: "smells like heaven." I got up and followed him. I know he was pulling my leg. He wasn't going anywhere. Ebethe akazobakho apha xa kufika omtsha but he was here. Me: "H, stop playing." I smiled. he stood at the door of his office. H: "introducing Mr Sobukwe." I went inside the office. When I saw him I almost choked on saliva. I couldn't breath. Ndaske ndabila ikhwapha immediately. Did my prayers not reach heaven gates? Is this a joke? What date is it today? H: "Spho?" he sat me down. H: "oh God, what's happening now?" he waved a file at my face for air. Me: "I'm fine.." H: "oh...good. Wooh, that was close. Anyway, Mr S, this is our favorite lady. Our new Managing Director." Lakhe: "lovely to meet you Miss." I stared at his extended hand with disgust. As if it didn't get any worse.....

Chapter 6

Harold left us alone in the office. Me: "No." I paced up and down like the psycho I was starting to become. Lakhe: "babe...I don't understand what made you leave me olahlobo. I thought we had a great time." I stared at him. Uphilile guys lomfana? Has someone ever sounded sooo convincing, you began wondering if nguwe lo ubene mistake okanye mhlawmbi you didn't understand what was said, or you probably did little to heal the broken. Man, have you ever felt that way? Me: "firstly, I'm not your babe. Secondly, you were the one who showed me leopard spots right after we had sex!!! You knew I worked here! You just wanted to make it difficult for me! As if wena nala ndrwantyu yetshomakho haven't done enough damage to my emotions, you want to rule my work life too?! What kind of man are you?" all

this time I was ranting and raving, he just sat on the desk and listened intently without a sound. Me: "I QUIT. I'm not going to work for you! You can give your promotion to Harold! I, Siphosenkosi Ngudla wase Humewood (because I mean really....it needed to be said.) am out." I turned on my heel. Before I reached the door, he grabbed me and pulled me close to him and kissed my lips. How I missed these lips. I had to push him away because I was getting dizzy and hypnotized. Lakhe: "I never meant to scare you away. Andifuni undishiye Spho..." Me: "after the way you treated me that night???" nanko unonyembezi. Lakhe: "what you said brought back hurtful memories." Me: "bendizoyazi njani lonto? How am I supposed to know anything if awuthethi nam?" now I was getting confused. Hurtful memories? Lakhe: "I'm an adopted child... Ndashiywa ngumamam ndina 7 with no form of education, no relatives and no chance of survival. I was left alone with her dead body in our shack for 3 days before I got any help. Ndathathwa zii-social workers that were called to my case and I was put in foster care. Everyone knew my story. Then, it was a taboo topic. They knew my mother had i-AIDS and I was teased about it for months on end. I had no friends, nobody wanted to come near me. Ibingathi ndizobosulela ngeloxesha andinanto mna. I was being emotionally abused by my mother's faults. I don't even think it was her fault, its never your intention to contract the disease. Things happen-" Me: "Lakhe.." Lakhe: "no, you want the truth, you need to be able to bear with it all." Me: "I can't." Lakhe: "then how do you expect me to? I lost my way of speaking with you but I never meant to hurt you at all. I'm sorry Spho." I looked away. Lakhe: "please? I miss you." I was being the emotional weakling again. With tears in my eyes and ready for action. He pulled my face by my chin with his hand. Lakhe: "ndicela undixolele." Me: "you never called me once. Or even sent an email to explain." Lakhe: "I had to go somewhere...I made sure to send dinner every night to your room. Ndiyakwazi how much you like eating. I couldn't risk sending lunch here, it would reveal my secret." Me: "how did you know my room?" Lakhe: "I partly own the hotel love." Me: "stalker." he smiled finally. Me: "I found a flat in Humewood." Lakhe: "I heard, ngoku undiqhwabela ithanga. Usisi wase Humewood. Andizofumana invite for dinner?" Me: "no." Lakhe: "aww...well I'll have you know, my winery has arrived, so has my furniture...you're also not invited." I smiled. Me: "I'm inviting myself. That's our house now." Lakhe: "seriously send me address yakho ndizoyazi ukuba uzifihla phi when you run away from me." Me: "No." Lakhe: "fine. I'll find it myself and God forbid when I do." Me: "good luck with that." he kissed my lips. Lakhe: "congratulations on your promotion to MD. Le ufuna uphisa ngayo ke phof." he kissed me again. Me: "that counts as sexual harassment ke apha." Lakhe: "might as well have you on my new desk right now, sibenento yoxoxa ku

mantyi." My insides screamed for him. Konwaba intliziyo. Me: "I can't...I'm on my period." Lakhe: "oh

that sucks...yilento mos ndiphantse ubulawa nge cephe." Me: "uzuhlekise. I have work to do." Lakhe: "let me make you dinner tonight...your place." Me: "okay. Wear something sexy." he smiled and kissed my forehead. Lakhe: "I will. Let me watch your ass while you walk out." I laughed and catwalked out his office. When I reached mine, I shook my head. Where do my morals escape to when he's around? I feel like a teenager going through stages. I even smelt like him. Heee, ubhuti wamadada.

Later that day. Lakhe arrived at my place with a plastic from Pick n Pay. He was dressed casually. G star jeans, a black t shirt and black Adidas Tubular sneakers. Me: "you might need this. Andiyazi usiza uskimile nje." I wrapped my apron on him and he started cooking. Lakhe: "enkosi baby." Me: "awufun uncedo?" Lakhe: "I'm not into men." I laughed. Me: "i'll be on the bean bag then." I went to relax and stretch. Lakhe: "baby funeke undikhumbuze to order furniture online vha." Me: "I thought you already had." Lakhe: "no, for apha babes." Me: "I already have it chosen." Lakhe: "oh? Ifika nin." Me: "in 7 days." Lakhe: "you could say awufuni qha instead of lying to me, you know that right?" Me: "you're too persistent." Lakhe: "is it so bad xa ndifuna only the best for umntuwam?" Whatever do you mean now? Khange athi we just chilling? Before I could respond to that statement there was a knock on our door. Lakhe: "hlala phantsi. I got this. You need to relax." he went to open the door. His whole body blocked the view and ebemde ubhuti wakho. I tried peeping under his bracket legs. I saw four pairs of feet. Male formal shoes. Female stilletos. Those are Louboutins. Both of them. The stilettoes matched mine. Has to be Zingi and Dumi. Lakhe: "Hello, can I help you?" Zingi: "hi. Sizeku bhabha. She home?" Lakhe: "ubhabha? There's no baby here." Dumi: "obviously a new flame." they giggled. Lakhe: "excuse me?" Zingi: "uSpho? Is she home?" Lakhe: "oh yes. She's resting." Zingi: "sicela usivulele simbone ke bhuti. That's why we're here." Lakhe: "of course." he opened the door. Me: "hi guys!" Zingi: "hey sweetie. We thought uyabawela ukuya eGinger for dinner. We didn't know you had a guest. Who is he?" Me: "uhm..." Zingi: "hi Uhm. Nice to meet you." Lakhe: "Lakhe. Is my name." he said as he chopped finely. Zingi: "oh...wow. Erh...well then...nice to officially meet you." Lakhe: "first time." Zingi: "excuse me?" Lakhe: "you said officially meet me, I've never met or seen you before unless You've spoken about me nobhabha." Zingi: "I...well..." I shook my head signaling for her to stop talking. Lakhe: "like you're doing now just without words." Dumi: "its like he has eyes on the back of his head." he whispered. Lakhe turned around with a sweet smile on his face. Lakhe: "I just wanted to prepare a nice dinner for my lady. She had a long hard working

day and she deserves to have her food on time, her bath run and her feet massaged until she's asleep. I'm sorry if I seemed a bit unwelcoming." Zingi: "awww. That's okay. Sorry for being pests, we're leaving you love birds alone." Lakhe: "bye." Me: "you don't have to go. Babe...its a chance to get to know my friends." Zingi: "no, no hun...that will come another day...you two.....have some love and catching up to do." she giggled. Me: "I'm not following." Dumi: "I think it would be nice if we stayed and got to know Lakhe." Zingi: "love, its rude." Lakhe: "its okay. I've prepared enough food. Stay." he turned around and went back to his cooking without another word. I had a feeling that he didn't want anyone around him. No friends. Nothing. He wasn't, cold per say...just....distant. Dumi: "so...Lakhe. What do you do." Lakhe: "what do I do where." his eyes focused on his task. Dumi: "your line of work." Lakhe: "I'm the new CEO of Golden-Cell. By profession, I'm a qualified architect, IT technician, and a chef." after a dead silence, he put down the knife and stared at him. Lakhe: "You?" Dumi: "an advocate." Lakhe: "that's cute." he went back

to the knife and washed his utensils in the sink. My heart sank. Zingi: "uhm...so, how's work babe?" Me: "its great. I've been promoted to MD!" Zingi: "oh that's wonderful!" we hugged. Zingi: "ubumfownele umamakho?" Me: "no.." Zingi: "why not? At least check on her." Me: "she's fine." Zingi: "please?" Me: "ngomso. I'll call her." after almost an hour of chatting, wathetha ubhut bae. Lakhe: "dinner will be ready in just 10 minutes." Me: "he's a good cook." Dumi: "is it... plus a good architect and a good IT technician. And, and, and...." he sighed. Dumi: "how is that even possible." Lakhe: "I believe if you go to a real university and study real subjects." Dumi: "oh but, thats awfully a lot of subjects for one human being. How old are you?" Lakhe: "would you like your food breathing hot or corpse cold?" Me: "Lakhe." Lakhe: "it was meant to be a joke." Dumi: "you should have been a mortician." Lakhe: "I took the course, just didn't end well." Dumi: "Zingi...get your bag." Lakhe: "I'm just about to serve dinner." Dumi: "its clear you don't want us here." Lakhe: "I said no such thing." Dumi: "you didn't have to. your actions imply that. Your responses also indicate you're hiding something." Lakhe: "what a good lawyer. For real, stay." Dumi: "we're leaving straight after dinner." Lakhe: "whichever tickles your ears Dumz. Is it okay if I call you Dumz? Dumzet, Dud'latey, Duba-dub-dub." Zingi and I chuckled. Dumi: "Dumisani." Lakhe: "hm." he dished up and brought us our food. Lakhe: "enjoy." we started eating our meal. Zingi: "wow! Lakhe...this is delicious." Lakhe: "thank you Zinglet." she blushed. Zingi: "how is the steak so tender on the inside yet tasty and juicy?" Lakhe: "its a secret. Maybe I'll show you one day." she smiled. Lakhe: "Dumi, you enjoying the food?" Dumi: "its fine." Lakhe: "thanks Dumadumdum.." I almost choked on my food. Zingi: "is

there dessert?" Lakhe: "definitely. I have some ice cream and strawberries if you give me 10 minutes, I'll whip up a chocolate syrup real qu-" Dumis: "no...we have to go now. Unfortunately." Lakhe: "oh. Bye then." Me: "let me walk you guys out. Ndiyabuya Lakhe." he collected the plates and I walked my friends out. Me: "I'm sorry. He's a bit of a nut." Zingi: "I think he's sweet. And funny...and his food is Amazing!" Dumis: "I don't trust him. Something isn't right." Me: "I thought so too but he had a rough upbringing. He doesn't like being around people a lot. I think its the second time he's avoided being with a group." Dumis: "second time? He's clearly hiding something and wena Spho are too blindly in love to see it!" Me: "if you're upset about him teasing you, he was just trying to be nicer. He's not your normal, easy going guy. Its difficult for him to interact." Dumis: "I just hope you know who you're sleeping with." he got in his car and slammed the door. Zingi: "I'll call you later." I hugged her and went back up to the flat. Lakhe was washing dishes. Lakhe: "hey beautiful." Me: "am I your girlfriend?" he looked at me and dried his hands. Lakhe: "what?" Me: "I wasn't stuttering. Are we in a relationship or not? Are you my boyfriend? Or what? I'm unclear." Lakhe: "now? I thought we-" Me: "thought we what? what do you feel? How do feel about me?" he just blinked and stared at me. Me: "you're not gonna say anything Lakhe? Really?" Lakhe: "I'm not sure what to say. You're already upset, if ndithetha lento uyifunayo uzothi ndiyaxoka and get angry, if I am honest with you and tell you what I feel uzocimba ndiyaxoka again then whichever answer you get you're going to turn it against me and assume I'm using you for some odd reason." Me: "Wow. Sow'gqibile undiphendula Lakhe." I went to take a shower. I knew he didn't want me to at night, I was doing it to get a reaction out of him. Dololo sana. I got into bed and covered myself ndiqumbe ndinjalo. It was about 30 minutes later, I was getting really sleepy by then. My eyes were closed and my breathing was lighter. Lakhe: "I love each and every minute I spend with you. You bring light into my dark soul...I feel my heart when I see you. I can feel it for the first time...I just don't know how. You make me happy without even trying to. Just seeing you is enough

for me. That's why ndifuna ukonwabisa...that's how I feel about you." I dragged my eyes open and looked around. The room was dark. He wasn't here. I sat up straight immediately frightened. I already missed him. Me: "baby?" just like that. He was gone.....

Chapter 7

Again, I'd barely slept a wink. I got up early to have a shower. My period had stopped. The tampon was clean. Which didn't make much sense at first but I remembered its probably because ndiyeke uhlaba recently so my periods

were irregular. I took out some clothes to wear. I didn't know what exactly to wear. To be honest, I was distracted by what happened last night. How could he just leave me like that? I took out my black umbrella skirt and a fitted white shirt ndanxiba. Looking through my shoe bag, I found my Balmain stilettos. When I was done with everything, my phone beeped a message. I checked it: 'Good morning angel. Best part of my day is to watch you come into the office. Wear my favorite smile.' Me: "mxim." I walked out the flat to my car. I drove to work figuring out a dialogue of what I'm to say when I see him. I got to my office just after 7am. To my surprise. Everyone was here. I suddenly felt late. Was my watch wrong. I went to our receptionist. Me: "Bianca." B: "hey Spho. How are you this morning?" Me: "I'm good. How are you? And the baby?" she was 5 months pregnant and super excited. Not mentioning the baby was a sure way of getting attitude from her. B: "we're doing so well! You know he kicks so much but here at the office, he's so quiet and disciplined." Me: "that's so sweet. So why is everyone here so early?" B: "oh. Its one of the new orders the new boss gave. We have to check in at the office at 7am. Monday to Friday and knock off at 3. I think its great." Me: "Check in?" B: "oh yes. Sign here. And the exact time you're in the door." what the fuck is this? High school? Me: "why?" B: "well, yesterday, about 8 people didn't show up on time. Everyone comes in whenever they want." Me: "but their work is always complete and up to standard." B: "well...its what the boss ordered." Me: "I'm not signing this shit." yep, dialogue sorted. I stormed to his office. It was wide open with a contractor working there. Me: "Give us a minute." the guy got up and walked out. Lakhe: "ahh. My lov-" I closed the door. Me: "what are you doing?" Lakhe: "you didn't return my text." Me: "you make us sign registers? This isn't high school Masilakhe!" Lakhe: "you don't even say good morning." Me: "everyone in this office does their work properly and on time! Why do you need to pressure them like this!" he just looked at me biting his lip. Lakhe: "are you done?" Me: "Answer me." Lakhe: "firstly, punctuality is professionalism. It is the key to great business. It screams responsibility and diligence. People take you seriously when you're at work on time. Your boss takes you seriously when you're at work on time. You work more. You work harder. And smarter. Isn't that how you got your promotion? I make it MY business to build every individual in this office to their full potential. Which means grooming them to their best purposes and ensuring them a way to better themselves. Whether we have room for more management or to open a new branch. I don't work with sloths. I don't like dead weight. Every week I need a report of every one of the people who work in your team and or report to you. I want to see progress. Every Friday, you and I. We have a meeting at 3. Now if you'll excuse me. I have a company to run." I lost the argument. I was now being dismissed. Me: "why did you leave me alone last

night? Where did you go? Without saying anything." pulling out a classic 'Blame it on him' girlfriend move. He needed to be wrong one way or another. He had to be. Lakhe: "please close the door on your way out." he sat in his desk without so much as a look in my direction. Yuuuh andatyhafa. I walked out with my tail in between my legs straight to my office and closed the door. I started on my work. He had just given me another pile of work to top it all off. It was already Tuesday. I had my own work and the reports to finish by Friday. God, I just wanted to kill him right there! How dare he? Without another second to spare I started

working immediately. With my work here at the office, at home would be the reports. I had to monitor my team day in, day out. By lunch time I was almost done, just had one more meeting and I was ready for home. I didn't need to have lunch. I was going to get home, take off all my clothes, make myself food ndihlale on my bed naked and eating while watching a series. I wanted this so bad, I was excited as hell. I walked to Boardroom A to set up my meeting and my client arrived just in time. We greeted. Me: "if we may have a seat and begin." we sat down. The door opened again and in popped Mr Sobukwe like a bubble in the air. I felt bile working up inside me. Me: "Mr S, can I help?" I tried a smile. A.a, didn't work. Lakhe: "I hope you haven't started yet. I thought I'd sit in. Good day Mr Hamilton, I'm Mr Sobukwe. The new CEO." I swallowed my anger and continued with my meeting which was being hijacked right before my eyes.

I was home at 6 in the evening because I had to finish the first two reports. I locked my flat and flopped on the bed ndibawela ulila. I had a perfect afternoon planned. It was ruined! I was dead tired. Having to drag myself up to the bathroom and run a bath was no joke. Finally I sat in the warm water, scrubbing myself. When I was done bathing, I got out to dry up. Wrapping the towel around my body. There was a knock on my door. I peeped. It was him. He knocked again. I opened. Me: "what do you want?" Lakhe: "why do you treat me like this Sphosenkosi? Why am I such an enemy to you? You're always fighting me and I'm always trying to make you happy. Does that even make sense? What do I do wrong?" Me: "You have anger issues. You ridicule my friends. You refuse to answer my question until I fall asleep. Then you disappear. Then you dismiss me in the office." Lakhe: "babe. I didn't ridicule your friend. He just doesn't like me. You caught me off guard. When you got mad, I didn't want to be all up in your face and irritate you so I left. And do you think you're the only person that gets mad? You know....damn it, you can, more than anyone I've EVER known say the most hurtful things to me. I thought it was impossible but yeeyi, sisi. Yuh." Me: "what am I to you?" Lakhe: "there you go again confusing me." Me: "am I your girlfriend or your booty call

!!!" Lakhe: "you're You're my girl. My Girlfriend. I brought you dinner." he held up the plastic nervously. Lakhe: "please." I let him in. Me: "don't disappear again." Lakhe: "I won't. I promise." I took the plastic from him and set up the plates. Lakhe: "I'm thinking of buying the building. If we up our profits by 15%." Me: "that's impossible." Lakhe: "with you as my MD. I don't think so. If we keep that up, we'll own the building by the time Bianca gives birth." I laughed. Me: "don't bring Bianca in this." he kissed my neck. Lakhe: "maybe...we should have our own." Me: "our own what? Bianca?" I chuckled. Me: "no thanks. She talks too much." Lakhe: "no....our own." Me: "I don't follow." Lakhe: "for an MD. You're quite slow." he nibbled my ear. Lakhe: "our own baby." Me: "don't be ridiculous." I laughed. Me: "we both just got new jobs. HOW would we manage me falling pregnant ? Because you know damn well, I'm not going to be in it alone." Lakhe: "hmm...I can imagine you storming into my office just like you did this morning. Only this time, your big belly would lead the way and of course I'd just melt into your demands...you would be looking so gorgeous carrying my daughter in your womb." he rubbed my tummy. Yazi ebendicapkisa ngoku ndisiva kamandi. I've been wanting to have a baby but I didn't want to have one now because I had a new job. Me: "you really know how to manipulate people don't you?" he turned me around and kissed me. Lakhe: "No, I just like manipulating you." Me: "you really pissed me off today." Lakhe: "so did you. No text. No good morning. No manners. Such shame." Me: "maybe you should punish me then." Lakhe: "ooh...is my private road clear?" Me: "squeaky." he picked me and tossed me on

the bean bag. He pulled my right leg over the other and sat behind me holding it in front of me. Lakhe: "such behavior, deserves such punishment.."
Me: "punis-" he spanked me hard and brushed my skin after. It was stinging.
Me: "I'm sorry." Lakhe: "I beg your pardon?" he stuck his finger inside me, stroking carefully in and out. Me: "baby..." he lifted my leg up some more and opened me wide. Without warning he devoured me. His tongue massaging my clit. I held onto his head. Me: "Lakhee...baby!" he sucked on it for a little while. Me: "baby I'm gonna cum...yima!!" my legs were shaking, and he was going faster then stopped. He pulled me down to his waist and entered himself deep, paralyzing my legs. He pulled it out slowly and went in again gently. Lakhe: "look at me." I stared into his eyes. Me: "ba-" Lakhe: "shhhh..." he breathed. Not breaking our gaze for once. I held on his t shirt pulling him closer and breathing more carefully. He thrust in faster, deeper. Gripped me tighter. I was getting dizzy close to climax. My eyes fluttered. Lakhe: "my love.." he breathed. Those wordselectrified me somewhere. Deeply. Lakhe: "stay with me." he groaned. I wrapped my legs around him. Me: "harder

baby!" he pounded faster. Lakhe: "ooh damn!" I climaxed and melted underneath him. He breathed quicker, his mouth slightly open. Lakhe: "oooh...ohhhh...ahhhh." he stopped and let it all go. He had a hard encrypted look on his face. I wasn't sure if it was fear or pain. Then he closed his eyes getting up. Me: "are you okay?" Lakhe: "after that? Definitely." I took the towel that had once covered my body and wiped myself. Lakhe: "I'll dish for you. You need to eat." Me: "not too much." Lakhe: "enough though. You need your energy." Me: "for what? I'm about to sleep." Lakhe: "oh no you aint. You ran away from me for almost a week. You owe me a couple days' sex." I laughed. Me: "uphambene yazi. I'm sure awuziqondi. But uphambene." Lakhe: "ndiright." my phone rang. Who could that be? I checked my caller I.D. Random 060 number. Lakhe: "who is it?" Me: "don't know." Lakhe: "then answer it." Me: "no. This is my leisure time. I spend it with my boyfriend." Lakhe: "aww. That is so sweet but answer your phone baby. Nam izokhala eyam and I'll have to attend to it." Me: "I don't want to attend to mine though. Its so much admin." he brought the food. Lakhe: "your furniture is getting delivered on Saturday morning." Me: "you didn't have to do that." Lakhe: "I wanted to." he wiped the corner of my mouth. Lakhe: "besides. The only piece of furniture you have has cum all over it." Me: "you're disgusting." I ate my food. When we were done, I got into bed in his arms. Me: "so...how did you end up being CEO." Lakhe: "Its a long story. For another day baby. Today we need to rest." I couldn't help but notice his phone was put face down on the dresser. It was dark so you may be asking 'How you know?' That's because it kept lighting up every few seconds with no sounds. And that usually means its on silent. I waited for him to fall asleep. Which wasn't hard. All I did was play with his beard and tickle his ears. I managed to sneak out his arms and bed. Lakhe: "yaphi..." he groaned. Me: "need to pee baby. Ndiyeza." Lakhe: "hm.." and he carried on snoring. I took his phone and tiptoed to the bathroom, locking it behind me and I looked at it. Obviously password locked. And it only needed four digits. Fuck! What was his birth year? I tried to recall. He never told me. The phone lit up again in my hand without me pressing it. A message was coming in. Went black again. A call came through, it just stared at me quietly. Loco was the name on the caller. Didn't that mean crazy or something? I flushed the toilet and opened the door. To my horror, he was standing at the door staring at me. Lakhe: "uyenzan phone yam?" he whispered.

Chapter 8

Lakhe: "well?" I pressed and faked tears. Trying my best to remember a hurtful memory to support them. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi. You better start talking." Me: "I thought you were cheating." Lakhe: "what?" Me: "I just don't know who to trust

anymore. You disappear, you come back. You face down your phone. I can't take another disappointment Masilakhe. I don't want to invest myself into someone that won't do that to me. I stayed with Simphiwe for 3 damn years pouring all my hard work into his ass and he went on to marry another woman. I cannot go through that shit again. I'm sorry." I gave him his phone. Lakhe: "baby? Come on. I am not cheating. I just work a lot. What do you mean Simphiwe is married to another woman? Uyifumani phi lonto?" Me: "I saw it on Facebook. Everyone did. He proposed to her." he hugged me. Lakhe: "I will never do you like he did. You're an amazing woman. You're enough for mna. Don't doubt that please?" I nodded. Lakhe: "ndicela uyeke uz'comparisha nalantombi. And most importantly, uyeke MNA undicomparisha nala swine. I am nothing like him." At least I was out of trouble. Khaniyibone bethuna la look. Ubhuti wamadada isn't someone to fuck around with. If looks could kill, ngenindingcwaba kungoku. Lakhe: "7746." Me: "what is that." Lakhe: "my password. Just don't sneak out on me." Me: "can I look no-" Lakhe: "no. We're going to bed. Usile yazi." he picked me up and carried me to bed while I giggled. When we got to bed he tucked me in his arms. Me: "what does 7746 mean?" Lakhe: "it means Spho." I blushed. Why did I even doubt him? I still had to check but I was halfway certain that he wasn't double playing me. But who is Loco? And why is he calling him at this time? Me: "you have a couple of messages by the way." Lakhe: "from?" Me: "I don't know. Your phone kept brighting." Lakhe: "hm" he sighed and kissed my forehead. Lakhe: "sleep." I closed my eyes and tried to find some sleep..

About two weeks later. Saturday. I woke up early from bed. Lakhe didn't come over last night saying he had work left over to do. I brushed my teeth, showered and got dressed in casual. Blue high waisted leggings and a white crop top. I cleaned my little house, changing my sheets. Putting my dirty laundry into one bag. Today was laundry day and I was going to use Bhut Bae's house for it. My furniture was delivered this week because ndizjikisile before. Just placing it in the lounge was all I could do now. This was what I wanted. Bendingxamile gqithi. I quickly signed bahamba abantu babantu. It was two couches that formed an L when joined. A black Plasma TV. Plus a glass coffee table. I'd unwrap everything when I got back. I closed all my windows and locked my door, taking the bag to my car. I drove to Kragga Kamma and arrived at my boyfriend's estate. There was a black BMW parked in his yard ngo reverse. I parked my car ndayongqkongqkoza emnyango. Yes there was a bell but I believed in knocks more. Wavuleka umnyango. A strange man was standing there with a burger half way into his mouth. We stared at each other for a full minute while he chewed on his bite wade waginya uswine. "what you want?" Me: "ungubani?" Him: "the owner of this

house. Wena ungubani?" Me: "ndikhangela uLakhe. Where is he?" he stared at the bag in my hand. Him: "you're moving in?" Me: "ndicela uLakhe." he savagely bit again on his burger and chewed. I studied him. Before getting pissed off. Realizing he was so much similar to Lakhe. Same stance when standing. Legs far apart. Broad big shoulders. He just didn't have the face. That mean look. This one looked adorable. Like a little puppy. So I pushed him aside and walked in the house. Him: "hesana!!" Me: "Lakhe!" I walked to his room. Ndangena. Bed was made. He stood by the window with his phone in the ear signaling me to keep quiet. Lakhe: "yes sir, I understand your frustration and we're working thoroughly to solve your situation, trust me. I'll look

into it again and see if we have any developments. I will give you a call on Monday morning....Thanks." he hung up. Me: "baby, who is that psycho in the lounge." "that psycho? G ngubani lo ?? She just stormed in here like she owns the place." Me: "excuse me? Mr Wait for me to chew my burger like a toddler. He stuffs his mouth. I'm not gonna wait for that!" "I will stuff your face if you keep talking." Me: "oh please try." Lakhe: "Okay! Both of you! Yinton ingathi ningoo K? Damn." Me: "I got here first." I mumbled. "I stay here." he replied. Me: "baby. Who's this imbecile?" Lakhe: "this imbecile is my brother, Sands. Brother, this is my girlfriend. Ndicela nivane because xandingekho you'll have to tolerate each other." Me: "ubuthe kum you had a sister." Lakhe: "I never said only." I looked at this Sands. He stared back at me. Me: "babe. Ziphi mpahla zakho. I'm here to do laundry." Lakhe: "laundry room babe." he kissed my cheek. Sands: "I'll be in my room." he walked out. I went to the laundry room and started on the washing. Not much to do than sort the clothes, empty pockets and toss them into machine. There was even a dryer so biyimpolo nje. I walked out and heard voices so I slowed down and listened. Sands: "are you out of your mind?" Lakhe: "Sandile. Khawundehle man." Sands: "No Gazi. Akhonto ndizoyehla at all. First this stupid CEO nonsense that you know nothing about, now a girlfriend?" Lakhe: "firstly, before we get things twisted. I went to university. Ndiyayazi lento ndiyenzayo. Secondly, why ndingazobana cherrie? You had no problem with Banger." Sands: "because Banger ebengenzi washing. She was a booty call. She knew her place. This one is too bloody controlling. Next thing you know, you'll be forced into marriage! Uyabona uyafosta lomntana!" Lakhe: "Spho would never force me to do anything." Sands: "wenza i-flop Lakhe. Blind. This chick is gonna get seriously hurt when she finds out the kind of dog you are." Lakhe: "uthethi kaka kengoku." Sands: "kwamna? Do you think uzomelana nalent-" Lakhe: "shut up! I will deal with Spho, uyi responsibility yam. I don't understand why Une worry kangaka." I tip toed back to the laundry room and digested

my new findings. What were they talking about? Was Sands really his brother? Were they gay? That's probably why Sands engaged me. He was jealous. Were they GAY?? What the fuck? I recalled their whole conversation. They Were Gay! Is that why he didn't want to come over last night? Because his boyfriend was home? Oh my God, oh my God!! Why can't I stop acting crazy? Lakhe: "babe." I busied myself. Lakhe: "love wam." Me: "hm." I was so disgusted. I didn't know what to do. My clothes were in his machine! I needed my clothes people. I had to wait until they finished. Me: "I'm going to make lunch." I ran out the room ndaya ekitchen. Sands was spawned on the couch like tomato paste on a pizza. I shivered in disgust. To be honest, I have nothing against gay people. I believe in letting people live their lives as much as they liked. It just became a problem where there was a possibility that Lakhe could be fooling me. I wasn't sure. My phone rang when I was in the kitchen. Again the number from last night. So ndaphendula today. Me: "Hello?" Caller: "Hi Spho." I went ice cold. It was the bastard. Simphiwe. Simphiwe: "before you hang up, hear me out." Me: "you have 5 seconds." Simphiwe: "babe, funeke sidibane and figure out how we're going to make our bond payments because we have to split them now." Me: "I don't live in that house anymore. Its not my responsibility." Simphiwe: "Spho. You know I can't afford that house by myself." Me: "ungaceli fiance yakho ikuncedise nje? Hm? Isn't that how marriage works?" Simphiwe: "baby ndicel uyeke lento uyenzayo tu." Me: "don't ever fucking call my number again! Andinguye ubaby wakho Simphiwe uyevha? Go to hell. I hope you get kicked out that house too. Ubuyele kula lokishi ndakufumana uhlala kuyo. Bastard!" I hung up the phone. When turned around I found Lakhe leaning on the mirror fridge. Ndaske ndamjonga naye andamazi ndimthini. He didn't say anything nam ndathula. To be

honest I was a bit nauseas. I took a glass ndagalela amanzi ndasela. Lakhe: "bhabha." Me: "hm...." Lakhe: "what's going on?" I checked my phone for the time ndabona message. I viewed it. 'I tried being nice and considerate. You decided to insult me. Ukhumbule ke sisi lendlu is in YOUR name. When you're blacklisted by the banks and hounded by credit bureau ungabuyi ukhalela mna. I tried helping you.' I swallowed in pain. Yehla inyembezi yokuqala. I couldn't take it anymore. I was just defeated by life. Every time I tried getting up, it kept knocking me down. How could I afford i-bond yendlu ese blue water and my flat in Humewood? And my car, my petrol and clothing accounts as well as cellphone plus my mother's allowance even on my promotion salary? How? How? How?!!! Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi." Me: "I have to go-" Lakhe: "Siphosenkosi!" I ran out to my car and started it. Lakhe: "Spho!!!" he screamed behind me. I sped off instantly. In my mirror I could see the BMW

revving toward me. I got on the freeway ndayinyathela accelerator. My phone rang on the passenger seat. I looked at it and back at my mirror then wiped my tears. By the time I opened my eyes again I saw a sharp curve and I hit the brakes. The car bumped on the pavement and rolled over to oncoming traffic. It landed on its side. Me: "ohmy God." I'd survived. Before I sighed in relief a loud bang hit me.....kwacima izibane..

Chapter 9

"Phakama! Phakama! Phakama man Sphosenkosi!! Get up!" my mother was standing on top of me next to the bed. I jumped up and washed my body with the water in the small tub. Ma: "uzundityele ixesha mna andinaxesha la Le nonsense yakho vha!" I washed faster and got dressed in my uniform. Ma: "masambe." Me: "ibhedi mam-" Ma: "itheni?" I left it like that and we took a taxi to the clinic. I hurried behind her safika sangena kwi queue. This wasn't our regular clinic. Ibise town intle and I wasn't sure why we came here. Mama wayobhalisa waphinda wahlala nam. I knew better than to start asking questions. In an hour, one girl came out the room walking painfully. She was in tears. What did they do to her? Just then my name was called out. I glued my behind on my chair. My mother dragged me up and to the doctor. He closed the door and smiled. Doc: "hello Siphosenkosi. How are you my angel?" I kept quiet. What did he want to do? Doc: "you can wait outside ma'am. We won't be too long." my mother left me in there alone. Doc: "I'm going to need you to relax okay? This won't hurt at all. You're just 10 weeks I see. Almost as small as a jelly bean. Take this pill and have a rest there." The rest of the day was one of agony, blood and tears. I lay in my bed at night and sobbed myself to sleep.

Mother was gone in a few days again. Her job made her leave a lot, I didn't want to be alone again. Not here with him. He came into my room and stared at me with disgust. "Uyazbona izenzo zakho zenze ntoni? Uzumxelele net unyoko uyow'ndibona." I didn't reply, I kept quiet as always. "uhlale apho ndiyabuya. Uyevha?" I nodded. When he walked out the room I got up from bed. Under those blankets I was already dressed in my tracksuit. I quickly put on flip flops grabbing my school bag and dashed out. To my surprise it was horrifyingly cold. I regretted leaving instantly but then remembered his smell on top of me. The aching of my legs from being pulled apart. The blood. I had to run. "HEY!!!" he yelled behind me. I ran as fast as possible. The rain slapped my face angrily and the winds dragged me back. I pushed forward. Running. My feet were ice cold and wet with the rest of my body. I ran until I couldn't breath anymore. I struggled for oxygen and kneeled in the middle of the road crying and trying my hardest to breath. Me: "Please..... Help..... Me." I

tried to push out screams. My chest was closing in on me and then I fell down.

Voices were on top of me. Whispers.. I couldn't see. I tried opening my eyes. "she's awake." I heard. "how?" someone asked. "Hi angel." who were these people? Ndiphi kanti? "uyandiva?" I slightly nodded. "Usesbhedlele. We found you unconscious two weeks ago on the highway. You were almost frozen to death. You're okay now...everything is going to be okay." she had kind eyes. A beautiful smile. Like an angel. I was feeling really warm, she took one blanket off and gave me water. I could sit up. The room was heated. A white old man came in. He reminded me of the man who gave me the pill which made me bleed for hours. The man who was scraping my insides clean. I was shivering in my bed. Doc: "hey...you're finally awake." he sat next to me and checked my eyes. Doc: "there is a lady who wants to take you home and wants to take care of you. Open mouth." I opened my mouth. Doc: "lovely. We're going to keep you here for a few more days okay? So you can familiarize yourself with your new family." I have a new family? Doc: "starting tomorrow, we'll do some exercises to oil up your joints okay? You must be tired." Me: "get up..." Doc: "you want to get up?" I nodded. He helped me out of bed and I could feel my spinal cord cracking back to its place. We walked a few meters and went back to bed. I met the woman who was to take me home. She had a teddy bear in her arm, with a big smile on

her face. "ndingu Zama mna. Did the nurse tell you I'm taking you home with me?" I nodded. Where was my mother? Zama: "ina baby. This is for you. My husband thought you'd like it." he was wrong. It was a beautiful bear but she had a husband...my mother had a husband....he hurt me. I started crying. The machine next to me was beeping. Zama: "hun? What did I do? What's wrong?" the doctor came straight in. Doc: "please escort Mrs Ngudla out." he injected something that made me weak. I closed my eyes....

Chapter 10

I opened my eyes to bright lights. Lakhe: "Spho. Its me. Lakhe." my whole body ached from head to toe. My head was heavy. I looked at him. Ngubani lo? He was standing next to me. Me: "who." Lakhe: "you're awake!! Oh Thank God." he ran out. I looked around the room. Then Who was this? "You are crazier than I thought and suicidal. Why would you -" he kept quiet when this Lakhe walked back in. Another man came in and checked me. Man: "ahh...welcome back." What was happening? Man: "you're in hospital. You were in an accident a few days ago." Lakhe: "6 days ago. Its been 6 days you haven't woken up." what was more confusing was.....I fell asleep in hospital. The doctor injected me. How did I get in an accident? Man: "do you

remember hun?" Me: "the woman...she came in....with a teddy. Where is...she?" Lakhe: "what woman? Where!" Me: "I almost died." Man: "well.....yeah... But you survived." Me: "it was cold. I froze. Into coma." Lakhe: "doctor what's happening?" Man: "I'm not sure." Me: "the nurse....she said she found me. I almost died. She said a woman was taking me home." Man: "Oh God." he held his forehead. Lakhe: "what?!" Man: "I need to take her for a PET scan immediately." Lakhe: "why? What's wrong!!" Man: "I don't think she remembers a thing. All of this, could not have happened recently. Can you get a hold of her parents?" Lakhe: "I tried, her next of kin is her best friend. She says she is on her way from Gatwick." Me: "her husband thought I liked the teddy. I didn't like the husband." Man: "This won't be long." other people entered the room and my bed started moving. Man: "you're going to be okay. Just trust me." he held my shoulder. I was put onto a stretcher bed, thinner than the one I was on before. "Just relax hun. Don't mind the big light." he placed a needle into my vein and I felt a sharp sting. After a while, I was entered into tunnel shaped cylinder with my eyes closed. "still doing okay?" I could hear him. Me: "get me out." Him: "okay love. Just a few more minutes. Stay still." I waited a few more minutes. I couldn't hear him anymore. Me: "hello?" Him: "I'm still here baby girl. You want to talk?" Me: "I want out." Him: "okay. Just let me finish okay?" Me: "okay." I don't know how long I was there. My body was becoming stiff and I couldn't move. Finally he got me off and wheeled me back to my room. My eyes were weak. Lakhe: "Doctor? What's wrong? its been an hour and a half!" Doc: "it should take a day or two to get the results. Then we'll find out what is the problem." Lakhe: "what could be the problem? She looks like she doesn't even know who I am." Doc: "it is possible that she is suffering from amnesia." Lakhe: "so she Doesn't know who I am." Doc: "Masilakhe. You need to be patient. We will do whatever we can." he walked out of the room. "this is your chance." Lakhe: "chance for what Sandile? You better not talk shit or I swear I'll knock you the fuck out." Sandile: "you need to let go bra. Its fate. She doesn't know you. Chances are, she never will. Uyamva she's talking crazy. Do you really want that type of life? Bhatala fondin ii-bills u'slyze qha." Lakhe: "Get the fuck out." Sandile: "Lucky you're making a mistake my brother." Lakhe: "Get the fuck out." Sandile: "G? Its me." Lakhe: "I'm saying it one last time Sandile." Sandile: "fine. I'm leaving. Kodwa wenzi flop bra." he walked out. I looked at him. Lakhe: "I promised you I'd never leave. I intend to keep that promise. Ndiyayazi awundazi. So, this is our time to start afresh." he got into bed next to me and hugged me. Lakhe: "jonga....." he took out his phone and turned on the front camera. Both our faces showed on the screen. I giggled. Lakhe: "you are still so beautiful." he went to pictures. Lakhe: "I took these every chance I got. Apha wawulele .. Look at that mouth." I smiled. This was me. I just wished I was there. Lakhe:

"here, you were walking out my office...apha ubusenza washing yethu. Which by the way yomile....it was also the

day of your accident." a slow tear rolled sideways because I was laying on my side. Me: "stop." Lakhe: "you don't have to worry bhabha." when he said that, my heart felt so warm with love. I turned around and hugged him tight. Lakhe: "its okay baby. Everything is going to be okay."

6 weeks Later. My first day outside hospital, I struggled to walk a bit and still couldn't remember anyone in my current life. All these people that came in I have never seen in my life. All these events they mention. It was like being introduced into a new life. Everyday Lakhe said it was a second chance but I also wanted these wonderful memories. He walked me to the car and drove home. I stared down at the controls of the car. Could I drive? Was I able to do this without help? But that's the reason of the accident. Clearly I couldn't. Where was I driving to? Oh no...my heart sank when I had one more question about this accident. I looked at him. Lakhe: "what's wrong baby?" Me: "was there anyone else in the car?" Lakhe: "no babe. Just you. Why?" he looked a bit distracted. Me: "I can't drive can I?" Lakhe: "ubukwazi. Do you want me to tell you what happened that day?" I nodded. Lakhe: "you'd just met my brother. Didn't get along that well. Ubusenza washing in the laundry room and then went to make into yokutya. Before you could begin, you received a phone call. Someone said something that upset you over the phone and you ran out crying. You got into your car I tried to stop you but you were speeding off. You took a turn too late and crashed." he stopped talking and breathed. Lakhe: "the most painful thing was watching the car roll over right before my eyes and there was nothing I could do to stop it. When it finally did, I got out the car but another car in on coming traffic crashed into you." He wiped his eyes. Lakhe: "I thank God...you're here with me today. We're home." he pulled into a gigantic house. It looked like a house in a movie. With a beautiful huge lawn. Me: "who was it?" Lakhe: "Who babe?" Me: "the person that called me. Who was it?" Lakhe: "why?" Me: "maybe angayazi kwenzeka ntoni. Why did they upset me? Do you know who it is?" Lakhe: "no babe. You never told me. Even phone yakho got lost in the wreckage. I'm sorry."

Chapter 11

My day was spent resting on the sofa and going to the toilet. Something was distracting him. He was awfully quiet and that made me uncomfortable. Me: "will you be honest with me?" Lakhe: "of course my love." Me: "what's wrong, you look worried." Lakhe: "everything is fine. I'm glad I didn't lose you too." he hugged me. Me: "too?" Lakhe: "you're the only person I have in my life. Please don't scare me like that ever again." he let go of me and walked down the

passage. I ought to give him some breathing space so I went outside to the garden. There were 3 cute little ducks in a pond. They quacked and swam in the water. Ndaqondba mandihlale apha ecamkwabo. What could he have meant when he said he was glad he didn't lose me too? Who else did he lose? I didn't have the energy actually I don't know why I'm even bothering myself ngemibuzo. I got up to go fetch a camera. These ducks were too cute. I went inside the house ndaya eroomin yakhe. Before I went in, I peeped. He was leaning on his arm by the window. He looked like.....he was crying. I knocked on the door. Me: "Lakhe?" he wiped his face. Lakhe: "love." avoiding eye contact. Me: "ndiyak'cela uthethe nam. Please. It hurts enough that I'm in this new environment and I trust you to guide me through it. I also need to know what is wrong. Andithandi ukubona unje." Lakhe: "baby, I'll be fine. I just need time." Me: "Lakhe. Talk to me." he sat on the bed. Lakhe: "I can't." the room fell awfully quiet with each of us deep in our own worlds. He was sitting on the bed, I was staring out the window. I don't know for how long we were in that phase but kwakhala iphone finally. He looked as if he didn't hear a thing. Me: "your phone." Lakhe: "hm?" Me: "your phone is ringing." he looked around and found it with his eyes. Lakhe: "I can't stop thinking. Its like....my whole life has crashed and spilled all over now I can't stop thinking." Me: "ucinga ntoni." he looked up me. Lakhe: "that I love you more than I've ever loved myself." these past 6 weeks he had been in and out of my hospital room but I've never not even once heard him say this. Lakhe: "you couldn't stop bleeding. It hurt me so bad Sphosenkosi. I can't imagine how it must have felt like kuwe." I could not say a word. I didn't want to disturb him. He just said he loved me. A man that didn't even talk about his feelings? It was a big step for him. Lakhe: "it was too early, but it still hurts so bad." he stood up and I saw the strong man I have started to know again. He looked lost and seemingly didn't want to be found. Me: "I feel a bit tired." Lakhe: "of course. Come here." he got me into bed and slipped in after me. He held me in his arms. We laid there quietly. Me: "how long have we been together?" Lakhe: "about 3 weeks before the accident and now its just over 2 months." Me: "cela undibalisele how we met." Lakhe: "uhm...its quite funny actually. At the mall. I was new to the city. I was asking for directions but we both established that was a lie to get to talk to you." I smiled. Me: "what was I wearing?" Lakhe: "a long navy dress. You had longer hair, ziyaphinda ziyakhula ngoku though." Me: "and then what happened?" Lakhe: "well, our first date was you coming over for breakfast then we went shopping. Sabuya ndenza supper. We had pizza and each other." Me: "hmm..." Lakhe: "I enjoyed it so much." Me: "the pizza?" Lakhe: "noo. You. That day. Then it kept getting better. You work for a company called golden-cell, I've just been appointed CEO kuyo. Its difficult without you. Harold offered to take your

place until you're fit and proper again." Me: "Harold? The white man that came to the hospital a few times?" Lakhe: "ewe." Me: "what made you stay? If it were only 3 weeks, why didn't you just turn and walk away." Lakhe: "I promised you andisoze ndikukhubekise and ndizohlala ndikunye nawe no matter what until wena utsho mandihambe. Not that ndizohamba but ke...." Me: "thank you. I don't know bendizokwenza njani without you." Lakhe: "baby.." Me:

"hm." Lakhe: "why ungafun ubona umamakho? You banned her from your bedroom and threatened suicide everytime efuna usondela kuwe." Me: "If you tell me why you were crying I'll tell you." he kept quiet. Me: "I know all you want to do is protect me. Don't you realize I want to protect you too? I feel the exact same way about you." Lakhe: "I know babe." I was really feeling tired now. I closed my eyes for a few seconds whiffing his cologne. God, did he smell so damn goood. I kissed his lips he kissed me back. Lakhe: "uyabawa ngoku?" Me: "heee. Hayi kengoku. I'm just kissing my boyfriend." he kissed me again. Holding my head. I sucked on his soft lips, my hand brushing on the soft beard on his face. Lakhe: "ubuthe udiniwe ke." Me: "bendidiniwe." Lakhe: "lala ke sisi." Me: "no baby." Lakhe: "yes...lala. Subastout." I obeyed his commands ndavala amehlo to sleep.

"I'm so sorry my angel. I didn't mean to scare you. Are you okay?" Zama was standing next to my bed. The doctor was helping me exercise. I just nodded. Zama: "just after this sizogoduka vha." I smiled. After my exercise, I was dressed warmly and she signed a few papers. Saphuma phandle. For the first time in a long time I saw sunlight. A bit of wind, but there was sunlight. The clouds hung around the sun just as my doubts and fears lingered in my new light of happiness. She opened her Polo Vivo and helped me in with the seatbelt neatly locked around me. She drove. I didn't ask where she lived so I didn't know. I was given a chance so many times to ask questions. I didn't. Instead she spoke a lot. She spoke for me. Maybe that's why I agreed to leave with her, she was my voice. She parked in a yard with nicely cut grass and a white brick wall around it. Zama: "we're home Spho." I got out the car and followed her inside. In the house, I heard barking. I was terrified of dogs. Why was it in the house. Zama: "honey!?" a tall man walked out the kitchen and smiled. Zama: "Spho, this is my husband, Khaya. Hun, nanku Spho." he looked at me. Khaya: "she's so cute." he extended his hand and I backed away quickly. Khaya: "I thought you might like someone to play with, so ndikuthengele uboy. Would you like to name him." he held the small puppy up in the air. That was the cute one. Not me. Zama took the puppy and handed it to me. I just smiled. Me: "Mr Giggles." they both laughed. Zama: "come angel, izobona room yakho." she took me to my room. The walls were

pink, with butterflies. My bed was pink with orange flowers on it. Zama walked out and left me alone with Mr Giggles. I stood by the door, I wanted to listen what was said. Khaya: "baby. I don't know hey." Zama: "njani mntu wam? What don't you know?" Khaya: "did you see the way she wants absolutely no contact nam? Its like she doesn't trust me at all. Uyandoyika lomntana mna." Zama: "she's just shy. Remember she had a panic attack just by seeing me? Its still early baby." Khaya: "Kodwa, did you have her checked properly? I think something is wrong. Akhomntana unokoyika oluhlobo....unless she's been hurt." Zama: "hurt? Uthetha ngantoni na ngoku?" Khaya: "I mean hurt. I work with abantwana and abantu abanje. I'm a psychologist." Zama: "I haven't forgotten Khaya, but kengoku Spho is just a little confused. Okay?" Khaya: "okay, but ke, keep an eye on her. She needs the extra attention." Zama: "I will, ude waya eskolweni?" Khaya: "yes, I also bought her new uniform. Angaqala on Monday. For now just get her more warm clothes and try finding out what she likes, such as food, intwezimandi-" Zama: "relax! Remember I've been wanting to do this for years? We finally have a baby girl. I will do everything and anything to protect her." Khaya: "enkosi mntu wam." I went back to bed. The little puppy barked at me, I put him on the floor waske wajikeleza then went to the corner and pee'd. That is just disgusting of you Mr Giggles. That is nasty. Zama: "Spho." I looked up. Zama: "its time for lunch angel." I wanted to ask questions now. Me: "sisi." she came in and sat next to me.

Me: "am I going to go home?" Zama: "no baby. This is your home now. Ufuna ugoduka wena?" I shook my head quickly. Me: "Mr Giggles pee'd." she smiled. Zama: "what's wrong sthandwa? You can tell me anything." Me: "uphi umamam?" Zama: "shewas taken by the police. She sold things that were not allowed." Me: "what things?" Zama: "things I don't want you exposed to. She can't protect you anymore, not while ephaya. So I got custody of you." I nodded. Zama: "you can call me anything you like. Noba uthe mama, okanye Zama vha." I nodded. Khaya came inside the room. My heart was bursting out my chest from fear. Khaya: "hey.." I stiffened. He stopped and looked at Zama. Khaya: "izanoty, the food is ready." I struggled to breath again, holding on too tight. Zama: "Spho??!!" Khaya: "kwenzeka ntoni ngoku?" Zama: "she's not breathing!" he stepped back. Khaya: "just hold her, rub her back." the tears were at the verge of spilling. Zama: "she isn't letting go." Khaya: "just wait." I finally exploded into a well of tears. "Sphosenkosi....baby?"

I woke up immediately. Lakhe: "baby? Spho?" this wasn't a dream. I was regaining more memory. Lakhe: "why ukhala kangaka? You almost choked me. Uphupha ntoni?" Me: "ndifuna umamam." Lakhe: "now I'm confused.

Ebekhona umamakho in hospital, you chased her out. Baby please tell me kwenzeka ntoni." Me: "I remembered." Lakhe: "okay..that's good." Me: "where is she?" Lakhe: "I booked her into a hotel. Ndimbize over for dinner?" I nodded. I got up. Lakhe: "Uyaphi?" Me: "I need to find something to cook." Lakhe: "okay, I'll get dressed sizokuya kwa Woolworths. Come here." I went to him. He changed my clothing into grey sweatpants, my black Superstars, plus a sweater. He got dressed too in jeans and sneakers. Saya emotweni. He drove to the mall. We went into Woolworths and I ended up in the clothing section where he was in the food section. I pushed around my trolley looking through things. "Spho." I looked up and saw a medium height man. He had light skin and a big beautiful smile. He looked surprised. "baby? Wow. Awusemhle. You cut your hair?" I stared at him questionably. Me: "I'm sorry....I don't remember you." "haibo...are we like that now? Its me..." Me: "you?" "Simphiwe.....remember now?" I shook my head. He looked confused. Simphiwe: "heee...are you for real?" Me: "Simphiwe?" Simphiwe: "yeah...I've been trying to call you for the past few weeks my love. Akuphumeli nanye efownini. I even tried your friends, they said abakwazi uphi. I got so worried. I'm so happy that you're still here." he hugged me. Simphiwe: "baby, ndicela uxolo ngento Yonke man. You really didn't have to settle the house plus all other bills. I don't deserve that. Landlu ibiyeyethu sobathathu, I was wrong. I want us to talk about this." Me: "a house?" sobathathu? Who was the third? if I had a house with this man. And we had Bills, who the hell was Lakhe and how in the fucking world did he get into my life? Simphiwe: "honey boo boo misses you so much. Speaking of which, where is he. Buhle!!!" "Tata!!!" a squeaky voiced replied. He came running. Buhle: "mamaaa!!!" he screamed when he saw me. I had a child? He hugged me. Me: "hey.." Buhle: "uvelaphi mama? Ndakhumbula mna. Uzohamba nathi?" Oh My God...I was a mother? Simphiwe: "Spho...please mntu wam. I made a huge mistake. Please come home." Lakhe suddenly appeared out of nowhere with the most deadliest look on his face. I shivered. Lakhe: "Spho. I'm ready to go." I swallowed. Me: "Lakhe, who is he? How could you not tell me I had a family! Why would you do that?" Lakhe: "This is not your family." Simphiwe: "heeee, hayi mfo. Yinton ngoku?" Me: "Lakhe, ngubani ke lo?" Lakhe: "I've never seen him in my life. Your mother is waiting. Masambe." Me: "I'm not going anywhere with you. My child needs me." Lakhe: "Masambe Siphosenkosi ndingeka phumi esmilweni sabaphilayo." Me: "No." Simphiwe: "you heard my lady. She said no. Khona ungubani WENA sow'ngazondazi."

Lakhe bent down and gently removed Buhle from his grip on me and without a warning scooped me up into the air, throwing me on his shoulder and pushed his trolley out the shop.

Chapter 12

I screamed and cried all the way home. This psychopath ignored me ingathi andikho. When we arrived at home, he looked at me. Lakhe: "yazi, what I'm doing is saving you from heart ache. Its not because andik'thandi." Me: "why didn't you tell me about uSimphiwe noBuhle?" Lakhe: "because, it would cause you heartache. I don't need you to be upset usaqala uphila." Me: "how would seeing my son upset me? Umbonile indlela ebendibambe ngayo? He said he missed me Lakhe. Uyenza njani into enje?" Lakhe: "masingene endlini Sphosenkosi." he got out the car and took the grocery out the car. Lakhe: "umamakho will be here in two hours. You might want to bath in the meanwhile." he walked into the house. I stayed in the car. I wasn't going anywhere. Why would he not tell me anything to help me remember my past? Was he even there beforemaybe he was like my new guardian. Like Zama was when I was in hospital. It was only about an hour later when I heard the car door open. Lakhe: "Spho." I looked out the window. Lakhe: "kuyabanda ke apha. Best undiqumbele usiva shushu utyile." I ignored him. Lakhe: "alright then." he got out the car and opened my door. I held on to the seatbelt. Lakhe: "what would it take for you to trust me?" Me: "tell me the truth. I'm not going inside that house until you do." he looked at me. Lakhe: "kuyabanda apha." Me: "cacile kaloku ndizogodola." Lakhe: "what is it that you want from me then?" Me: "inyani Lakhe. Who is that man?" Lakhe: "utshilo mos Ngu Simphiwe." Me: "you said you didn't know him, You've never seen him in your life." Lakhe: "I might have lied." Me: "what is he kum?" Lakhe: "he's your ex boyfriend." Me: "and why must I believe that?" Lakhe: "akhange afike kuwe acele uxolo? That's because he fucked up your relationship, emotionally abused you for months and cheated on you, in your house. I got with you and he engaged the other woman. Which, by the way is the mother to Buhle. He's not your child." I kept quiet and looked at him. Lakhe: "I know I lied a little, but I don't want to see you hurt again. I don't want you to re-live that memory in your life because ibibhlungu nakum." Me: "I'm sorry." Lakhe: "I know, can we please just get inside the house. I need to bath you before umamakho afike." Me: "I can bath myself. I just need some time alone." I got out the car. Lakhe: "okay." I went inside the house ndayongena bathroom. I ran my bath. Lakhe: "baby..." Me: "I acted like an idiot. You've been nothing but good to me and I was ready to just throw it in your face. I just don't know what I'm missing. I hate not knowing." Lakhe: "its okay babes, izothatha ixesha kaloku. I don't want you to rush it. Can we move on?" Me: "have you told me everything I need to know? No surprises will come back at me in the future?" Lakhe: "ewe baby. No more surprises." I got into the bath after undressing. Me: "okay. I'll be here....bathing." Lakhe: "I'll check on you ugqiba kwam

upheka." he kissed my cheek and closed the door behind him. After my bath I got dressed, ndaphuma ndisiya to the lounge. Lakhe: "here she is." mama was setting the table when she looked up at me. Mama: "hello my angel." Me: "hi." I let her hug me. I confused myself so much not knowing this woman saved my life. The first one was the one that I didn't want near me. Not Zama. I loved her warmth and her hugs so much. Mama: "its okay mntanam. I know now...Lakhe told me you're still a bit confused." Me: "I'm starting to remember...just slowly." Mama: "you will be fine sthandwa. Its a whole journey." Lakhe: "I'll be right back ma, kusekho nje something I need to sort out." Mama: "okay bhuti." he left, taking the second passage which led to the other section of the house. Mama: "uMasilakhe undixelele kwenzake ntoni at the mall." Me: "I don't understand why he lied." Mama: "he was protecting you from pain. He loves you Spho. Let him love you. He doesn't want to hurt you." Me: "I know." Mama: "I don't think you do." Me: "mama, please. I don't want to talk about him." Mama: "ufuna uthetha ngantoni?" Me: "ukuxelele uLakhe about Simphiwe nhe?" Mama: "yes." Me: "well, Simphiwe says I settled the house. And all the other bills. Clearly, Lakhe did that, I knew nothing about it." Mama: "okay, so....what's the problem?" Me: "why would he do that?" Mama: "Spho. You must let that man take care of you. Let him-" I heard a loud bang and jumped up! Me: "What the hell

was that?" I didn't know whether to go look for him or wait. Mama: "it sounded like a gun shot. Hlala phantsi sisi." Lakhe appeared from the passage ingathi akava nto. Lakhe: "you used to call me on my cellphone, late night when you need my love. Call me on my cell phone, late night when you need my love...and I know when that hotline bling-" Me: "Lakhe!" I whispered. He looked at me. Lakhe: "dinner is ready." Mama: "did you hear the loud gun shooting?" Lakhe: "Nope. When?" Me: "ngoku man Lakhe! Someone just shot something!" Lakhe: "oh. Well, let me call the neighbors to check if they're okay." Me: "someone is in our house Masilakhe!" Lakhe: "no baby. They're not. I just came from the other side. And There's no one here. We're having dinner in five." he went to the telephone. Lakhe: "that could only mean one thing, and I know when that hotline bling that could only mean one thing. Ever since I left the ci- Oh Hello Mrs Jordan, how are you? Is everything okay?" he listened. Lakhe: "oh alright, my girlfriend heard gun shots, our property is clear and I just to make sure you're okay.....That's fine ma'am. Alright. Good bye." he hung up. Lakhe: "dinner time." he smiled. Me: "what did she say?" Lakhe: "oh, her sons are playing with fire crackers." Mama: "well I'm glad." she went to the table. How could he have not heard anything? That was not a fire cracker. Why was he singing and so jolly? Something smelt fishy. We sat down to eat and I looked closely at him. Mama was telling him some story about

my childhood and he was laughing like someone broke his fucking tickle bone. Me: "excuse me. I need the bathroom." Lakhe: "need any help?" Me: "no love. Sit." I walked to the passage and slipped into the joining entrance which led to the other side. To my surprise he walked in the other side. Not a single grin on his face. Me: "baby, I think I'm lost." Lakhe: "indeed. Udlule toilet ezimbini down the passage. Boggles my mind how you ended up here." Me: "told you to put signs on the wall. Haha." I turned and went back sighing deeply. Now I was convinced he was hiding something. It bothered me but I was afraid of him. He was everywhere. When I went back to the table ebengekho. Me: "mama...." Mama: "again, Spho, please my baby. Can you please just trust. Not everyone wants to hurt you." Me: "fine mama. I'm just a bit uneasy." my mother stayed with us for about 2 more hours and her Uber took her to the hotel. I kept asking her to stay but she refused. I loaded the dishes in the dishwasher ndayivala and switched it on. When I turned around, I found Lakhe staring at me, leaning on the fridge. Me: "hey babe." I pretended not be frightened. Lakhe: "hey." Me: "what's up." Lakhe: "There's somewhere I need to be for a few hours. Will you need anything before I leave." Me: "no. Uyaphi?" Lakhe: "somewhere. Let's get you to bed." I walked to the bedroom with him behind me. Me: "you can go baby. I'll manage." I got into bed, he tucked me in. Lakhe: "to stay still....I hope to God so." he kissed my forehead and walked out the room.

Chapter 13

Deep into the night, the bedroom door opened then closed. I heard footsteps to the walk-in closet. I think he was undressing. I heard plastics. Something beeped and opened then closed again. The footsteps went to the bathroom and the shower turned on. Now I was wide awake without moving an inch. I was too afraid. I wasn't dare going to cross him and his boundaries. The Lord knows I don't want to find out what the danger behind the Look is. The shower was turned off. The footsteps came into the bedroom. All the time, my eyes are shut. He got into bed and crawled over to my side. The bed was big and laying low. He almost had to crawl until he reached my back. I swallowed. He held me. I couldn't stay in that position, I was going to start shaking. His body was cold as ice. I started moving. Lakhe: "hey.." Me: "hey." I yawned. Me: "buye nini." Lakhe: "few minutes ago, just took a cold shower. How do you feel?" Me: "about what?" Lakhe: "uziva njani baby....health wise." Me: "oh. I'm fine. No pains. I think I got proper rest." Lakhe: "hm..." Me: "maybe I should start looking into work..." I knew he would say no. He won't let me do a thing. Lakhe: "I think that's a good idea. It will keep you busy....and you might remember a few more things. Just need to take it slow, I'll talk to Harold." I'm sure you're as surprised as I am. Where was

the camera? Was I being tricked? Me: "serious?" Lakhe: "ewe baby." he kissed my neck. Me: "I thought you'd say no. Isn't it too early?" Lakhe: "its not like you'd be carrying cement packs and pushing iikiriva. Exercising your brain too is a nice idea." his erection was poking at my spine. Lakhe: "masilale mntu wam." I turned to look at him. Lakhe: "ndiyakwazi ke. The minute you start looking at me awufun ulala. Come. Izola-" I kissed his lips, holding his hard dick in my hand. Lakhe: "baby." he whispered. Me: "I'm fine." I rubbed it in my hands. Lakhe: "kodwa..." Me: "shhhh..." I kissed him. His hand slipped into my under wear. Lakhe: "awusemanzi. Cela uphuza baby?" Me: "yima baby. I want to do you." I went underneath the blanket, found it and sucked it in. I held his balls and massaged them while sucking. Lakhe: "Dammmn..." he held my head pushing me gently deeper. Lakhe: "oh baby." I took it out my mouth and softly kissed it then slid it back in. He gasped. I took it out again. Kissing his balls and rubbing the dick with my hand. Lakhe: "ooooohhh." he pulled me up and kissed my lips. I straddled him. Both my legs on each of his sides. He plunged it straight in. Me: "Lakhe..." he stroked from underneath me while I tried to catch my breath. His thumb softly place on my clit when I was grinding on him. Me: "baby..." Lakhe: "yes." my toes curled, ndiminca. Me: "I think I'm gonna....." he held me to him and in one move got on top of me, placing me under him. His waist only moved. Me: "Lakhe..." he kissed my lips drilling in faster. I dug my nails into his skin. Lakhe: "ahhhh...." he groaned onto my lips. He was shaking. Grabbing the pillow under my head. Me: "baby!!!" I opened wider for him and he stopped, pulling out of me. He went down and kissed it, my thighs were shaking. He had his finger tickling my opening. His tongue twirling around the clit. I was about to reach my peak. My body was started to shake. He stopped again coming up to me. He kissed my lips and entered himself again. He was slowly pulling in and out. And suddenly upped the pace. His lips never left mine. He went deeper and breathed on my neck. Me: "Masilakhe !!!" he picked himself and thrust harder. He pulled my leg to the air. Lakhe: "ahhh!!! Yesss!!!" I melted under him climaxing hard. He stopped and held me tight. In a short little while, he got up and went to the bathroom. Wabuya kunye ne towel, wandisula then himself. He threw it on the floor then got into bed. Lakhe: "that was amazing. I think I should leave more often, ndizobuya ndincancwe." Me: "don't you dare." I giggled. Me: "you just looked upset uhamba kwakho. I'm not sure if its me or..." Lakhe: "definitely not you my love. I'm just stressed at work. Akhonto ibitheni." Me: "so everything is fine now?" Lakhe: "yes. Everything is fine. Goodnight love." he tucked me into his arms with a firm grip. Me: "goodnight." A few days later, Bae was at work. I was taking a breather after trying to get back at it. It wasn't coming easily at all. I was beginning to hate myself. I was in a 27 year

old body stuck with a 14 year old mind. Sies. I was instructed ke to feed the ducks today, at least I

had a responsibility. They needed to be taken from their penthouse to the pond for a swim. After 30 minutes babuyele and fed. It was an easy job. So I went to the duck penthouse and took one. It started quacking so hard and flapping. I screamed and dropped it. Okay, maybe it wasn't so easy. Me: "Zanno.." one looked around. There she is. Me: "come Zanno, Iza baby." I picked her up taking her to the pond. I went back to fetch those two kicking and screaming ndabafaka pha. They swam in the pond. I went to fetch their food in the house and the telephone was ringing. I picked up. Me: "hello." the other line went quiet. Me: "hello???" Caller: "uphi uLakhe?" Me: "he's at work." Caller: "ndithetha nabani?" Me: "noSpho. Who is this?" he sighed. Caller: "this is the only call I have." Me: "okay." Caller: "ndim uSandile. Lakhe's brother. I need him to come. Please call him." Me: "come where? Une meetings throughout the whole day, he'll only be free after 6pm." Caller: "Spho. I'm going to need your help. My minutes are almost over. Ndise Humewood police station. I need someone to bail me out." Me: "I can come. How much is it?" Caller: "its R5000." Me: "okay. Ndizofownela Uber. I'm coming." Caller: "okay." I hung up. Finally! Something to keep me busy. I called an Uber and went to feed the ducks while waiting. Ndababuyisela kwi penthouse yabo. I went to go find the card Lakhe left me. I found it and took my bag ndaphuma sefika Uber. He drove me to the bank ndacela andilinde, after my withdrawal we went to Humewood police station. Ndayongena pha. He was released after I paid the amount. Sandile: "do not ask." Me: "I didn't." I walked out. We got into the car. Me: "are you gonna tell me what happened?" he ignored me. Ndamyeka ke mna. When we got home I went to check on the little ducklings. Ndabuyela endlini because it was cold. Me: "hungry?" he nodded. I went to the kitchen, frying beef patties, egg and bacon. I toasted the bun a little ndamenzela burger. Since he loved those. I poured him juice. Me: "here." he stuffed his face as usual. Sandile: "enkosi." he said with his mouth full. I switched off the stove and walked away. Sandile: "Spho." Me: "yes." Sandile: "enkosi. For getting me out." Me: "Lakhe would've done the same." Sandile: "yeah. That's another thing.....please don't mention this to him." Me: "I just withdrew from his account." Sandile: "he won't notice." Me: "I don't like lying to him Sandile. I never do that, it doesn't end well." Sandile: "please? He won't be happy if uyivile. I can't deal with that today." he looked quite afraid. Me: "okay. But You've got to tell him sometime." he nodded. I walked to the bedroom again to try and find my way into my work. Around 5 I went to go prepare for dinner. Sandile: "let me get that." I sat down. While he cooked. Me: "nonke kokwenu niyathanda upheka?" Sandile:

"oh yes. Umama wethu made sure to drill that into our heads. Its probably the only domestic thing I can do." Me: "nice. Where is the rest of your family." Sandile: "well, my sister Nwabisa is in EL. So is umama notata. Lakhe is here. Besise Durban sobabini." Me: "are you going back there?" Sandile: "I don't know. Ndiyafuna. At the same time, I've never been without my brother." Me: "that's why you're so attached to him." Sandile: "yeah." Me: "why don't you want him to know about today?" Sandile: "he gets stressed. Especially lately." Me: "what happened? How did you end up there? If you want me to be quiet, you better tell me." Sandile: "I robbed a bank." Me: "what?" Sandile: "undivile ke sisi." Me: "Why???" You have enough money as is. Why would you need to-" Sandile: "before you judge me." Me: "I'm not judging you." Sandile: "I don't know man Spho. I'm just used to it." Me: "used to it? Like a hobby?" Sandile: "yes. Its a hobby. Do you have hobbies?" I thought deeply. Me: "I don't know." Sandile: "still having trouble remembering?" Me: "yes." Sandile: "ask your best friend to help you. If its possible, she will know what you like the most. Go experience those things maybe the more you do them, the more you'll start to remember." Me: "you're right. Thank you." Sandile: "I'm sorry for being a jerk kuwe. You didn't deserve that." Me: "its fine." Sandile: "so, everything is going well?" Me: "I think so." Sandile: "what's wrong?" Me: "its nothing really." Sandile: "its something." Me: "has he always been secretive?" Sandile: "yes. He doesn't talk much. Even when he's frustrated." Me: "why?" he shrugged. Sandile: "the only time I've ever seen him crying was when the doctor said you lost the baby. I'm sorry for that. It couldn't have been easy." Me: "I beg your pardon?" Sandile: "the....." he stared at me. Sandile: "Spho." Me: "I lost....a baby?" he closed the pot. Sandile: "Spho, please...I thought you knew." I could feel my

heart breaking in pieces. Lakhe: "molweni." he walked in. Lakhe: "ufike nini fondini." the house was dead quiet. Sandile stared at me apologetically. Lakhe was confused staring at him and back at me. Lakhe: "kwenzeka ntoni?" I walked away, he grabbed my arm. Lakhe: "you're not going to do that to me." Sandile: "khawume Masilakhe, just wait." Lakhe: "no, she's not going to run away again. What is wrong? Kwenzeke ntoni Sandile?" Sandile: "I'm sorry." Lakhe: "for what?" I couldn't control my tears at all. How could he look me in the eye and lie to my face? He said he wasn't hiding anything else! Sandile: "Spho, ndicelu xolo sisi. I'm sorry bra." Lakhe: "can someone tell me what the fuck's going on!!!!!" he yelled. Lakhe: "Sandile? wenzeni!!!!" Sandile: "I didn't know!" Lakhe: "what the fuck don't you know!!! Why is she crying!!!!" he strangled him. Me: "Stop It!!!!!! Stop!!! Stop!!!!!!" I screamed. Me: "YOU are the problem Lakhe! Nguwe!! How could you not tell me about the pregnancy?" he swallowed and stared at me. Me: "Why???" for the first time, I

could see the pain written on his face. He wasn't the same anymore. This wasn't Lakhe. Me: "how could you not tell me." he was back to the closed and sealed self that did not say a word. Me: "Lakhe?" he picked up his bag and walked out.

Chapter 14

Sandile: "he's hurt. Ebengayazi uzoyiqala ngaphi. Ndiyayazi ayikho mnandi Spho. Please understand." Me: "he said we met 3 weeks before the accident. How did I fall pregnant?" Sandile: "well, ugqirha uthe you could have been 3 weeks pregnant ungekazazi. The embryo was only beginning." Me: "and I lost him." Sandile: "it was an accident, Spho. Ubungayazi. Ndiyamazi ubrother wam xa evale umlomo akaphindi afune uthetha, please understand him. I don't want him to be alone again." I turned around to walk out. Sandile: "he loves you." I walked to the bedroom. I lay in bed with my aching heart. I lost someone I didn't even know existed. So why did it hurt so badly? When I relived the memory of the clinic, was that when I lost him? My second baby. I cringed at the thought. Why did it have to be me? Ndenzeni mna bawo? I stayed in bed with my wet pillow until I fell asleep. Lakhe didn't come to bed nor did he bother coming back home. When I woke up in the morning, I felt like staying back in bed but there was a knock on my door. Me: "ngena." Sandile: "hi." he walked in and stood by the door. Sandile: "I just came to say I'm sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you or him." Me: "its okay Sandile." Sandile: "I made some hot chocolate." Me: "do you have sleeping pills?" Sandile: "no, but there is a bottle on the bottom drawer. They belong to him. Drink one only zi-strong. Do you want some toast?" Me: "I'll manage. need to get up and exercise anyway." Sandile: "okay." he placed the hot chocolate on the dresser and walked out. I got out of bed ndayokwenza toast. I put on some butter and went to the bedroom with water nesonka Sam. I ate and drank the pill ndabuyela ezingubeni. Soon enough I fell back asleep.... I woke up from a deep sleep, feeling very heavy. I was uneasy. I opened my eyes and saw him standing next to the bed with his hands in his pockets. I sat up and looked back at him. He didn't say a word. Nam ke ndizovala owam umlomo. I got out of bed and went to the bathroom. When I came back, he was still standing there. Me: "are you going to say something or stare at me like that all week?" he shook his head. Lakhe: "you haven't eaten." Me: "I don't feel like eating-" Lakhe: "you have to. You need to be physically healthy and strong so that-" Me: "I know, so that my brain works. It works just fine. Because when I was losing my second chance in having a baby, I felt it Lakhe, I saw it happen. When it was detaching from my body? Have you ever felt life detach itself from you?" I looked at him. His eyes were full of tears. Lakhe: "yes." he sat down. Lakhe: "I was there." my feelings came to a still, he was in

pain too, and that hurt me more. He was weak and I couldn't put him down any longer. I sat next to him and hugged him. Me: "you should've told me." Lakhe: "I'm so sorry." he cried. Lakhe: "I'm soo sorry Spho." Me: "its okay." I kissed his head. Me: "its okay baby." Lakhe: "he was not even there, it was too early, but he existed. He was growing." I rubbed his back. Me: "its going to be alright." Lakhe: "he left with a piece of me Spho." Me: "that piece is still there my angel, its just feeling a bit defeated. We still have Zanno, Titi and Kaylen. They still need their daddy." he chuckled. I wiped his face. Lakhe: "I'm sorry I didn't tell you." Me: "its fine. We'll get through it." Lakhe: "I love you Spho." Me: "I love you too Lakhe." he breathed. We lay together in bed, cuddled under the blankets. Me: "bekunzima sana izolo. When I first tried to take them, baske baphambana bangamageza. I think it was Kay, she's the one with the big eyes?" Lakhe: "ewe. She's difficult. Funeke uqale ngoZanno. Umbize ngegama. Then the other two will follow. If you're whistling." I laughed. Me: "only if I'm whistling?" Lakhe: "precisely." Me: "I'll remember that next time." Lakhe: "ufike nini uSandile?" Me: "emini. When I was feeding the girls." Lakhe: "uth uvelaphi? Lonto nizi friends. What happened?" Me: "he didn't say much. He's not that bad.." Lakhe: " That's nice. So nincokola ntoni?" Me: "lonto uyazthanda nendaba. Just stuff nje. Khange sithethe nakakhulu izolo. He was just apologizing for being a jerk before." Lakhe: "oh. Must be nice." Me: "what is?" Lakhe: "having Sandile as a friend. Khona ufunani endlinam bendithe makahambe." Me: "Sandile is used to being around you. You took a decision of just upping and leaving him alone in Durban. Ebezohlala njani ngaphandle kwakho?" Lakhe: "firstly, he has those ghetto friends

zaKwa Mashu. Nezinye ezise Mlazi. He never stayed 2 minutes in the house unless ulele or uyatya. How can he not live without me?" Me: "sometimes its not about talking to someone, but perhaps having them around. He enjoyed your presence. It made him feel safe." Lakhe: "I see. Makahlale ke." Me: "uzuthethe naye kaloku. You're the one that tried choking him izolo." Lakhe: "arg he's fine." Me: "talk to him!" Lakhe: "only if you eat." Me: "masambe ke." Lakhe: "lonto uyekile ufana noZanno, with that little limp." Me: "ndizok'fak' impama uyeva?" Lakhe: "xolo baby ndithule." I went to the kitchen, he went to the lounge. Lakhe: "grand?" Sandile: "shap bhuda." Lakhe: "sho." kwabukelwa i-TV. Me: "Masilakhe." he looked at me. I squinted my eyes. He hid his face with a cushion. I walked to him and stared at him. Lakhe: "hehake baby. Ndiyathetha njena." Me: "andikuva." Lakhe: "okay kaloku ndizokhwaza." I went back to the kitchen. Lakhe: "uzohlala mos." Sandile: "andikayaz Ta." Lakhe: "andibuzi ndiyak'xelela." hehake. Would I ever get Lakhe to talk properly bethuna? Clearly this is the best I would get if he had to interact with other people. I made myself a sandwich and some tea

ndayohlala phantsi to eat. They were watching TV and fighting over the channel. Sandile was watching Animal Planet. Lakhe wanted to watch some Crime Investigation show. I took the remote ndayofaka Cartoon Network ndavala umlomo wam. There was no more argument. Lakhe: "hayi kengok baby. Sizobukela oo-popeye?" Me: "cartoons. Popeye is on Boomerang." Lakhe: "yintwenye nje baby. Ababantu babhabhayo." Me: "usenoyohlala eroomin yakho ubukele Le ithandwa nguwe." Lakhe: "ndifun hlala nomntu wam nje." Sandile: "sendakhiqwa na ngoku." Lakhe: "akhokwanto ondiphathela yona ke wena ngaphandle kothetha. Intoyazi kukhamisa." Sandile: "worse ba kutsho wena ba mandihlale." Lakhe: "sizoy'thini indlu eDurban?" Sandile: "rent it out. Funeke ndiyokhupha izinto zam pha." Lakhe: "so kuzofuneka ndifikele hotel xandisiya?" Sandile: "rent out the back cottage. At least kubekho someone around the property." Lakhe: "I'll call Jeff and see if he's willing to move there. He likes that property." Sandile: "unosele ehlala ngaphakathi ke xa inguye. At least I trust him." Lakhe: "I'll give him a call ngomso. What are we having for dinner?" Sandile: "I'm having pizza, Spho? Ndiyamazi ubrothers hates take aways." Me: "I'm with you on pizza." Lakhe: "fine. I'll make myself dinner." he got up and went to the kitchen. Sandile called the pizza store. I went to take a bath in the meantime. Uggqiba kwam I wore a long yellow dress and white sandals. It was around 4 emini and I don't think I was going anywhere but I didn't want to be in pajamas. I went out to the lounge wandijamela uLakhe. Lakhe: "Uyaphi?" Me: "nowhere." Lakhe: "awusemhle. Awufuni uyobona tshomi zakho?" Me: "I do." my heart jumped in excitement. Lakhe: "okay. Itya ke kqala. I'll take you. I'll let them know you're coming." I went to sit in the lounge with Sandile. Ephethe box ka Large yeda. Sandile: "nantsi yakho." Me: "a whole box?" Sandile: "I don't share pizza." watsho esitya. I dished two slices on a plate ndatya ndibukele TV. Lakhe brought his own food, watya. Vegetables and steamed fish. Uggqiba kwethu, we got ready to go. I took my bag ndaphuma. In the garage I became so confused. There were 3 different cars. Me: "don't you have a black car?" Lakhe: "no baby. Uyibona phi imoto emnyama?" Me: "I don't know. I just had this feeling you had a black car." Lakhe: "nope. All my cars are white. Sandile umntu ka black." Me: "hm." I got in the big white Mercedes Benz. Me: "funeke ndiphathe 3 step ladder for lemoto. This is ridiculous." he giggled. Lakhe: "uske uzenze umakhulu yazi." he drove me to Zingi and Dumi's house. Lakhe: "you're doing quite well yazi." Me: "nyani?" Lakhe: "yes. There's more improvement in the work You've done." Me: "so you're spying on me." Lakhe: "I'm not spying if you leave it on the table." Me: "I don't know if I'm doing so well." Lakhe: "ndiyayazi mna. Suyingxamela. It will be easier." he held my hand. Me: "enkosi mntu wam." we finally arrived wandikhapha ukuya emnyango. Lakhe: "just give me a call when you want to go home." Me: "okay love." the door

opened, Zingi was standing there with a smile on her face. Zingi: "hello! Come in guys." Lakhe: "I'm not staying." Zingi: "aww why not?" Lakhe: "work." Zingi: "hayi wethu. You're the boss. Stay." Lakhe: "No." he turned around and walked to his car. Zingi: "oookay. He's being weird again?" Me: "uyamazi nje." I came in the house. Zingi: "did you guys fight?" Me: "nope. We're good." Dumi: "so why is he throwing you out the house then?" Me: "I just wanted to visit my friends." Dumi: "was that

your idea or his." Me: "okay. Why do I feel like I'm being investigated?" Zingi: "hayi wethu Dumi. Anyway, uyithanda njani ba ndifowanelwe Ngu Simphiwe. Ucela ndithethe nawe." Me: "I met him at Woolworths." Zingi: "yeah. Utsho naye. Ebendibuza udyola noLakhe na wena, I said to him andazi niks. All I know is that ubukwi accident and he was there for you. Oko ke esithi ufuna uthetha nawe I must help him." Me: "Lakhe says Simphiwe cheated on me and was abusing me emotionally." Dumi: "that is true." Me: "but, Simphiwe uthi ndibhatele yonke into including our house when I left him. My bank statement does not reflect that." Dumi: "ayisecace ibhatelwe ngubani." Me: "but why would he do that?" Zingi: "because he loves you. He wants to protect you from pain. The way ebekhala ngayo esbhedlele. He didn't stop. He never left your side. I don't know hey...he's one in a million." Dumi: "yeah. I give him an applause for that. Maybe he's not so bad. I might have misjudged him before." Zingi: "uyakthanda mntase uLakhe. Don't even begin to entertain uSimphiwe. He wasted your money and your life and still betrayed you. Ibizovakala ke if at least, he wasn't cheating. Bendizomthethelela, kodwa hayi sana, umoshile mpela." Dumi: "you were distraught when you found out. Walahleka iintsuku kanti uzivalele kwi hotel. We were so worried." Me: "yeah. I think I'm glad I don't remember all of this. Maybe its for the best." Zingi: "at least you know who you are." Me: "yeah, and I recognized umama. I'm regaining a bit of my memory. I dreamt of the day she took me home." Dumi: "inoba uye wakhululeka naye. Ebengekho right." Zingi: "usekhona?" Me: "yes. I'm going to her ngomso. Spending the day. Also, I need you guys to help me with my hobbies. You must know best what I like. Maybe that will trigger some of my memory." Zingi: "that's a great idea. Kutsho uLakhe? He's so smart." she bragged. Me: "no actually....his brother." Dumi: "that dodgy looking guy uthand urhorhozela emven kwakhe is his brother???" Oh my God." Zingi: "he's not dodgy just because he likes wearing black. In fact I thought he looked a little like uLakhe." Dumi: "that guy looks nothing like uLakhe. What kind of person only owns black clothing?" Me: "its his favorite color. Apparently his car is black too." Dumi: "its a bit disturbing. Indixuzelisa isusu." Zingi: "anyway, uhlala nani lo brother?" Me: "ewe." Dumi: "something is making you uncomfortable about him?" Me: "no." Zingi: "yes. Ukwenzentoni?"

Me: "he did nothing. He just...." Dumis: "just what?" Me: "he called the house izolo efuna uLakhe. I asked what the problem was, he said he needed to be bailed out of jail." Zingi: "jail?" Me: "that's not all. When I bailed him out, uthe ndingamxeleli uLakhe." Dumis: "why? Ebefownela uLakhe mos kakade. So he would have to know." Zingi: "exactly. Kutheni funeke ifihliwe. Uyinton etrongweni Khona?" Me: "he said his hobby was robbing banks." Dumis: "I knew it! I knew there was something dodgy about him!" Me: "Dumis please don't tell anyone about this. I have reason to feel he's not really put together in the head along with his brother. They can literally strangle each other near death one day and talk like they're best friends the next." they both stared at me. Dumis: "you think There's something they're hiding?" Me: "no." Dumis: "so nothing suspicious has happened?" Me: "nope. He just sits there and eats." I couldn't tell them about the gun shot/fire cracker. I had already said too much. I didn't want to be caught in fire. Zingi: "don't worry, your secrets are safe here. Just don't tell anyone else kwenzeka ntoni kwakho. Because we do have friends esingabaxeleli Yonke into. Wena awuzoyazi which. So its best that if ufuna u-empty'sha isfuba uze kuthi. Njenga ngoku, nobody knew about your break up with Simphiwe or what happened. Abamazi nalo Lakhe ngubani. So don't just trust anyone that claims they're a friend." Dumis was texting on his phone. Kudala phofu but ibingathi he's uncomfortable. I don't know if I was the only one seeing it. His finger tapped lightly on the arm rest every time he waited for a response and his eyes were darting. He noticed I was staring at him. Dumis: "unyansile uZingi. Fez ebelapha just yesterday ezobuza ngawe instead of going to see you." Me: "enkosini guys. I appreciate it." we went on to talk about other useless things and soapies. Dumis: "guys, ndiyabuya ngoku vha, I just want to check on something at the office quick. Kuthiwa the alarm is on." Zingi: "uzoya wedwa?!" Dumis: "babe, the security company sent a car, ndizoyojonga qha ba akwenzekanga nto. Relax." Zingi: "okay love." he kissed her. Dumis: "bye hun." Me: "bye Dumz." he left. Zingi: "finally." Me: "yinton ngoku?" Zingi: "nothing." Me: "its something. What's happening?" Zingi: "he's just changing

man. Mjonge uhlobo anxiba ngayo ngoku." Me: "well, its not like I have something to compare with. Memory remember?" Zingi: "oh." she showed me pictures on her phone. Meh "urg." Zingi: "exactly. Now he's joined a gym, he has a trainer, he wears tighter suits. At first, I thought he was just imitating uLakhe, which is adorable. But now he has a slang too. He talks like....like he's rapping." I laughed. Zingi: "he's going through a mid life crisis, this one. Akaz'boni." Me: "sometimes, its nice to change." Zingi: "it was amazing when I thought he was changing. I loved that instead of complaining and being grumpy, waske walandela lento ayibona ingathi is attractive. I appreciated

the effort." Me: "that being Lakhe." Zingi: "his style, not yena ubuqu. Keep up." I giggled. Me: "alright. So Lakhe's not attractive." Zingi: "he, himself knows he's attractive. The way he walks down a passage, his legs in a perfect structure. That cologne." she sniffed. Me: "haha. Bunozibona." Zingi: "anyway, I'm not so sure anymore. What if he's cheating?" Me: "Dumi? He's is not the cheating type. He's probably out there picking out some flowers or a present to surprise you with. He's sweet." Zingi: "yeah. That does sound like him." she smiled. We lazed about for a while until it was dark outside. Me: "can you drive me home?" Zingi: "yeah sure babe. Masambe." we went to her car and she drove to Lakhe's house by my direction. Phof I was guessing from landlela size ngayo. Luckily it was the right track. She dropped me off and waited while I walked to the door ndavula and waved. She hooted and drove away. I walked inside the house. It was dark. No lights were on plus all the windows were open. My heart started beating fast. I didn't know whether to call out for someone or quickly run to my room. So I slowly stepped into the passage. I walked a few steps in the darkness. Something was odd.....oh shit. I was in the wrong passage. This was home right? I would turn into the joining hall ndibuyele kule yam i-passage. So I took one further step and something crumpled under my shoe. I began shaking. Why the hell was I stepping on plastic all of a sudden?? I took another step. Again, plastic sound. I opened my mouth before I even yelled his name.....a hand cover my mouth and locked both my arms into one of his. "Keep Still. Don't move another step." he whispered in my ear. I nodded. "I'm going to remove my hand and carry you to bed. This never happened.. Uyeva?" I nodded again. He removed his hand. Me: "San-" I could feel the deadly stare in the dark. I shut my mouth immediately.....

Sent from Fast notepad

Chapter 15

I was locked in my room for the longest time. I decided to drink the sleeping pills before I drove myself to insanity kuba kaloku bendingulo ulindele uva a sound. Soon I fell asleep which felt like a mere 10 minutes. By the time I woke up on Sunday morning, There was a little bit of sunrise. I turned around and found Lakhe next to me fast asleep. I didn't even hear him come in. I went over to his side. Me: "baby?" I whispered. He opened his eyes staring right at me. He looked pissed off but I thought he was quite cute at this point. Me: "hi, ubulele?" he was quiet, just staring. Me: "babe?" he closed his eyes again. I assumed he was still sleepy. Lakhe: "could've gotten yourself hurt last night." Me: "hurt? Ubuphi wena?" Lakhe: "Sandile plays a lot with his friends, I usually leave him to it. When I asked you to call me xa ufuna ugoduka

bendingakuteketisi." Me: "ubuphi wena?" Lakhe: "I had work to do." Me: "but what -" he stuck his finger in my mouth. So apparently, this means I talk too much. Or ask too many questions. I pulled it out. Me: "it was dark, and cold. Kuvulwe zonke ii-festire. There was plastic on the floor. What were they doing?" Lakhe: "It is best that you begin to stay out of other folks' business." he got up and went to the bathroom. When he came back, he hopped into bed. Lakhe: "I need 2 hours of sleep. Please wake me only after 2 hours." Me: "ok." I have to admit, I was afraid of going out the room. I had to though...eventually. I got out of bed. Lakhe: "UYEKE USANDILE." he ordered. Me: "I was just going to feed the ducks. Geez." well, if I bumped into him, I would've asked. I'm still going to though. I washed my mouth ndaya eKitchen. Sadly there was no sign of him anywhere. Maybe naye ulele. I took the duck food ndaphuma ndaya kubo. They too, were sleeping. I didn't want to disturb them or anyone else for that matter. Maybe I should just take a walk. Ndabuyela endlini and took a shower. I went to get dressed. Looking through the closet and ke shame I saw my sweatpants first ndafaka zona. My sneakers and a vest. The sweater was zipped open. I took one of Bae's watches to keep track of time. Ebe the two hours mos? I had an hour and 15 minutes left. I walked out the house and out the gate. It was a cool day outside. Sunny with a little breeze. I walked down the street ndabuka the neighbors houses. There was no other like my home. They all looked different but gorgeous. "wow. That watch is beautiful." I looked back down on earth. I had been so occupied by the houses andiboni nomntu ozayo. I couldn't tell whether usuka ngasemva or phambili. Me: "enkosi." and I went back to my sight seeing. He looked as though he was jogging. Eyilonto itakatakayo ecamkwam. "my name is Ben, I live down there. Kulo direction uhamba ngayo. I've never seen you here before. You live here?" Me: "Yes. With my boyfriend, Masilakhe. That house." Ben: "hm...nice house." he was still now, walking normally. Ben: "would you like to jog with me?" I laughed. Me: "no I'd like to look at these houses." Ben: "Lovely. Sesizofika nakweyam. Its open for coffee." Me: "Ben, you did hear me say ndihlala ne-boyfriend yam right?" Ben: "I did. Uhlala nawe kaloku, not nam. I don't see how that's my potato." I giggled. Me: "well that is MY potato, and no thank you. I will not have coffee at your house." Ben: "lunch perhaps.." Me: "do you ever give up?" Ben: "do birds stop flying?" Me: "you're not a bird." Ben: "point taken. But I do believe in reaching for greater heights, thus not giving up." Me: "well, you should. I'm happy endlinam." Ben: "then why are you out here taking a walk by yourself?" Me: "I need not explain myself to you." Ben: "True. So what do you do?" Me: "I used to be MD at Golden Cell." Ben: "Wow. My brother has just been appointed to be their business lawyer." Me: "wena wenzantoni?" Ben: "I own an Engineering company, plus a little NGO." Me: "hm..." Ben: "this is my house.

Bring your boyfriend sometime. I'd like to get to know him too. As a friend."
Me: "hm..." Ben: "hm?? What?" Me: "I'll tell him." Ben: "you said his name was?"
Me: "Masilakhe." Ben: "niyafika?" I nodded. Ben: "well it was nice to meet you.....?" Me: "Spho." Ben: "beautiful." his dog came running to the gate wagging his tail. Ben: "that's Nelly." Me: "okay. Sharp." he went in his gate and I went about my business. I got back home with 20 minutes to spare from the 2 hours. Ndaya ekitchen. To my disappointment, he was awake. Standing there, dishing out breakfast. Me: "hey. I just took a walk. Around the neighborhood." he stared at me and back at his task. Me: "I didn't want to disturb you and Sandile. Even Zanno, Titi and Kay were asleep." he ignored me flat. Throwing the pan in the sink and it made a loud cringing sound. He took his plate and walked to the lounge. What the fuck? Me: "Lakhe." he ate. Me: "Lakhe ndithetha nawe." Lakhe: "I'm trying not to lose my appetite Siphosenkosi." I went to the bedroom with tears in my eyes, almost bumping into Sandile. Sandile: "Spho?" I closed the bedroom door behind me ndayokhangela mpahla yonxiba. I called a cab also. If I disgusted him, I was going to get out of his sight. I changed my clothes and packed a few in a bag ndaphuma. Sandile: "Spho?" I was headed for the door. He grabbed my arm. Lakhe: "myeke! If she wants to leave makahambe." Sandile: "like the last time? That is NOT happening. Niyanya nobabini this time." Me: "khandiyeke wethu Sandile." Sandile: "not until you tell me what's wrong and Uyaphi." Me: "buza LO what's wrong. I took a bloody walk because he wanted to sleep in peace! I didn't want to disturb him, so ndihambe. When I come back, he's THIS. I can't do this. Andizokwazi ucengana nendoda endala Sandile." Lakhe: "bungasoze ukwazi uyicenga kaloku unayo nenye." Me: "What?" Lakhe: "don't what Me!" Me: "ndizamthini umntu onje ke mna?" Sandile: "woah....Lakhe, what do you mean unendoda entsha uSpho? Since when?" Lakhe: "mbuze ba uvelaphi." Me: "I was taking a WALK!" Lakhe: "heh. Inoba ucingba ndiyi mookie wena." Sandile: "Spho. Thetha nam. Kwenzeka nton?" Me: "my cab is here. I'd like to go." Sandile: "I can't let you go. Unfortunately. Kuzofuneka ndithethele uLakhe kuba akakwazi uzithethela uyila bullet ilinde utsalwa yena. Akabuyi mva emvakoko. He loves you. But he is upset." Me: "Sandile, I appreciate your concern kodwa bubuxoki obu. Andinandoda bitheni mna." Sandile: "Lakhe uyifumanaphi lento uyithethayo." Lakhe: "uyekane nam. Hoya tshomi leyakho iye ndodeni." Sandile: "mntase. Suhamba please. Let me talk to him abit. Ndizova ingxaki isukaphi." Me: "mandiye kumamam ke." Sandile: "awuzokwazi ukuya ndawo until you fix le yalapha kwakho as umfazi. I'll talk to the driver." he walked out before I could protest. So there I was standing by the door with my bag. He came back. Sandile: "Iza." he took my bag wandisa e-lounge. Lakhe: "ningakuliiinge nizondifundekela ndizihlelele mna niyeva?" Sandile: "khawume Kancinci bhuti. Sifuna net ukwazi what you

mean by uSpho unendoda." Lakhe: "ungambuzi nje." Sandile: "ndibuza wena bhuti." cwaka umntu. Sandile: "Lakhe. Lakhe. Lakhe. Lakhe." Lakhe: "I will fucking punch you in the throat if you say Lakhe one more time." Me: "Lakhe." we giggled. Lakhe: "mxim." Sandile: "asizokuyeka ude uthethe lento ikutyayo." Lakhe: "andiswelanga nto kwenza ke mna." Sandile: "siyayiqonda lonto bhuti." Lakhe: "mbuze ba uvelaphi! Nanku." tshin bethuna, is this about that jogging guy? Me: "are we fighting about Ben?" Lakhe: "hewha." Me: "u-BEN? Really?" Sandile: "who's Ben?" Me: "his neighbor!" Sandile: "we have a neighbor?" Me: "he lives down the street. He was taking a jog while I was walking. He even invited you to lunch. How can he be indoda yam?" Lakhe: "he didn't invite me. He invited YOU wathi emven koko uzise mna. Apparently I'm the potato." I couldn't help but laugh out loud. Sandile: "how did you suddenly become a vegetable bhuti wam?" he chuckled. Lakhe: "zendibeyi salad." Me: "wait...how did you know? Are you spying on me?" Lakhe: "you're spying on yourself busy taking my watches. Uyodibana namadoda akho. Uba charmer nge watch yam. Imagine." Me: "your" I stared at it on my wrist. Me: "how.." Lakhe: "uthi nyawu ngoku." Sandile: "oooh, its the one connected to your phone. Oops." Me: "ayondodam uBen. He's a nuisance. He talks too much also. Besides, you're not a potato." Lakhe: "ayisecace andilo tapile. When last did you take a proper look?" heee ndiphoxwelani ngoku? Lakhe: "and ndiyaya kula lunch. Ndibone lo Ben ungena tapile. Inoba uyibhatata k'le ndawo akuyo. Swine." asayihleka noSandile. Lakhe: "awukwazi nomenzi salad. Ulazelaphi tapile khona? Phof uzothin ungalazi enxiba nee-leggings." my stomach was sore from laughing. Worse kuba lomntu was dead serious eshwabula. After a while we calmed and watched some TV. Lakhe: "futhi iyadyola latshomi yakho." I looked at him. Me: "uthetha nam?" Lakhe: "ndithetha nawe." Me: "ngeyiphi lo tshomam." Lakhe: "kanye Le uyicingayo." Me: "I'm not thinking of anyone. Khona buhlala eDurbz kodwa awukhulumi, awung'khulumele phela." Lakhe: "don't change the subject. Dubaduba lo wenu." Me: "nooo...he's not." Lakhe: "uzuth anditshongo. And futhi Andifun bantu bazolila apha endlinam bezokwenza isizungu ingathi sibhujelwe. Undincede sisi. Nidibane pha kude." Me: "Lakhe, uyifumanaphi lento uyithethayo." Lakhe: "I saw him. Udyola nomnye mntana, looks 19 if not 20. Ebehamba naye, doing shopping." I was getting soo damn confused. Me: "no man. Not Dumi." Lakhe: "inoba ndiyimfama ke. Ndiyampampatha xandijonga umntu." I didn't want to laugh at all. How could he think this? Lakhe: "ungahambi uthetha ezinto. He didn't see me. I saw him. Qha ke ndiyathanda ungazingeni ezabantu izinto. Its not my place, neither is it yours." Me: "now I must not tell Zingi?" Lakhe: "what proof do you have?" Me: "but she's my friend-" Lakhe: "ingxaki yakho kuthand ungena into zabantu.

Uzobhidakala. Batshatile ababantu, you're coming with these news will rock their marriage hard. Do you want to do that? Ungenaphi?" it was true. Ndingenaphi? At this point they were both my friends and I couldn't tell which I knew better because as far as my memory serves me. They're equal. Me: "I need to see my mom. Lakhe: "she's still in church. Uzophuma aze apha." yakhala phone yasendlini. Sandile went to pick up. Sands: "yep?" Lakhe: "awuphenduli olohlobo iphone!" Sands: "yes she's here." Lakhe: "that better not be your boyfriend. Ndizomhlaba aphambane mna. Akandazi nondazi." Sandile: "Spho-" Lakhe: "nguban lowo!" Sandile: "Learn To Trust." I went to go answer. Me: "Spho speaking." Zingi: "hey boo its me. Usendlini?" Me: "yes I'm home." Zingi: "great. Can we hang out? I'm bored. Abantwana ndibase kumama. Andimazi uphi uDumi." Me: "okay. There's lots of activities here." I was feeling guilty. Dumi was probably with his girlfriend. Zingi: "okay ndiyeza ke." I hung up. Lakhe: "and then? Umphanga? Ya, its time for me to disappear." Me: "you're not going ANYWHERE. You told me about this! You will Suffer with me!" I followed him to the bedroom. Lakhe: "I'm not staying for anything in this world." Me: "then say goodbye to these." I pulled up my top. Lakhe: "for 2 hours. I'll stay, if she starts crying, I'm leaving." Me: "if you dare leave." Lakhe: "torture Sandile. He fixes problems better than me." Me: "Sandile didn't tell me about potential cheating." Lakhe: "it is not potential. It is reality. He is cheating! You're about as in denial as his own wife." Me: "mxim. Just bath and come say hi." I went back out. Me: "we're expecting a guest Sands." Sandile: "oh, lo ucheat'elwayo?" Me: "no uZingi." Sandile: "I'm confused. Lo unomnyeni ocheatayo?" Me: "he's not cheating." Sandile: "uyi Blesser labhuti. Let him prosper." Lakhe: "yintoni Blesser?" Sandile: "umdala nyani. You don't even know who you are." Lakhe: "huh?" Sandile: "Blesser is a rich guy, who sponsors young girls. Amnike Mali for her hair, take her shopping, trips, those things." Lakhe: "why would he want to do that?" Sandile: "because ikuku imandi." Lakhe: "heee hayi nawe Sandile. I am banning that name under my room." Sandile: "but its

the truth. Sizothi yinton ke?" Lakhe: "whatever suits your fancy." Sandile: "ice cream ke. Imandi ice cream. Besides, it makes you look cool." Lakhe: "so nawe uyi Blesser?" Sandile: "andinaxesha lalo kak-" Lakhe: "Banned." Sandile: "really? We're banning shit too?" Lakhe: "my house." Sandile: "awusethule nopopi. What's wrong?" Lakhe: "ku-cheatelwa yena kaloku." Me: "mxim. I'm going to make snacks." Lakhe: "no need. Sandile will do so. Khandikhape ndiyovasa." I walked after him. Sandile: "I'm not even asked. Its like I'm paid to do it." in the bathroom I sat on the toilet seat Wangena yena kwi tub. Me: "I feel so bad." Lakhe: "andiphindi ndikuxelele izinto wena yazi." Me: "but she's my friend." Lakhe: "keep it together." Me: "I'm keeping it together." Lakhe: "tie

it up." Me: "its tied." Lakhe: "and put it away. Don't look at it." he bathed and we discussed some work issues until Sandile knocked. Lakhe: "yes." Sandile: "ufikile." Me: "okay ndi-" Sandile: "NO! Stay there." Lakhe: "Sandile, get in here." Sandile peeped. Lakhe: "get in." he stepped in. Lakhe: "wenzani pha." Sandile: "we're talking....just give me a few minutes to vibe." Lakhe: "vibe what?" Sandile: "just stay here please. I'll keep her company." Lakhe: "heee ooSandile." Sands: "don't you judge me." he stepped back out. Me: "do you think he likes her?" Lakhe: "definitely." Me: "I have to-" Lakhe: "KHAWUYEKE izinto zabantu! Yoh." I sat still and helped him bath. Ugqiba kwakhe wayokhangela isinxibo. Me: "I can't....I have to go to her." Lakhe: "I'm almost done." Me: "you're not even wearing underwear!" Lakhe: "I know." he came closer to me. Me: "get your ass dressed. Uze!" I walked out the room. The two were sitting cozily on the couch. Me: "hi." Zingi: "hey angel. Why didn't you tell me Lakhe had a sexy brother? And this wine.....Jesus, Is that you?" Me: "well..." Zingi: "he's such a gent." Me: "I'm sure. There's a cinema, awufun bukela movie." Sandile: "that's a great idea Spho! You guys choose the movie, I'll bring the snacks." Zingi: "and more wine." Sands: "your wish is my command." I was so confused. Finally Lakhe came through. Lakhe: "hi." Me: "maybe I should invite Ben." Lakhe: "try me." I giggled. Lakhe: "uright Zingi?" he tucked me under his arm. Zingi: "I'm perfect! Hey, we're watching a movie. I need a bathroom. Spho, you always choose great movies. You choose. Hahaha!" she stumbled down the passage. Lakhe: "is she....drunk?" Me: "yep." Lakhe: "I hope she's not drinking my wine." Me: "buza Sandile. He's her host." Lakhe: "and then?" Sandile: "I brought snacks. Where did she go?" Lakhe: "home." Sands: "What!!" Lakhe and I almost fell down laughing. Sands: "oh kumnandi ngoku? Mxim." we made our way to the mini cinema. Lakhe: "siyabashiya aba xa kufika umamakho." Me: "okay baby." Lakhe: "did I mention how gorgeous you look today." he kissed my forehead. I blushed. Lakhe: "umhle queen yam. Shota nge qhiya emnyama ngoku kuphele uxoxa." Me: "ubuxoxiswa ngubani." Lakhe: "nguBen." as he sat down. Me: "awusamthandi." I sat next to him. He put my feet on his lap. His facial expression changed. Me: "what's wrong?" Lakhe: "its nothing baby." Me: "unje ke..." Lakhe: "I'm just glad you're here...and you're mine." Me: "bundigxotha ke." Lakhe: "hayi sisi. Nguwe umntu obefuna ukuya kuBen. Awuthunywanga ndim. They would find his body in a 12 feet grave before he tries to steal my treasure." Me: "oh?" Lakhe: "khawuzapha ndiphuze." I sat on top of him and kissed his lips. Lakhe: "we might not make the...beginning of this movie." I smiled. Zingi: "guys..." she was standing by the door. We all looked at her. Sandile ebehleli a little before the screen. We were by the door. Sandile: "what it is?" Me: "Zingi." she looked extremely scared, her voice a bit shaky. I

got off Lakhe. Zingi: "who is on the other side of that door down the passage?" Sandile: "Why?" Zingi: "they're calling for help..."

Chapter 16

Lakhe stared at her. Lakhe: "the only person that needs help here nguwe. First you were seeing Jesus, now he's calling you for help. Does that make sense?" Zingi: "I thought I..." Sandile: "were they screaming? Banging? What?" Zingi: "kind of like whispering." Sandile: "khazohlala phantsi boo. You're hearing things." Zingi: "I'm sorry guys." Sandile: "its okay hun.. Hlala apha. There's no one there. Funeke uyeke usela Le-wine." Zingi: "but its nice-" Lakhe: "its making you Crazy." I pinched him. Lakhe: "nyani mos. Kuthiweni ke? Wena baby sekhe wava umntu ucela uncedo aphe ndlini? As a permanent resident of this household?" Me: "well no." Lakhe: "nantsoke." Sandile: "movie is starting." Lakhe: "I don't feel like watching a movie." Sandile: "hamba kaloku." Lakhe: "masambe mntu wam." Me: "siyephi?" Lakhe: "hlala ke with your friends." I got up and followed him. Me: "Lakhe." Lakhe: "hm." Me: "you're being rude." Lakhe: "I am? How?" Me: "firstly stop talking to everyone ingathi singabantwana." Lakhe: "I didn't talk to anyone as though ngumntana." Me: "mxim." Lakhe: "you want me to be more open to people. I'm more open, now I'm too open?" Me: "you can be open without ridiculing everyone you come across." Lakhe: "oh?" Me: "baby I appreciate your efforts, but can you please turn down the sarcasm, just a bit." Lakhe: "babe. Pick and choose. You want me to be open and sarcastic or quiet and cold. There's no in between." Me: "fine Lakhe." Lakhe: "uqumbile kengoku?" Me: "what does it look like?" he shrugged and walked to the kitchen. I went to the telephone to call for my mom but I needed her number which meant asking the psycho and I wasn't about to. So I stood by the phone. He stood next to me. Lakhe: "and then? Is the telephone also whispering for help?" I grinned a bit. That was a bit funny. Lakhe: "hm? silinde call ka Ben?" I ignored him. Lakhe: "or mhlawmbi eyaka Dub?" he laughed. Lakhe: "usayikhumbula baby la-show ka Dub ku Sabc 2?" I hid my smile, I wanted to laugh so badly. Lakhe: "ufuna ufownela bani baby?" Me: "mamam." he dialed the number and it rang. Ma: "hello." Me: "hi mama Unjani?" Mama: "ndiphilile my angel. Wena Unjani?" Me: "I'm fine I-" I heard something in her background. Me: "uphi?" Mama: "ndikhona love wam." something wasn't right. Me: "useza mama?" Mama: "ohh...hee, hayi mntanam. Uhm...andikazohamba my angel. Sizophinda sidibane." Me: "are you sure uright?" Mama: "I'm sure baby." Me: "okay mama. Goodbye." I hung up the phone. Lakhe: "so..." Me: "cela undise kumama. Something is not right." Lakhe: "what are you talking about?" Me: "she sounds funny. Maybe akaphilanga and she doesn't want to stress me." Lakhe: "how did you come up with that now?" Me: "its the only explanation." Lakhe: "or maybe she just

wants some time alone." Me: "no." Lakhe: "baby. Is there a time where awungeni into yomntu? If your mom was sick she would tell me." Me: "no she wouldn't. She has pride." Lakhe: "Spho. Stop. Let me take you shopping and-" Me: "I'm not gonna let you bribe me while umamam engaphilanga. Masambe. Get your keys." he sighed and took his keys. I went to his car ndayogibela in the passenger seat. Kalok iyagibelisa lena imoto funeke unyuse umlenze straight. He drove out to the hotel my mother was in. Me: "is she in your hotel?" Lakhe: "no, she picked Courtyard." safika eCourtyard. Me: "did you stalk her room number?" Lakhe: "no, I booked the room. I didn't stalk." we got out of the car. Lakhe: "kutheni unervous? Feeling guilty already?" Me: "why would I be feeling guilty?" Lakhe: "because you're making me help you spy on your mom." Me: "we're just checking." I knocked on the door. I pushed him away from view. Lakhe: "what are you doing?" Me: "she'll see us in the hole before she opens then pretend she's not here xa ebona sithi. Don't be dumb." he held his hand over his mouth. Me: "this is not funny. This is the real deal.

Shhh, here she comes." the door opened. Me: "hello." she stared at me in surprise. Why was she in her gown still? Its after midday. Mama: "heeyyy." she said nervously. Something was definitely wrong. Me: "can we come in-" Mama: "No. Uhm....I was unpacking. There's a mess." Me: "mama." "Baby? Ngubani lowo? Buya alok." what the fuck? Was I hearing things or? Lakhe: "so this was nice. Besizothi Hi qha, come angel we have shopping to do." Me: "mama, Uhleli nomntu?" Lakhe: "yes honey. Maside sihambe." Me: "mom!" she was embarrassed engathethi nelinye. Didn't she say utata was in Cuba?" Lakhe: "call me when you need anything mama. Bye." he pulled my arm. Me: "I was supposed to deal with this." I said in the car. Lakhe: "you weren't supposed to interfere. I keep warning you about ungena izinto ezingakufuni. You never listen. I don't know what it would take for you to get the hint. Uyiqalile lento kum, I was lenient on you, because I cared about your feelings. Into ezokwenza, not everyone is Lakhe, they not gonna let it fucking slide. Stop being inquisitive. Yeka ungena indaba zabantu. That do not include you, I keep saying. Uzokhubeka ke." besendikhubekile. He drove. I was sure that couldn't have been utata, xa kaloku umama engafuni ndingene ndimbone. Or even say anything that ufikile. Who was it then? Lakhe: "ufun utya nton." Me: "I'm not hungry." yangena moto kwa McD's. Lakhe: "one happy meal please." he said on the intercom. "andiva bhuti?" Lakhe: "khang'ungandiva ndithe ndifun happy meal." Me: "nguban lo uzotya happy meal?" Lakhe: "you. Since you acting so childish." Me: "Lakhe. Ungak'linge undiphambanise mna uyeva?" Lakhe: "uzandithini?" Me: "Lakhe. Do not test me." Lakhe: "ndithin ndik'quize?" "hello." Lakhe: "hi. Ufuna ntoni

apha?" Me: "ndizotyha McDonald's xabektheni?" Lakhe: "utheni uMcDonald's?" Me: "hayi Lakhe ndinoske ndilambe." Lakhe: "ok. Sisi cela undiphe Triple Boerie burger, medium meal, Sprite for cooldrink, and some McNuggets." she told him the total. Lakhe: "enkosi." he drove to the next window to pay for his food then collected it and drove away. Me: "I thought you hated take aways." Lakhe: "I do. My brother doesn't." Me: "uyithengele Sandile Yonke lento?" Lakhe: "yep. He loves McDonald's." that is so sweet. Me: "but he's not-" Lakhe: "He loves McDonald's. Ikhona indawo ofuna Uya kuyo?" I shook my head. Lakhe: "shopping?" Me: "I just want to be home. Minding my own business. Umama is cheating on utata." Lakhe: "you don't know that." Me: "if he was here, he would want to come see his princess. He always did." Lakhe: "ncoooh bethuna. Princess ka tata." I looked out the window. Lakhe: "don't let this bother you baby. Please." Me: "its not." my heart was aching anyway. I didn't want utata to be hurt. He would be. Lakhe: "babyyy." he parked th car inside our driveway. Me: "I just want to be alone." Lakhe: "okay." I went to my bedroom and got into bed, covering myself. In a short while....I fell asleep...

"Spho...wake up sweetie. Its time to go to school." I woke up. Khaya was standing by the door. He had a pink fluffy gown in his arm and a pink little bag. Khaya: "I bought these for you. Some toiletries and a gown to keep you covered and warm." Me: "uphi umama?" Khaya: "she's making your lunch. I'll put this here, you can go bath now." he placed the gown and bag on my dresser then walked out. I got out of bed and wore the gown, taking the bag to the bathroom. I bathed in the tub as I have for the past couple of days. It was so nice and big. When I went to get dressed in my school uniform, there was a little knock on my door. "hurry up sweetie." it was Khaya's voice. I quickly dressed and fixed my hair then walked out to the kitchen. Mama: "there she is. You're so beautiful." Me: "enkosi mama." Khaya: "okay. I'm out. Enjoy your day ladies." Mama: "uhm...?" he kissed her cheek. Mama: "aren't you taking Spho to school?" Khaya: "I thought we agreed, you Would."

Mama: "I haven't bathed and ndine appointment namhlanje." Khaya: "okay, let's go princess." I stood dead still. Khaya looked at Zama. Mama: "its okay baby. You can go." Khaya: "sthandwasam. She isn't ready, let's not force this on her. Please? Makakhululeke ngexesha lakhe." Mama: "okay, I'll cancel my appointment." Khaya: "okay. Ndiphumile." mama was upset, or was she angry? I couldn't tell. Khaya got in his car and started it, reversing out the garage. Me: "is he going to hurt me?" she looked at me. Mama: "no baby! He would never do that. He helps those who have been hurt before. Did someone hurt you?" Me: "we're gonna be late." Mama: "okay, but you can tell me anything my angel...anytime vha?" I nodded. She dropped me at school and came to fetch me later. I was in my room doing homework, when

I heard arguing. I came out the room. Khaya: "You better get the hell out of my house." I heard the voice that rattled my bones. He was here. How did he find me. "She Is Mine." he bellowed. Khaya: "jongapha bhuti. This is my house. If you do not leave-" Tata: "uzothini? Call the police? Go ahead and see if you-" Khaya threw a punch at him and kicked him to the floor. Mama: "Khaya!!" Khaya: "ndithe fokofa kwam! Akho kwanto yakho apha you dog!!" he threw him outside. Khaya: "you better stay away from my family. Or I swear to God I will burn you alive!!!" he slammed the door closed. Mama: "Khaya." Khaya: "not now Zama." he went to his bedroom. I just stood there not knowing where to go to next. Mama came and hugged me. Mama: "he's never going to hurt you ever again uyeva?" I nodded. I went to finish my homework and went to have dinner. Everything was fine. Khaya was back to normal, after dinner he went to watch TV. I helped mama with the dishes. Someone knocked on our front door. Mama opened and two men stepped in. "I am detective Mashaba, We are looking for a Mr Ngudla, is he home?" Khaya: "yes." he was already wearing a jersey. Mama: "Khaya wenza ntoni?" Khaya: "lock these doors and have the alarm on at all times. Ubize brother wam azosa umntanam eskolweni. Don't let that animal anywhere near my child!" Mama: "what is happening!" Detective: "your husband is under arrest for assault. I assume that he already knows. Let's go." they left with him. Leaving my mother crying. It was all my fault...why did I come here?

I woke up and looked around. Another memory. I missed him now. I got out of bed and walked to the lounge. Some strange man was sitting on the couch and another standing next to him ingathi yi-body guard. "Ah! Finally! Someone in de house popping op. Hello." he had a funny gay Mexican accent. He was dressed in a grey suit with a pink shirt and navy shoes. The chiffon on his neck also navy. He had mirror cat eyed shades on ndabawela ukuyihleka ndazibamba. Me: "can I help you?" he stood up. "my neym is Loco. You are?" Me: "Spho. What are you doing inside my house?" he giggled. Loco: "Your ? House?" he giggled. Loco: "you so cute." yep he was definitely gay. Loco: "where is the Lucky? My favorite amigo?" Me: "the Lucky is not here." Loco: "oh. Guess I wait then." just when I turned ndiyobiza uSandile to come deal wangena umfana. Lakhe: "Loco." Loco: "ah." he smiled and batted his eyelashes. Loco: "Lucky. I been waiting." Lakhe: "I see that. Sphosenkosi nd'cel undiphe umzuzu." Me: "wantoni?" Lakhe: "ndicela uye roomini." Me: "ngubani lo?" Loco: "or we can go back and the forth and the back. And I come in and fetch my men and go back out. Think we make each other point." Lakhe: "Siphosenkosi!" I turned and left immediately. Loco: "beautiful." Lakhe: "your men are not here." Loco: "how come this house the only place they were in last?" Lakhe: "I wouldn't know." Loco: "but you must

know." Lakhe: "but I don't." Loco: "but you must." Lakhe: "I do not." Loco: "I can go on

forever. You must know, where is Sun?" Lakhe: "he isn't here." Loco: "donda esta el?" (where is he) Lakhe: "I don't know!" Loco: "this not going to end good for us Lucky." Lakhe: "if I find anything I'll tell you first. Por favor deje mi casa." (Please leave my house) Loco: "vuelvo enseguida Lucky. Vuelvo enseguida." (I'll be back Lucky, I'll be back.) he walked out. I was in the bedroom, minding my business when Lakhe came in. Me: "who is that?" Lakhe: "Siphosenkosi. You are beginning to fucking piss me off!!! This shit is not attractive! Why can't you just trust me for once!! Everything is a bloody investigation kuwe and it is stopping. TODAY. Uyandiva ndithini? If I say No, its a no, respect my fucking privacy! I will tell you when I'm most comfortable! Sundipusha man!" he threw a plastic on the bed next to me and stormed to the bathroom. I sat in bed shaking. I didn't know what to do. It hurt that for once he actually yelled at me. He said I was pissing him off. I didn't want that. The bathroom door opened. He walked out and stood by the door. Lakhe: "I apologize for the way I spoke. It was uncalled for. Just that its difficult trying to control all these emotions I'm feeling. I'm sorry." he walked out the door. I looked at the plastic he had thrown. I didn't even want to touch it. All I needed was to go do something. Like cooking. I went to the kitchen to start preparing supper. Was Sandile and Zingi still watching a movie? Phof, andingeni ndawo. Before ndiphoxwe again. I boiled the macaroni and fried some onion, peppers on a pan to prepare for mince. I spiced my onion well and stirred. When cooked, I added the mince plus a little bit of water ingazotsha i-pan yam ye-stainless steel. When I finally finished with both, I looked for the casserole dish and prepared the oven I mixed the mince and the macaroni, grating cheese on top. It was the most easiest meal and resulted in me wanting to do something else. While it was in the oven I began cleaning the kitchen. Lakhe stood by the door. Lakhe: "what's happening?" Me: "kumdaka apha. Just need to get it cleaned." Lakhe: "uhm...phi." Me: "just needs a fresh breath." ugqiba kwam e-kitchen , I went to clean the lounge. The oven was on a timer so I wasn't worried ngayo. Lakhe: "Spho, I said I am sorry." Me: "yes. I heard and accept your apology." Lakhe: "I got you something, did you check the plastic?" Me: "nope. It wasn't my business to." Lakhe: "come on baby. You are the one person that is deep inside me. Yonke into yam I share with you.....in due time. I was wrong ngokungxolela." the problem is that he didn't really yell. Ebethetha qha ngomsindo. Which There's a difference. I can yell at someone to come closer from a distance. But xandithetha ngomsindo, that comes from deep within. There's issues there. Me: "okay." he brought the plastic from the bedroom. Taking out a box. Macbook. Lakhe: "this is for you." Me: "me?"

Why?" Lakhe: "your laptop needed an upgrade. I got you this and this." he took out an iPhone 6s. Me: "Lakhe.....really." Lakhe: "I know its a bit dumb buying the 6 kuzofika i-7 soon, but we can change it if you want. Whenever." Me: "when we fight.....you don't need to buy me gifts to apologize. Its not necessary. I'm not going to run away again or hurt myself. Xandirongo, ndixelele. Ewe ndizokhubeka but ndibe ndiyazi ndirongo." he nodded. Lakhe: "so I can take these back?" Me: "you want to start another argument?" he laughed. Lakhe: "you can call your dad hun..." Me: "I had another stretch of memory.." Lakhe: "tell me all about it." we sat on the couch and cuddled while I told him what I was remembering. Lakhe: "he sounds like a super hero." Me: "I have a positive feeling about him." Lakhe: "that's nice mntuwam. We will find out his number sim'fownele. I'm sure he'd be happy to hear from his princess, who happens to be my queen today." his fingers were running through my short hair. Me: "hm...wake me up when the timer goes off." Lakhe: "hayi. Bendik'shiye ulele apha, ungak'linge undihlolele mna." Me: "just a tiny nap." Lakhe: "no. We're watching the cartoons. Nanku Gumball. Ziphi ezi zimbini?" Me: "haven't seen

them anywhe-" Sandile appeared from the passage. Lakhe: "Oh...Good God. Sandile really?" Sandile: "hayi ke ndenze ntoni kengoku! I'm just walking!" Lakhe: "you know exactly what you did! Kutheni unje?" Sandile: "Spho uthetha nganton ubhuti?" I shrugged. Lakhe: "you're going to clean that cinema yourself. I want it with glitter." Sandile laughed. Sandile: "yuuuh. Ndiyi nton kwi cinema yakho mna. Oh Please." he walked to the kitchen wabuya ephethe 2L ye Coke and two glasses plus his McDonald's. Sandile: "is the McDonald's for me? God knew what he was doing when he made you my brother. Ndiyabulela Somandla. This never gets old." Lakhe: "you are disgusting. Undibone ugqiba kwakho. The chicken is out the oven." Sandile: "is it roasted or burnt?" Lakhe: "roasted." Me: "I'm cooking macaroni and cheese. Ncedile baby wenza lo chicken ecaleni." Sandile giggled to his bedroom. Lakhe sighed. Lakhe: "the chicken isn't for supper sthandwa sam." Me: "oh? What's it for?" Lakhe: "all in good time..."

Chapter 17

The next morning was a Monday. I was up by 5:30am to make umfana some breakfast. After that I went to put out his suit and shoes. He chose his tie and shirt. Lakhe: "ngubani xesha?" Me: "its 6:05am." Lakhe: "funeke ndiphume by 6:30." Me: "ambotya ke." Lakhe: "what are you doing today." I fixed his tie. Me: "a bit of work, ndizongena at the office also." Lakhe: "okay. Should I get you a driver?" Me: "I'll manage." Lakhe: "might as well hire a driver to drive you around." Me: "I think I need to start learning again. How to drive." he looked at

me. Lakhe: "not yet baby. Its too soon. The doctor will let us know when is the best time to try. We have to work on one thing at a time okay?" Me: "I hear you. You can get a driver ke so long. Go have your breakfast." Lakhe: "get back to bed..." Me: "I'm doing no such thing. I need to clean-" Lakhe: "asizoxabana kwaksasa ke. If you don't want to be in bed, ambovasa sihambe. You're not cleaning this house ingathi uqeshiwe. In fact, call agencies and find us a helper. Wena umsebenzi wakho kulendlu kupheka, and this bedroom." Me: "plus the laundry-" Lakhe: "and the helper will iron." Me: "okay." Lakhe: "this side is the only part she cleans. The second section is off bounds. So are my ducks. Please feed my babies. The gardener must not touch that pond or their penthouse. I do that myself ndim utatabo. He only mows and trims." Me: "crystal." Lakhe: "great. That's your task for now, ugqiba kwakho uze kum at the office. I want to doggy you on my desk." Me: "heeee uMr Sobukwe. Is'ngcolo esingaka." we went to the dining area. Zingi came out the room behind Sandile. What was this? What happened? Yazi bendim'libele? Heee. Did they..... Sandile: "good morning family. This looks amazing. I am famished!" Zingi: "uhm..guys...I have to get going." Lakhe: "of course. I'm sure Dub is waiting." I kicked him under the table. Zingi: "see you later guys." Sandile walked her out. Me: "he has hijacked my best friend." Lakhe: "hayi wethu she needed that dick recharge. Ayeke uba lonely kulandlu." Me: "you promote cheating in marriage?" Lakhe: "definitely Not. Kodwa ke in this case bobabini barongo. If he gets some ass, why can't she get some dick. I doubt he's home even." Me: "I don't believe you." Lakhe: "stop feeling guilty." Me: "no, today I'm not feeling guilty ndoyika ezinto uzithethayo." Lakhe: "I would never cheat you mna mntuwam. That you can take to the bank. If I gain enough liver to sign half of my life, estates, money and fortune kuwe, andicingi mntaka somnci ndiyobhatyaza. I fear being broke." Me: "you fear being broke more than losing me?" Lakhe: "I fear being broke because of losing you. You leaving me would leave me broke. I wouldn't mind being broke unam, but ke uzobe undishiyile." Me: "and how about now..." Lakhe: "all the money in the world does not matter to me, as long as I have you." he kissed me. Sandile: "arrgg, Romeo and Juliet." Lakhe: "ungam'hoyi la Satan." Sandile: "namhlanje ndingu Satan. I wonder uzoy'gainer nini liver." Lakhe: "I wonder uzovasa nini. Let me get going. Thank you baby for breakfast, I love you. Remember to come to me xa ugqibile with the task so I can do that thang." he kissed my lips. Me: "I love you too. Bye." he left the house. Sandile: "I'll the do the dishes." I chuckled. Bendiya mos all he would do is load them on the washer. Sandile: "I'm glad you guys are doing okay. He seems more human. Uyakwazi nokuthi uyamthanda umntu without thinking about it for a few weeks." Me: "maybe he did think about it for a few weeks.." Sandile: "touche." I went to feed the ducks

ndabuya ndayohlala on the bed starting to call the agencies. I had 4 interviews set for Wednesday for the helper and 3 for the gardener. I just needed to take another nap kakade it was too early still. My phone rang. Me: "hello?" Lakhe: "how is it going? Any luck?" Me: "yes got a few interviews for

Wednesday." Lakhe: "wenzantoni ngoku?" Me: "I'm just chilling for now." Lakhe: "batyile abantwana bam?" Me: "yes. They've eaten." Lakhe: "do you mind spending a few minutes nabo? I'm sure they're feeling a bit neglected." Me: "heee hayi ke i-worse." Lakhe: "pretty please?" Me: "fine!" Lakhe: "thank you. Usisthandwa bonanje." Me: "ok." Lakhe: "uzoza ugqiba kwakho ne?" Me: "yes ndiyeza." Lakhe: "perfect." Me: "bye hun." I hung up. I didn't have a choice I couldn't take a nap. So I got up ndanxiba njee then went out the room. Sandile was sitting on the couch watching TV. I was dying to ask kwenzeka ntoni phakathi kwakhe noZingi but it was apparently none of my business. Sandile: "Uyaphi?" Me: "Lakhe asked me to pet the ducks. Some how baqumbile." Sandile: "I don't know what it is about those ducks. Thought they kept him sane, but now There's you.." Me: "kept him sane?" he looked at me and back to the TV ingathi Khange aqalise uthetha. Me: "I love him too by the way." Sandile: "I know." I went outside to the duck house. Me: "hey guys.." well of course they couldn't hear me. I picked up Zan and brushed her neck. I had to whistle for them to follow me to the pond sayohlala pha. Me: "I wish you guys could talk. There's so much happening here that I can't speak to anyone about..." I put them in the water and they swam in a circle then came back to me. Me: "its too much personal for my friend. Whereby your daddy doesn't want to talk at all. I can't ask umama because she has her hands full with some man that isn't my dad. Its a whole blob, you know? I'm not sure what I should be doing anymore. Its difficult minding your own business. Inoba bendizithanda indaba ne? That can't be right." I heard footsteps from my side. I looked. Sandile: "you talk to yourself too?" Me: "I was talking to the ducks." Sandile: "right. So does Lakhe apparently. You want me to drop you off Kuye? I'm on my way out." Me: "no its fine. I still have to bath and stuff." Sandile: "I'll wait." he had his serious look on. Okay, so again I was being chased out the house. Sandile: "I'll get them back to their place." I got up and went inside the house. I had an urge to know what it was that he was hiding. I wanted to know everything. I went to peep in the window, seemed like he was struggling with the girls. I quickly ran to the joining hall and crossed over to the other side ndangena kulamnyango. It look like a warehouse, completely different from the first section of the house. There was plastic everywhere. Even hanging from a ceiling, ropes on the floor, chairs everywhere.....and a bucket. Something about that bucket made my bones

buckle. I had to get out before I was caught in here. I walked out the door and ran again to my bedroom. Took a shower and went to look for clothes. I wore a tight navy bandage skirt and a long sleeve top that cut off just before my belly button, so I had to pull up the skirt a little. I wore red stilettos and combed my hair. My things were ready for the office, I just grabbed my bag and phone ndaphuma. Thank goodness we were taking the i8. I would never be able to get on la wagon ka baby inkulu. Sandile drove quietly to the office building. Which was a bit awkward. Me: "you okay?" Sandile: "why wouldn't I be?" Me: "uthule." Sandile: "sometimes I appreciate silence in a world that never stops talking." iyuuuh. Ndamvala kanene owam umlomo. The drive was silent without even the radio and andithandi tu ubhotorosha abanye abantwana. Sandile: "what." Me: "uthetha nam?" Sandile: "ewe. Uyandisinda. What do you want to ask?" Me: "Zingi." Sandile: "what about her." Me: "what happened." Sandile: "maybe you should ask her." Me: "ok." I looked out the window. Indidikile Le family inempoxo yazi. Sandile: "its not that I don't want to tell you, its just that she asked me to keep quiet and I don't like violating promises." he parked the car. Me: "I understand. Bye." I got out the car. Sandile: "Spho." Me: "yes." Sandile: "sorry." Me: "for what?" Sandile: "I have a lot on my mind, I didn't mean to be a douche." Me: "that's fine." I closed the door. Me: "I'm used to it anyway." I walked into the door. The

receptionist looked at me. She: "can I help you?" Me: "yes, I'm here for my boyfriend." Lakhe: "husband." he hugged me from behind, andancuma bethuna. Me: "hey." Lakhe: "morning love. Let me get my stuff quick." Me: "Uyaphi?" Lakhe: "we have a meeting in 30 minutes." he pulled me to his office. Everyone was staring at us ndinazo nentloni Kancinci not sure what was happening. Me: "babe. Kutheni sijongwe kangaka?" Lakhe: "sijongwe nguban." he was tidying his desk. Me: "everyone." Lakhe: "I wouldn't know. Its not like bebengayazi siyadyola. Bebefika esbhedlele ndipha." Me: "oh." Lakhe: "you look stunning mntuwam. Yeyyi..I'm so lucky. I wonder ndenze ntoni?" Me: "you seem a bit high." Lakhe: "oh wow. Really babe? Ayabibhlungu intliziyo yam." Me: "where are you taking me?" Lakhe: "out for lunch baby. Let's go." kuske kuthini na. Me: "are you trying to distract me?" Lakhe: "even with your memory loss, that degree still slays. Yes I'm distracting you. I want us to have some fun, before I break up with you." we walked out the office. I was already distracted by what I witnessed in the house. What was in that bucket! Water? But for what? Paint? Lakhe: "are you even hearing me?" Me: "what do I want to eat for lunch? Anything babe." Lakhe: "you're still worried about your mom?" Me: "yes." why would Sandile be so vacant in that space kodwa its bare olahlobo. Xa kalok ethanda kangaka uhlala pha. What's with the open windows? In fact, lamfana ebese ndlini couple days

ago ufuna ntoni? Lakhe: "ai ndikuncamile." Me: "I'm just a bit dry man." Lakhe: "dry?...where." he brushed my thigh. Me: "I'm not in the mood for sex Lakhe man." I've been really distracted hey? But if I was to snoop I couldn't let on that I was on to him. I needed to distract him too. Me: "siyaphi?" Lakhe: "Bay West." Me: "siyothini baby?" he shrugged one shoulder. Me: "uqumbile kengoku?" Lakhe: "nope." he was leaning on his door while driving, fist under his chin. Of course ebequmbile. Me: "I just enjoy time at home baby. Together alone. Not out there." Lakhe: "I thought you were tired of being couped up endlini oko, so I was trying to make you happy. You could say ufuna siyendlini qha and not shut me down as if I'm some hungry fox always looking for sex." Me: "haibo. When did I say you're a hungry fox?" Lakhe: "you didn't have to say it. Its how I feel." finally! He is starting to loosen up! Me: "I'm sorry baby, it wasn't suppose to seem that way. I enjoy having sex with you nje....its never a problem. And awuyiceli oko, Kuthen ikuhlupha lento?" Lakhe: "I don't want you to be uncomfortable....you just got out of hospital, I don't want to tire you out or be inconsiderate." Me: "babe....I'm not an invalid. If you want to have sex, we'll have it as long as uyicela. There's no reason why not." Lakhe: "K. So do you want to go shopping or home?" Me: "we can go shopping my love." he smiled. This smile was so familiar...too familiar. It touched deep inside my soul and rattled my heart. Lakhe: "what's wrong?" Me: "nothing." I was struggling to breath again. Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "no, I'm fine." he stopped the car on the side of the freeway. Lakhe: "Spho, you're not. Look at me. Baby? Please breath. Slowly." I tried exhale and inhale. Slowly... Lakhe: "what just happened?" Me: "take me home please." Lakhe: "Okay. Okay baby." he started again and drove us home this time.

On our arrival, Sandile was not there. Ebetshilo phof. I took off the shoes and sat on the couch. Lakhe made me some hot chocolate. Lakhe: "baby? What went wrong? I need to know to prevent it from happening again. You can't just lose your breathing like that...Sphosenkosi, that scares me. I'm not ready to go through that again." how could I tell him? I didn't even know kwenzeka ntoni kum. Me: "your smile triggered something. I'm not sure, I just panicked." Lakhe: "was it bad? It reminded you of someone?" Me: "I think

so. But it can't be bad...I've remembered up to a time where I lived with Zama." Lakhe: "so it could be a happy memory but iyakothisa because you're awake?" Me: "I think so." Lakhe: "I'll call the psychol-" Me: "No, Lakhe. Just sit. You like fussing around, I want you to sit next to me and hold me. Leave the doctors alone!" Lakhe: "okay." he sat down and held me in his arms. Lakhe: "sthandwasam...I want you to be able to talk to me about anything. I don't want us hiding anything from each other for fear of hurting omnye wethu." Me: "uqumba kangaka wena, ufihle worse." Lakhe: "baby.

Andifihli nto mna. I told you everyt-" Me: "and Loco right?" Lakhe: "Loco is history in my life." Me: "if you say so." Lakhe: "I'll tell you baby, but I'd have to get you pregnant first ungakwazi undibaleka ndibenomntu wondithethela xa ungasandifuni." I looked at him. Me: "that intense?" Lakhe: "I love you so much." my heart melted by those words not because he said them, but it was the look in his eyes that gave it up. Distraction? Our telephone rang. Me: "I wonder who that could be." he got up to answer the phone. Lakhe: "Sobs speaking." Sobs? Since when sana? Lol. Lakhe: "and you are?" he looked at me. Oh oh.... Lakhe: "I see." I didn't like that look. Lakhe: "oh, I'd love to. Give us 5 minutes." he hung up. Me: "babe....?" Lakhe: "wear your shoes. Bout time, I taught this little Ben of yours some manners." he threw his jacket on the couch, loosening his tie. Me: "Lakhe, what are you going to do-" Lakhe: "uzondifumana phambili Sphosenkosi."

Chapter 18

Indlela eya kwa Ben I tried hurrying behind him. Kwayena ke Phof abuya azondibamba isandla ndingawi. He helped me up the stairs and knocked on the door. A tall slender woman opened. Ndabhidwa. Sana, was this the right house. "hi, ndingu Lorraine. I'm guessing you're Spho right?" ebejonge kum. Me: "yes, isn't this Ben's house?" Lorraine: "excuse me. Come In. Ben!!" Lakhe: "baby...I need to talk to you." Me: "wait Lakhe." I pulled him in the house. Ben came out of nowhere with a smile shining bright like a diamond. Me: "molo." Ben: "hello. This must be Masilakhe. I'm Ben, this is my wife Lorraine." Me: "wife? You never said you had a wife." Ben: "you never asked. Anyway, she just came from East London. Doesn't know much people here and I was trying to trick you into being her friend. That's why I was luring you in my house." he sighed. Me: "awww, that's so sweet! Kwathini kengoku ungatsho?" Ben: "I guess I was misjudging. I thought you wouldn't agree." Me: "Lakhe, honey. Kutheni ume apho, come here. This is Ben." Lakhe: "I heard." Me: "Ben this is my boyfr-" Lakhe: "husband. Its lovely meeting you both...baby, we have a guest coming in a few minutes." me: "huh?" Lakhe: "yeah. Uzofika singekho." Ben: "that's okay. Maybe we should have a chill session. Braai some meat and so forth. Sonke." Me: "nice." Lakhe: "okay. We'll discuss it another time. Thank you for having us." Ben: "no problem. I hope you don't mind, I searched for your telephone number." Lakhe: "absolutely fine. Thanks." Me: "it was nice to meet you Lorraine. Bye Ben." we walked out. Me: "and then?" Lakhe: "then what?" Me: "you were so adamant uzokhaba umntu next thing uyajika." Lakhe: "Khange ndithi ndiyokhaba umntu, ndithe ndiyofundisa i-manners such as umntu xa ekubiza ngokuzithoba uyaya kuye." LOL. That was a lie. Me: "what did you want to talk to me about." Lakhe: "Lorraine. High school ex." Me: "oh?" Lakhe: "yes. It was nothing serious wethu, just thought you'd like to

know from me before anyone else. I have no intentions of making you uncomfortable phambi kwabantu and I don't want anyone else to make you uncomfortable about anything. Especially ngam." Me: "does she know, This Lakhe or the previous one." Lakhe: "previous. Everyone knows previous. This one belongs to you." he squeezed me in his arms. Me: "why do you keep telling people you're my husband kodwa awukabhatali ne-lobola." Lakhe: "ufuna ndiyibhatale?" Me: "no, I was just saying man." Lakhe: "maybe I should go pay nyani." I laughed. Me: "I can't imagine you doing that." Lakhe: "my wife....umfazi wam. Unkosikazi. Umkam. My half.....yep, sounds better." Me: "babe. Don't go doing that." he smiled. Lakhe: "okay ke." we arrived at our house sekungathi kuzonetha. Lakhe: "you hijacked me from the office wena. lyaphela imali yam pha." Me: "they'll call when they need you." I kissed him. Me: "so handsome." Lakhe: "enkosi." he blushed and hugged me. Lakhe: "let me get my laptop. Just need to check a few emails vha." I also needed to fetch mine. I undressed and wore my pajamas. He also undressed and wore a tracksuit sayohlala in the lounge. He lit up the fireplace wazozisonga in between my legs. His laptop below his tummy, neyam ndiyi beke on mine. With a towel under it. Lakhe: "babe. Here's your dad's Skype details." I typed them in and gave him a video call. It rang for a very long time before a face popped up on my screen. Andothuka. "Princess." he smiled. Me: "hi..." he hadn't changed from my memory. Exactly the way he was. Dad: "how are you doing my baby?" Me: "ndiphilile tata. Wena?" Dad: "I'm great. Umamakho told me you were in an accident. My flight home is booked for later today. I might arrived there tomorrow evening." Me: "aren't you working tata?" Dad: "yes I am baby." Me: "well, I'm doing fine. You don't have to come." Dad: "I want to. You're my

only baby girl." Me: "but tata your psychology is needed there. I understand." he kept quiet... Dad: "baby? I left psychology 9 years ago. I've been practicing surgery apha eCuba. Did you forget now?" Me: "oh..." Dad: "ndiyeza mntanam. Okay? I'll be there soon. I miss you so much." Me: "khumbula nam tata." there were tears in my eyes. Dad: "let me see that beautiful smile. Put your crown back on. Let's see." I smiled. Dad: "that's my angel. Uzofika ke utatakho vha. I bought you something." Me: "what is it?" Dad: "uzobona xa ndilapho." Me: "please be safe." Dad: "I will be. I will be there too. Don't cry mntanam." Me: "okay." Dad: "I love you princess." Me: "I love you too king." I closed my laptop ndilila. I missed him so much. Lakhe: "love?" he hugged me. Me: "I'm fine. He's coming." Lakhe: "okay baby. Calm down." it was funny how I became so much more closer utata first time than I was to my mom. Is it because I remember him from my memory? But I only remember him taken by those detectives still. Not further. It was clear he had

a deeper impact on my life. I was his only princess after all. Me: "I want to take a nap." Lakhe: "lala apha kum. Iza." he positioned himself properly and I cuddled on his chest. Me: "what about work?" Lakhe: "it can wait. Let's sleep." after I closed my eyes and almost drifting off. Lakhe was snoring lightly. I felt a feather light movement above me ndavula amehlo. Sandile. He covered us with a thick blue polar fleece blanket and tip toed away eyovala ifestire yase kitchen. I fell back asleep...

My mother had fallen asleep in my room after utata was taken. His brother, Uncle Lani had come to fetch me the next day for school and taken me home. A few days later Khaya came home. It was Thursday. I came home from school with umama and at home bekukho Khaya and Uncle Lani. Uncle Lani was shorter and chubby, with a light complexion. Khaya stood up and I ran to hug him. Khaya: "hey...how was school?" Me: "bekumandi." Khaya: "that's great princess. Go change uzondibonisa what you been doing at school." I went to my room and changed out my school uniform. I brought him my very heavy bag (when I was at school, it wasn't that heavy.) I had to drag it to the lounge. Khaya: "did you miss me?" Me: "yes." I really did. His presence was missed. I took out my book and showed him my Maths. Khaya: "wow. This is great work angel." I showed him all the other subjects and we started on my Natural Science project. Uncle Lani was helping mom in the kitchen with supper. Mama: "guys, supper will be ready just now." Me: "but mama, asikagqibi." Mama: "you have to eat baby." Khaya: "we're almost done princess. Just put this over here." Uncle: "wow. Doctors in the house!" I giggled. Lakhe: "doctor in the making. I have a mini me here." Me: "done." Uncle: "perfect! Masiy'fote." he took out his fancy phone and took a picture. Mama: "dinner time." I went up to the table and we sat down for dinner. Mama: "can we please close our eyes to pray? Dear God, we thank you. For your mercy and grace. We thank you Lord for protecting us at all times and bringing home my husband. We thank you for the roof above our heads and the food on this table. In your Holy Name. Amen." Us: "Amen." we opened our eyes and started eating. After dinner I helped Khaya wash the dishes. Mama: "come Spho sweetheart, time for your bath." I dried my hands and went to take a night bath. I wore my pajamas and got into bed. Khaya came in my room and tucked me in. Khaya: "I missed you too mntanam. I will do absolutely anything to protect you. Nobody will ever hurt my baby princess ever again. Uyeva? Undixelele if ukhona umntu okuvisa kabhlongu. I will never let that happen." I nodded. Khaya: "goodnight princess." Me: "goodnight daddy."

I woke up from my nap kudlala i-TV. It wasn't very audible though. Sandile was on the other couch watching it with a bowl in his hand and a spoon.

Lakhe was also awake. How long had I been out? Lakhe: "hey sleepy head." Me: "hi." my heart still ached from missing my dad. The thought of him brought tears to my eyes. Lakhe: "kwenzeka ntoni ngoku?" Me: "I still miss him." I hid my face in his chest like a little baby. Lakhe: "okay, baby uyeza nje. Yoh, I'm beginning to think ndizoshiywa ndiphambane apha ngulomfo." Me: "mxim." Lakhe: "he lands in joburg at 6am." Me: "how do you know?" Lakhe: "There's only one plane landing from Cuba." Me: "I need to keep myself busy." Lakhe: "baby.." Me: "hm?" Lakhe: "you're really close to him ne.." Me: "I guess so." Lakhe: "I'm glad." I went to the kitchen. Me: "I want to make red velvet cupcakes-" Sandile and Lakhe: "Dibs on the bowl!!" Me: "huh?" Sandile: "I said it first its mine-" Lakhe: "ha.a Sandile! I said it." Me: "what is going on!!" Sandile: "I get to lick the bowl." Lakhe: "I put on dibs." Me: "ah you'll fight it out." Lakhe: "I'm going to help." Sandile: "nam." Me: "I want you both out of my kitchen! Stay at the door." Lakhe: "but baby, I'm helping." Me: "I don't need help." Lakhe: "but I love you." Me: "nobody is licking the bowl." Sandile: "please." Me: "bye." I took out the ingredients and mixed the batch. When I poured them into the pan, entered them in the oven. I made some icing. I licked the bowl too. :) I went to sit in the lounge with them, bebukele some soccer game. Sands: "Paul, Sbu and Hunter are in town." Lakhe: "andizaz ezitshom zakho mna." Sands: "the Beamer squad." Lakhe: "ude Ube kwesiphi squad wena? Its beamers ngapha, its Aston Boys ngapha, wena uphi?" Sands: "I enjoy lingering in between. I'm not going to associate myself ngenxa yemoto endiy'qhubayo." Lakhe: "bazofika nini." Sands: "tonight. Bazozobulisa then go. Andizobakho ke for at least a few days." Lakhe: "bye." Sands: "what did Jeff say about the house?" Lakhe: "he's thinking about it. Funeke ayo consulter umfazi kalok." Sands: "very soon nawe." Lakhe: "sisaqala nje. Uyamva baby uSandile uyandigezela?" Me: "uzobethwa ndim uSandile tshonge friends ezingacacanga apha." Lakhe laughed. Lakhe: "ingathi uyabazi. Kukho lo unes'bunzi esigoso." Sands: "you are the meanest man alive." Lakhe: "hayi ke mninawa xasigoso ndisthini mna?" Sands: "mxim." Lakhe: "ndifun ubone baby lo ingathi yi bompie. Ingathi udiniwe xa ehamba Uhlel ekhefuzela noba uyaphakama ibangu mcimbi." he fell down laughing. Sands: "uright!" Lakhe: "why ufuna uphuma wedwa kwesi squad. Uzenza lo usexy, abanye awubahoyanga. you're the mean one, not me." Sands: "and people wonder why you don't have friends." Lakhe: "tshomi yam Ngu baby mna. Andinayo ne-worry yase rhini. My squad is my girl." Sands: "yavuya wena." Lakhe: "undiqumbele? I was playing. Baby akho bompie pha babi bonke ngokufanayo." Sands: "mxim." Lakhe: "uzundishiyele BMW i8 yam torhwana. Ukhe ubaphoxe uhambe nge Benz. Benz is part of Beamer right?" he laughed. Sands: "mxim ndiyahamba ke mna." Lakhe: "ndithule ke. You can have it. Its yours." Sands: "forever?" Lakhe: "ewe. I don't use it anyway." Sands:

"uyandi'briber?" Lakhe: "is it working?" Sands: "mxim. Enkosi." nyani in about an hour zafika friends zakhe. I had checked on the cuppies and they were ready ndacima i-stove. I went to the lounge. The three guys were hanging around Lakhe ingathi kuziwe kuye. Clearly they liked him. Lakhe: "baby, ungabaphi cupcakes aba. Mabahambe sizimince." that was unnecessary, just ebefuna kwaziwe qha Ngu BABY ke lo. Me: "molweni." Sands: "andinovinjwa ekhaya." the guys greeted. "I'm Paul." I shook his hand. Me: "hi Paul." the next one was Hunter. The last one looked at him wearily. "hi." Me: "hello." as though he froze. I let go of his hand. "I'm sorry. Just that you look familiar. Igama lam ngu Sibulele. Its nice to meet you." I stared back at him.

Something was ringing bells in my head ngoSibulele. Kind of like a warning. I just saw red. Paul: "you and familiar. He says that to everyone." Hunter: "first time etshilo since ephume esbhedlele. I thought he forgot that line." they laughed. Me: "esbhedlele? For what?" Sibulele: "I was in an accident." everything was whirling around me. 'I was in an accident' kept ringing in my head over and over again. I was feeling really light headed. Lakhe: "babe? Are you okay?" my brain shut down.....

Chapter 19

I woke up. Lakhe had his arms around me. Sandile was sitting on the bed. Sands: "hey." Me: "hi." Lakhe: "baby..." I sat up. Me: "what happened?" Sands: "you collapsed." Me: "how long now?" Lakhe: "about 5 minutes." I was quite embarrassed. Me: "baphi....the rest." Sands: "in the lounge." Lakhe: "love....it turns out Sibulele was driving the car that bumped into you. Maybe that's why you reacted to him?" I don't think so...the reaction part. That can't be why, can it? No...there was something more there. "Sands... Is everything ok?" someone said from the other side of the door. Sands: "yeah bra. Everything is fine." Me: "I want to talk to him...about the accident." Lakhe: "are you sure baby?" Me: "yes." Sandile went to fetch Sibulele wabuya naye. Sibulele: "hey.." Me: "hi." then it was quiet... Me: "I'm sorry....I believe I was in the wrong, I caused the accident." Sibulele: "no, it wasn't you. The car rolled over. Nobody could've been able to control it. At least we're both alive. So its okay." Me: "how come you never came to check if I'd survived. I never saw you once." Sibulele: "bendizile when we were in hospital. The day before I left. You were bandaged on your head and unrecognizable from what I'm seeing now. Abazali bam came to fetch me and I was transferred to Durban immediately." Me: "that's okay...my mother wouldve probably done the same. If I could remember her. I can't remember a thing in my present life. I have snippets of my childhood qha." Sibulele: "it will grow back soon. You need to be patient and calm. Stay away from stress nezinto ezikhubekisayo.

Trauma is caused by pain. Don't allow it to happen." Me: "thank you Sibuu."
Sibu: "a pleasure. If There's anything I can do." Lakhe: "thank you Sibuu." Me:
"thank you." Sibu left the room. Me: "I was making cupcakes. I need to put
icing on." Sandile: "can I do i-" Me: "nope. I'm going to do it." Lakhe: "can I
have some icing?" I kissed his lips. Lakhe: "no baby. The one you made. Me:
"no. Ndizoyipha uSibu." Sandile laughed. Sandile: "he's allergic though.
Anyway mnike, uzayipha mna." Me: "who is allergic to icing sugar?" Sandile:
"Him." I clapped once ndaphakama. Lakhe: "sure you're okay?" I nodded. His
phone rang. Lakhe: "babe." Me: "hm?" Lakhe: "its your mom." Me: "ngubani
xesha?" Lakhe: "its 20 past 6." Me: "oko kwayizolo emini, uqala ufowna ngoku?
At 18:20pm?" Lakhe: "baby, maybe she wants to explain?" Me: "or shut me up
because uyeza utata? Right... Of course she wants to explain." I walked out.
Yes, I wanted to talk to her, but not ndinje. I was weak, and the thought of
her cheating on utata made me angry. I hated it! Ibindenza naar. Therefore I
needed to calm down much more than now. I went to the kitchen and put
icing on the cakes. Lakhe was first in the kitchen ezolanda eyakhe. Me: "you
have one." Lakhe: "thank you baby." he kissed my cheek and took the
second one ephuma. Sandile came and took his two. Sandile: "you're God
sent." Me: "abanye abantwana bona?" Sandile: "Sibulele akayityi cupcake."
Me: "uzotyantoni ke yena? Find him something." Sandile: "ha. a Spho
uzozikhangelela yoh." he took the rest of the cupcakes to the lounge. While I
was cleaning up wangena Sibulele in the kitchen. Sibu: "I'll just have some
juice." Me: "in the fridge." Sibu: "enkosi." he walked out after he poured himself
a glass. After my cleaning I went to the bedroom where Lakhe was. Me:
"wenzantoni babe." Lakhe: "working love. You kidnapped me from work
remember?" Me: "oh." Lakhe: "oh and Zingi asked you to call her back xa
ugqibile." I took my phone and took her number from his. I dialed and listened
to it ring on loudspeaker. Zingi: "hey babe." Me: "hey hun. Unjani?" Zingi: "not
so good." Lakhe looked at me and shook his head. Me: "do you want to
come over?" I stared back at him with a straight face. He looked at me with
a shocked expression. Lakhe: "where?" Zingi:

"no, baby I can't come over. Can we meet up for coffee?" Me: "okay.
When?" I don't think anyone has coffee after 6pm but..... Zingi: "now. Can we
meet at Salt?" Me: "okay love." Zingi: "sharp." I hung up. Me: "what is your
problem?" Lakhe: "I told you she can't come cry here. I said it specifically
because I knew. I'm not being mean but I need to focus babes." I went to the
closet to find something to wear. Lakhe: "babe?" Me: "don't you need to
focus?" Lakhe: "not for wena mntu wam." he came to the closet. Lakhe:
"uzonxiba ntoni?" Me: "Jeans. Top." Lakhe: "I bought you a white highwaist
pant some time ago. Unxibe la top yakho i-half yakwa Adidas i-white. Then

your black coat." Me: "ayikho half la top." Lakhe: "nxiba ndibone." I rolled my eyes and undressed. Lakhe: "sundi-confuser vha. Don't do that all at once." Me: "baby please go work. Iya torhwana. And andizokwazi unxiba la pant imhlophe I'm too clumsy." Lakhe: "uzayinxiba ke kanti. It looks sexy." Me: "yikhuphe ke." Lakhe: "babe...I'm just trying to make you look nice, kutheni nje ingathi andifunwa?" Me: "I don't want to wear the white pants ku-late. I don't want it dirty." Lakhe: "but awuyanga yo-jaiver nje. But its fine. There's the denim jeans?" Me: "I like this." it was a black short jumpsuit with a gold zip down the back. Lakhe: "mna ndizonxiba ntoni?" Me: "Uyaphi wena?" Lakhe: "k'le ndawo Uya kuyo. Andicingi mntu wam tu ndik'yeke umke wedwa. Ungalahleka ndingaze ndiphinde ndik'bone. I can't let you see better people unje." I laughed. Me: "awuphilanga kanene." Lakhe: "I'm serious Spho." Me: "babe. You need to trust me. I'm having coffee with Zingi. You're dropping me off, and LEAVING, ubuye uzondithatha. This is one place only." Lakhe: "okay." Me: "zip me up." he stuck his hand inside the jumpsuit and hugged me. Lakhe: "miss you already." Me: "shame baby. Nyusa kaloku." Lakhe: "seyiz'nyukele njena." Me: "the zip, silly!" Lakhe: "oh sorry." he zipped me up. Lakhe: "andisavinjwa man." Me: "andizok'phendula yazi. Which shoes?" I held up my thigh high straps. Did I own these before? They look so hoe'y. :v Lakhe: "ndafa bawo." Me: "tie me up baby." he sighed and knelt down. Fitted the shoe on my foot and started tying up the laces to my thighs. When he was done, he looked up at me and smiled. Me: "usuke apho." Lakhe: "cela uyobulisa ke." Me: "No. Come, get up." we stood up and I looked in the long mirror. Lakhe: "nantso into yam madoda." he took a picture with his phone. I combed my hair in the bathroom. I looked at my make up bag. Me: "babe.." Lakhe: "mntuwam. Ondishiyayo." Me: "how do I look? Without make up." Lakhe: "you're beautiful my angel." Me: "the uneven tones? The little scar?" Lakhe: "baby. Umhle qha. You don't need this make up at all." Me: "are you saying that because you're staying behind or because you mean it?" Lakhe: "both." Me: "so you don't want me to slay?" Lakhe: "hesana. Did you see your outfit?" I took out my foundation and began the process. Lakhe: "so.....you know this how." Me: "I watched the videos on YouTube." he laughed. Lakhe: "I see." after I was done he looked at me and smiled. Oko eme apha. Lakhe: "plum lipstick. You look gorgeous, my glazed donut." Me: "thank you sthandwa Sam." Lakhe: "so I'm really not invited huh." Me: "no. Call Ben. Bother him for a while." Lakhe: "I might just." we walked out the room. I took my clutch bag and phone and his card. Lakhe: "heee. So he's allowed to go but I'm not." Me: "he doesn't mind crying." we walked out the bedroom. Sandile: "siyaphi?" he stood up. Lakhe: "SIT." Sandile: "I'm on my way out." Lakhe: "no you're not." Sandile: "ndikhapha ii-boys. They're going out." Lakhe: "that's nice." Me: "bye guys." they waved goodbye ndangena emotweni. Sandile: "bhuti-" Lakhe: "I

don't want your silly comments tonight." Sandile: "uzoshiywa uphambane ulibele ubangu tamkhulu. Why you wearing tracksuits bra?" he laughed. Lakhe: "I don't answer to you." he got in the car and started. Me: "sum'hoya wethu uSandile usile yazi." Lakhe drove quietly. Andazi noba kuqunjelwe mna or what but ndathula. Lakhe: "would we still be this close if we were

married?" I swallowed. Me: "yes baby. Why not?" Lakhe: "your thigh is distracting me." Me: "what's wrong?" Lakhe: "I want you." Me: "for once can you get out mind out the gutter? Just once." Lakhe: "only if you would agree to be my wife." was that a proposal orndim lo udom? I just got so irritated that minute ndavala umlomo wam. Lakhe: "baby." my heart was beating too fast. I was scared. I was confused. I was emotional. This wasn't my dream of a proposal. It wasn't even a proposal. Ibiyi ultimatum. Really?? He turned up the music on the radio. Bendisiva shushu gqithi ingathi aside sifike kulendawo siyakuyo. Everytime he stopped at the robots he looked at me. Without another word out of his mouth. I was being unfair though. I needed to speak out, so I turned down the music. Me: "uthini na Lakhe?" he looked like he was shaking. Me: "Lakhe." yamisa imoto. Lakhe: "I said...ndicela ubengu mfazi wam." he whispered. Me: "here?" I didn't know whether to be disappointed or happy. He got out the car. Oh God, please...NO. He opened my door and kneeled down just like he was doing when he was tying my shoes. Lakhe: "at this point I know I look crusty as shit. With my old tracksuit and sneakers. While you're sitting there beautifully like the queen you are. I didn't plan this at all. Andizazi mandithini. I never thought there would come a day in my life where I would stare all day at the woman I love trying to measure how much she means to me. Zange nangemini enye sekhe ndacimba ndiyoze ndiguqe phambi komntu ever again since I lost my mom. I love you so much. And its weird because ayikapheli ne-3 months ndikwazi. Ndixolela usokola ndingabinanto than to lose you. I'm not easy, I know that. Ndiyabulela ngondinyamezela mntanomntu. All of this is just a short cut version of why I love you just before a truck knocks me down ndisaguqe apha. All in all, please marry me." Me: "you're ruining my make up." I cried. Lakhe: "that's why I didn't want you wearing it. Qha ke...kuthwa ndinomona." I got out the car and hugged him. Lakhe: "baby?" Me: "Yes?" Lakhe: "YES!!!!!" Me: "no, wait-" Lakhe: "sow'vumile! Haaa! Can't take it back." I was laughing so hard trying to explain. Lakhe: "now you're stuck with me for the rest of your life." he kissed me. I cannot believe I didn't even see this coming. Me: "masambe baby." Lakhe: "siyaphi?" Me: "Zingi?" he looked confused. Me: "well?" Lakhe: "oh, yes. Masambe. Ndinomfazi kaloku. Ingqondo ime ndaw'ninye." Me: "just get in the car husband. Ngena." he closed my door and drove me to Salt in Richmond Hill. Lakhe: "ndibuye what time?" Me: "in 2 hours. Call me first." Lakhe: "okay

nkosikazi. Although you look like my mistress right now and all these girls are staring at me ingathi ndingu tata omdala. Oh my God, I forgot to shave!" I laughed. Me: "you are so dramatic. Firstly, akujongwanga wena. Allow me to flourish. I love you husband." I kissed his lips. Lakhe: "love you too." I got out the car and walked into the restaurant.

A waiter came to me. Him: "hi sisi, table for one?" Me: "two. I'm waiting for my friend." he directed me to a table ndayohlala phantsi and called Zingi kanti naye uyangena. I got up and hugged her. Zingi: "you look so sexy." naye wabe eyi flame. She was wearing a maroon wrap around dress that had a long ass slit up her thigh. Me: "thank you. So do you angel. Unjani?" Zingi: "I'm a mess man." we ordered our food and drinks." I knew we weren't gonna have coffee. *side look* Me: "kwenzeka ntoni Zingi?" Zingi: "I had sex with Sandile." Me: "whaaaaat." I acted shocked but she clearly saw I was faking it. Maybe I didn't put that much effort into it. It was kind of an 'haha I know' moment. Zingi: "he told you. Didn't he." Me: "he did not. He respects you. He said he's not breaking promises." she sighed. Me: "how was it?" Zingi: "so amazing..." I laughed. Me: "amazing? Wow. I'm going to need a glass of wine." Zingi: "I need a bottle." Me: "so what's the problem." Zingi: "it happened so

quick...we didn't use protection...." Me: "Oh No." I was beginning to stress. Zingi: "I know. I had to rush out that morning to buy the pill." I sighed, but I had another feeling. Me: "I'm still waiting for the bad part. I feel like There's more." Zingi: "I got nauseas afterwards and threw up." and back to the stress. Me: "you threw up the pill?" Zingi: "yes. I saw it in the throw up. Completely undissolved." Me: "and then what happened." Zingi: "I went to the doctor, he did some tests." Me: "and....everything is fine right?" Zingi: "no...I'm pregnant again." Me: "I am extremely confused. In a day???" zingi: "no! I'm 15 weeks!" I stared at her, shocked. Me: "is the baby okay? The pill! The drinking!" Zingi: "he's fine. Everything is perfect." I sighed again. Me: "at least the baby is fine. I'm sure Dumi will be so happy." my mind bounced to the fact that he's cheating and I was looking at my best friend straight in the eye having to keep this secret. It hurt so bad. Zingi: "yeah..I'm not so sure about that. He said he didn't want another baby." Me: "then he shouldn't have been having sex. No offense." Zingi: "andiyazi ndizomxelela njani uSandile. Goodness, I can't even look at Dumi. Not that he's ever there." Me: "are you dating Sandile or its just a fling?" Zingi: "I enjoy his time. And sex....I don't know....he's sweet. Even today, besihleli kunye. He's sweet and adorable as hell." Me: "uhm...Zingi... You're married." Zingi: "I know Spho." Me: "don't you think maybe it would be beneficial for your household if you kind of....paid more attention to Dumi. And what he's up to." Please take the Hint! Zingi: "Dumi is always working!

Akanalo ixesha lam. Or the kids anymore. There's this stupid big case he's working on. So much so, ungena ngo 1 emke ngo 6. Is that sane?" we got our drinks. Me: "maybe....Ikhona into emhlopheyo or angaxolanga ngayo." Hint #2. I'd be damned. Zingi: "ah well...ba akathethi how does he expect me to know? In any case. I want to abort this bab-" Me: "don't you Dare!" I couldn't let her finish that sentence. Me: "you're a mother! You cannot abort that baby! You will NOT! And you're not having wine either." I took her glass. Zingi: "Spho, this is my decision. Giving birth to babies can't be all that I'm doing for Dumi." how I wish I was in your position. With a little someone growing inside of me. Me: "now its kind of too late Zingi. You and Dumi need to pull yourselves together and raise this baby the same way as the first two. You're not going to punish this baby for your faults and I'm not letting you harm her either! So you're just gonna have to suck it up." she sighed. We stayed quiet for a few minutes. Zingi: "I think its a boy." Me: "I'm betting on a girl." Zingi: "I think I like uSandile." Me: "how?" Zingi: "njani ba how ngoku?" Me: "when you're married don't you kind of just like your person and no one else?" Zingi: "things change in the long run Spho. I still love Dumi, but Sandile at this moment.....damn." this scared me. If I told her what Dumi was doing, she would have an excuse to keep having sexual relations with Sands. If I didn't, I'd probably go insane because I care about her marriage and family. I just didn't know what to do. I was too involved. Zingi: "anyway....how are you doing?" I snapped back to reality. Me: "I'm good. I'm great." Zingi: "and...what else? Hey, are you permanently staying with uLakhe or you going to move back to your place again? Cuz if not, I'd like to use it." Me: "to fuck Sandile privately? The least you could do is find a hiding spot." Zingi: "yeah but ndizoxelela uDumi kuba you sold it. Therefore he will never go there." Me: "Zingi, I don't want you to fuck up your marriage. Please." Zingi: "relax Spho." I was so upset it wasn't even funny. I drank the wine in silence. She was on her phone smiling and texting. No doubt that was Sands. Me: "have you done this before?" Zingi: "done what?" Me: "cheated? On Dumi." Zingi: "no, why." Me: "I'm just asking." Zingi: "Sands uyabuza sizobuya nini. He's ditching his friends at Finnezz." well, I also wanted to spend time with my fiance anyway. Me: "whenever you're ready." Besendimkhumbula shame. Ebengaxoki ngoku ebesithi I'm his only friend. He's also my

friend. I texted him. Me: "we're coming home." Him: "you can't baby, my other girlfriend is here." Me: "ndikufake impama ke mna." Him: "lol. Sow'dikiwe yi-friend yakho?" Me: "no, yena udikwe ndim. Apparently Sands d game is on point." Him: "Iza kumntu wakho ke baby. I'll lick you to sleep." I asked for the bill and take aways on our food. Zingi: "and then?" Me: "we're going home love." Zingi: "heee. Wena noLakhe." she shook her head. Our bill came, she

paid it and I took the plastic. Saphuma ukuya kwi BMW yakhe. She drove to my house in KK and parked on the driveway. Sandile was waiting by the garage. Me: "goodnight guys." Sandile: "no, we're having game night. I have the games set up." Me: "nope. I need to get to my bae." ndabashiya apho. My boyfriend was on the bed, his laptop next to him and a few papers in his hand. Suddenly, out of nowhere, someone started speaking and I began wondering why God was asking about a financial report email? Lakhe: "I received it yes. I'll go through it tomorrow at work. My wife just worked in. That's enough business for the day." "alright man. Enjoy." Lakhe: "sure thing Luke." then I heard two beeps. Me: "what the fuck was that." he smiled. Lakhe: "I have speakers in this room and a Bluetooth connection plus wifi calling." Me: "this is our bedroom Lakhe!" Lakhe: "I apologize." Me: "baby, this is for you study room, not for our bedroom. This is an anti work station. I'm here to get licked. Please!" he laughed. Lakhe: "wow...now I know how to get you home. Khawuzapha." he pulled me in his arms while sitting on the bed. I stood in front of him. Me: "I didn't rush over here to get a hug." Lakhe: "unezmanga yazi. Ithini tshomi yakho." Me: "heeee...mk. I'm unable to develop the can ngoku." Lakhe: "andiyiva ke Le English yase transkei mna." I chuckled. Me: "mxim." he pushed away all his work to the other side of the bed and unzipped me. Taking off my jumpsuit and underwear. Me: "izihlangu bab-" Lakhe: "keep them on." he pulled me on top of him turning around to lay me on my back. His tongue swiveled around my clit. Me: "baby.." he sucked on it slowly and wiggled his tongue. Me: "ooohh yeesss..." he held my legs apart. His tongue worked its way down and up again. I held onto the pillow for support. Me: "Lakhhe!!" he got up and kissed my lips. Lakhe: "kunini ndikubawela baby?" he groaned pushing himself in. Only then he took off his t shirt. Lakhe: "please hold me..." he kissed my neck and pulled his muscle out and back in. I listened to the smooth organ kneeding my insides so tenderly. Lakhe: "baby..." his voice sounding more urgent. I'd forgotten. I held him and he kissed my lips humping faster. His lips were stuck on mine I wrapped my legs around his waist. He pounded himself in once and stopped, trying to catch his breath. Lakhe: "I am so sorry. That was a really poor performance. Kunini ndilambile." Me: "undiqhathile baby." Lakhe: "I know mntuwam. I feel so bad. And Warm...and fuzzy." Me: "baby..." I complained. He looked at me with a smile then disappeared under the blankets.

About 20 minutes later Sandile came to knock on our door. Lakhe: "yinton." Sands: "uhm, we have a problem bhuti." Lakhe jumped up and got dressed. I too, got dressed casually. Lakhe: "hlala apha." he hissed. Me: "babe-" Lakhe: "Sphe. Uzohlala apho. Siyevana?" he said as low as possible then he opened

his door and I saw a gun pointing at him. "noooow....do you have the time for me???"

Chapter 20

Lakhe: "what are you doing Loco? This is not smart of you." Loco: "Me knows buuuuut I'm doing anyway." Lakhe: "I told you I know nothing!" Loco: "I think you lie. You lie to me." Lakhe: "what reason would I have to lie?" all this time they were standing in that one position. Loco didn't see me. He didn't know there was someone else in the room with Lakhe. I took the small cylinder vase and smashed it broken on the visible hand. Loco: "ouuucchh!" he dropped the gun. I heard gun shots and Lakhe grabbed the one on the floor shooting down the passage. Funny enough these weren't the normal loud gunshots. They just sounded so soft and quiet. Lakhe: "lock this door." he closed it behind him and I locked. My heart was beating so fast. It was the longest hours of my life having to wait there in the dark. Ndizibuza ndiziphendula ukuba lo Loco ufuna ntoni kuLakhe. "Spho." he knocked sekukdala. I jumped up and opened the door. He took off his bloodied t shirt. I didn't want to ask so many questions instead I kept quiet and waited for him to say something. I peeped out the door and everything looked normal. Zingi came to our room and knocked on the open door. Zingi: "is everything ok? What happened? I took a nap and all of a sudden xandivuka you're both upset." she looked at the broken pieces on the floor. Me: "we're not upset hun." Zingi: "okay. Uphi uSandile?" Lakhe got into the bathroom and took a shower. Me: "I'm sure he'll be back soon. Umhlambi he went out to check his friends." Zingi: "uright uLakhe?" Me: "he's fine. Yeah." Zingi: "okay." she sat down on the chair. Zingi: "I don't know what got over me. Ndiveske ndozela ndalala in minutes." Me: "maybe the baby is firing you out." Zingi: "maybe so." I started picking up the pieces quietly. Lakhe came out the bathroom and walked to his closet. I cringed in embarrassment. Zingi: "uhm...I'll be in the other...uhm..yoh." she walked out and closed the door. Me: "what the hell? Masilakhe!" Lakhe: "yinton?" Me: "why did you do that?" Lakhe: "this is My bedroom. Andizozimela mna for abantu abangayaziyo indawo yabo." he got dressed. Me: "we're going to have to talk about this sooner or later." Lakhe: "about what now?" Me: "what happened hours ago! And where the hell is Sandile!" Lakhe: "Spho-" Me: "No. This time, it is My business. You almost got fucking killed! I have the right to know what the hell is happening! If I'm to marry you, I must know what the hell this is." he looked at me then moved closer to me. He stood right in front of me and kissed my lips. I pushed him away. Me: "don't fucking piss me off." Lakhe: "ufuna ukwazi ntoni ke Sphosenkosi." Me: "what is Loco to you and why does he want to kill you!" Lakhe: "its not a problem anymore. Its taken care of thou-" Me: "Don't Lie." Lakhe: "akaphinde asihluphe uLoco." Me:

"Masilakhe Sobukwe." Lakhe: "nkosikazi-" Me: "tell me!!" Lakhe: "I can't baby. I'm sorry." Me: "so is that what's going to happen now? We're keeping secrets from each other?" Lakhe: "no..." Me: "fine then Lakhe. You'll be on the couch until you're ready to open your mouth." I threw him a pillow and a blanket. Lakhe: "I have a 15 bedroom hous-" Me: "Get the fuck out of this one and Sleep on the COUCH!" I screamed. Lakhe: "baby." Me: "Mfana!!" I warned. He took the pillow and blanket walking out of the bedroom. Me: "ndifike ungekho net apho!" I paced around the room ngomsindo. Me: "Masilakhe!" he peeped. Lakhe: "baby?" Me: "go to the other room. We have a guest and awuzokwenz ubuxelegu k'la lounge." Lakhe: "kodwa baby-" I stared at him. He quickly walked away. Where the hell was Sandile? Watsho engena. Sands: "mntase." Me: "Sandile. Kwenzeka ntoni?" Sands: "yoh...mntasekhaya kumoshakele man..." Me: "what are you talking about?" Sands: "uphi ubhuti?" Me: "akekho apha. Uye kwenyi room." Sands: "cela ungamqumbeli

torho. All of this is my mess and he's been trying to fix it for me." Me: "then kutheni engathethi nam? I almost lost him and I don't even know why! Is that fair? Ukuba ibindim lo he would've demanded to know." Sands: "I know sis. Its difficult though. For us to just talk about izinto zethu. Nam andinokwazi uthetha izinto zakhe kuwe, funeke kutsho yena. Vice versa. Its not that we're trying to hurt you." Me: "its fine Sandile. Its whatever. Zingi was looking for you." I held the door for him. He walked out the door and I closed it. What in the world was happening here? I took the pill for sleeping and got into bed. I couldn't believe I almost lost him like that. How did I get the strength to take that vase and attack a man I didn't know? I could've failed and gotten us both killed. I just needed to focus on other things for a minute. My dad was on his way, that was something right? Yeah.

I woke up in the morning ndiziva ndisindwa. I opened my eyes and saw an arm around me. Then I heard snoring. I couldn't even get irritated. I just couldn't. Instead ndiye ndatyhafa. I looked at his face. He looked so peaceful and sweet. Me: "Masilakhe." he shifted and moved closer with his loud breathing. No better than the snoring. Me: "Masilakhe vuka man." Lakhe: "hm.mh." Me: "how did you get in here?" Lakhe: "baby kusebsuku." he mumbled. Me: "no its morning. You're going to be late for work. Get up." Lakhe: "sorry alok." he yawned. Me: "mxim." I tried getting out of bed and he pulled me back in, locking me in his grip. Lakhe: "cela undixolele. I got cold without you kengoku ndabuya ndazolala. I did ask wena wandifaka ebeleni. I thought that was a yes." Me: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "yes baby." Me: "the place I was living in before." Lakhe: "yes. Isekhona babes." Me: "I need you to sell it. Today." Lakhe: "for a second I thought you'd say ufuna uyohlala pha." Me: "and move out of my house? Uphambene." he smiled. Lakhe: "and yeyakho

baby lendlu. Why do you want me to give the place away? You were renting pha. So I paid for the next 3 months kakade." Me: "Zingi wants to use the place for yena noSandile. I'm not comfortable with the cheating." Lakhe: "I see. Kutheni ungaske utsho ke." Me: "andifun uba ngathi ndinomona. I tried last night umxelela ayeke but she doesn't want to hear. I don't know what else to do." Lakhe: "you're going to tell her that you're not comfortable in letting her cheat on her husband especially in your space. Therefore, you won't be involved in any scandals or lies in the future. Ukuba uthula ngoku uyow'xoxa ubom bakho bonke. Ibengathi nguwe kengoku ixoki. Set it straight kwangoku." Me: "fine." he kissed my neck tenderly. It felt so nice but I was still mad. Ndiyilonto izilwayo ndimyeke ndimxhaye. Luckily for him, he just stayed where he was, doing what he's doing without extending it. After a while he stopped and I felt him breathing lightly. He had fallen asleep again. Me: "Lakhe! Work." Lakhe: "I am so tired baby. Ha.a. Yuh." Me: "hayi Masilakhe awuzokwazi tshi." Lakhe: "No." I let it go right then. Lakhe: "we're sleeping in today. Sizovuka emini, sivase sitye and come back to bed." Me: "no, I'll have to prepare for utatam." Lakhe: "he's living with us right?" Me: "uhm...baby....I am not going to be able to do that. I can't sleep with you ebhedin yakho, ekhona yena. Its disrespectful." Lakhe: "I understand completely. Sizothini ke." Me: "I don't know." Lakhe: "use your flat for a few days. He's not staying that long mos." Me: "I don't know babe..." Lakhe: "then he can stay in the flat. Or I'll book him a hotel." Me: "I'll ask him when he's here." Lakhe: "okay nkosikazi. We must go choose your ring futhi." Me: "something small and simple. Plus I can't wear it before uthethile nabazali bam." Lakhe: "I know. We'll have to go to kwabam ke nam in East London. I'm sure my dad will give me his liver if he found out ndizotshata." I smiled. Lakhe: "he never knew what to do to me to get me to talk to a girl. Wazama wancama." Me: "you never had girlfriends?"

Lakhe: "I did. There was Ncumisa, Lorraine but we weren't serious, after her, in varsity there was Kristen, Hlumelo, Dez, then I started working and building my career kwecwaka for a very long time. Then came Bianca who stayed only a few months. Been single since." Me: "I was waiting for at least a two page list." Lakhe: "I would've lost focus if bendihoye amacherrie. I needed to be successful more." Me: "when last did you talk to him?." Lakhe: "couple of days ago. Those 10 second calls." Me: "10 seconds?" Lakhe: "yeah. He's like, Hee mfondin! Usaphila? Oh. Hayi ndiyacheckisha mfo. Sho. And he hangs up." I was laughing at the voice imitation so bad. Me: "that's it?" Lakhe: "he talks noSandile longer ke. Ude azivalele eroomin ke yena. Andizazi zindaba ezivelaphi ezi almost everyday." Me: "maybe, you should reach out often. Xa ekwazi ukucheka nawe you got to call him and make sure he's okay. Talk to him about stuff he's doing." Lakhe: "that's why Sandile is there-" Me: "and you.

He needs both his boys." Lakhe: "okay. Ndiyakuva. Can I sleep now?" Me: "fine. Sleep." I got up and went to brush my teeth, washing my face ndaya e-kitchen. Me: "hi Sands." Sands: "hello." Zingi came out the room and again, I felt a bit uncomfortable. Zingi: "babe, today Ikhona into obusy yiyo?" Me: "not really why?" Zingi: "great. I have a crisis at the salon, also I have to take Zimi for her check up. Lulonke has to be at school. I need your help." Me: "how?" Zingi: "my suppliers only know me, so can you take the kids." Sandile: "I can take them." Me: "that's alright. I got it." Sandile: "but you can't drive." Me: "I don't have to." Zingi: "okay. Here's my mom's address. I'll call her ngoku. And here's the school address." Me: "okay. The doctor?" Zingi: "of course, nantsi neyakhe. I have to go." Sandile: "can I drop you off?" Zingi: "I called a cab already babe. Sizodibana efownini. Right?" he nodded. Zingi: "goodbye Spho." she left the house. Me: "will you manage breakfast?" Sandile: "sure." I went to take a shower. Lakhe: "Uyaphi?" Me: "I'm taking the kids to school." Lakhe: "which kids?" Me: "Zimi noLulonke. Phof Zimi needs the doctor." after my shower I looked for clothing. Lakhe: "so...we're babysitting?" Me: "yes. Phakama. You have to drive me to places." Lakhe: "uurrgg..."

I went in Zingi's mom's house to fetch the kids. She knew who I was, I didn't. Me: "molo ma." Her: "hi bhabha. Uright?" Me: "ndiphilile mama Unjan wena." Her: "ndiright sana. Zingi told me what happened, I hope uba right sisi." Me: "I'm fine mama. ndiya ngoba right wethu." Her: "heee sana. Khawutsho. Ithini into yalentombi?" Me: "uZingi? Everything is fine." Her: "no its not. Kutheni engasekho endlini? The last time ebezise abantwana baye bazobonwa ngutatabo ebuza uphi yena. He thought she was here." Me: "oh, ebehleli nam ngalomini. Like izolo." Her: "ohhh....hayi kulungile ke sisi." the kids were ready and I felt like I was seeing them for the first time. Lulonke was a big boy, probably around 6 years of age and Zimi was the little 2 year old buttercup. She looked so beautiful. Me: "okay, let's get going angels." Zimi: "thatha." I picked her up with her bag in her carseat and we went to the car. Me: "babe. This is Lulo." Lakhe stared at him on the rear view mirror. Lulo: "hello." Lakhe: "hi." Me: "and this...is Zimi." I installed her seat in. Zimi: "booooo booooo booooo!" she giggled. Lakhe: "uhm...ok." I put on their seatbelts and got into my seat. Lakhe: "great. School first?" Me: "hm." he drove the car to Lulonke's school. Me: "goodbye sweetie." Lulo: "you must come in with me sisi. The teacher must see the parent every morning." Me: "Oh. Lakhe, please watch Zimi." I took Lulo into school and signed in with his teacher ndamshiya khona. Lakhe drove to the doctor. Lakhe: "so...Zimi-" Me: "no." Lakhe: "akalambanga umntana?" Me: "she's barely able to say hello." Zimi: "bhubhu." Lakhe: "she already learned my name. Yes baby?" Zimi: "Imi nambile." Lakhe: "so she is

hungry. I'm bhubhu by the way." Me: "uzotya xa egqibile. Her appointment is almost now." Lakhe: "babies have appointments now." Me: "mxim." Zimi started sobbing in the back. Me: "what's wrong angel?" I gave her, her doll. She pushed it away and continued crying. Me: "I'm so bad at this." Lakhe: "just take her." Me: "that is illegal. Umntana uhlala kwi baby seat at all times." Lakhe: "just take her." Me: "its illegal." he stopped in the parking lot and took off his seatbelt. He took the baby from her seat and hugged her. Lakhe: "yintoni ingxaki sisi?" Zimi: "nambile." Lakhe: "sizotya ntoni?" Zimi: "uMeki!" he laughed. Lakhe: "okay. Even though I don't know what that is." they got out the car sayongena ku doctor. After the check up we left the doctor to find something to eat. Lakhe: "so what does she eat?" Me: "I don't know what babies eat. I never had one. Baby food perhaps?" Lakhe: "khabuze kumamakhe what uMeki is." I called Zingi. Me: "babe, utya ntoni uZimi. She's asking for uMeki." Zingi: "Meki is McDonald's and she can't eat that now. She already had her porridge, get her fruit and one small yogurt." Me: "that's it?" Zingi: "yes. Gotta go now." she hung up. Me: "fruit and yogurt apparently. Meki is McDonald's and not allowed at this time." Zimi was looking up at him with her hand on his beard. He stared back at her. Lakhe: "it looks nice ne? It does, doesn't it." Zimi: "bhubhu." Lakhe: "ndim lo." Me: "Lakhe." Lakhe: "yes babe?" Me: "did you hear a word I said?" Lakhe: "weren't you on the phone? Sorry baby." Me: "she must get back in her seat, umamakhe said fruit and yogurt." Lakhe: "she can sit right here. Let's drive my little soldier." Me: "Lakhe! That's dangerous-" Lakhe: "its an automatic, I'm controlling the steering and pedals. Relax." the car started moving. Zimi hit the hooter loudly. Lakhe: "tell them to get out the way baby." Zimi: "boooop boooop!!" she giggled. She looked so happy and bubbly. Yet I wanted her to sit in her seat still. We drove to Walmer Park and bought her yogurt kwa Woolies and some fruit. I was pushing the trolley. Lakhe was holding her. They kept popping random things in the trolley. I wasn't even paying attention because bendizixelele andingeni ndawo. He paid and we went to the mall. Zimi was on his shoulders shouting and laughing. He held my hand. Lakhe: "where to now?" Me: "I don't know daddy. You choose." Lakhe: "I smell jealousy." Me: "I'm just happy she's having fun. She's a cute child." he kissed my forehead. Lakhe: "you're so overprotective ngaye." Me: "if she were mine I would be too. She needs to be kept safe. One can never replace this." Zimi: "Tata!!" she screamed. Zimi: "Tataaaa!!! Nako Tataaaa!" I looked at where she was looking and Dumi was walking out of Zara with a young girl in his arm and shopping bags zakwa Mac and Zara. Andakhubeka bawo. He literally froze. Lakhe turned and walked another direction. Poor Zimi just stared behind her. Me: "come here baby." I took her off and cuddled her in my arms. Me: "maybe we should go home?" Zimi: "uMeki bhubhu." she whispered. Me: "and get her some Meki

please." he held my waist walking to our car. When we got in she sat on my lap to eat her yogurt and fruit. We left shortly after she finished sayothenga McDonald's. Which got her off the dull mood. In no time. She held her happy meal safely on her lap with a smile on her face. We arrived home sayongena endlini. Sandile wasn't here. I always knew because he's allergic to his room during the day. Uhlala Kla couch and watch TV all day. Zimi sat on the couch and started eating her meal. Lakhe: "uthini ke." Me: "ngantoni." Lakhe: "am I still lying. Umbonile ngawakho amehlo shopping for make up." Me: "she looks so damn young akekho se-high school lamntana! What the hell is he thinking! Does he even think! Did you see him ignore his child! Why would he do that!" Lakhe: "babe. Don't stress. She's probably forgotten about it already." Me: "what he did. That was shitty. I can't believe this." he sat down next to Zimi and watched Disney Junior. He was spread out on the couch, Zimi dropped her food and climbed on top of his chest clapping her hands. Me: "she

really likes you." Lakhe: "jealousy." someone rang our gate I answered. Me: "hello?" "Hi its Ben. We just came to say hi." Me: "alright. Come on in." I buzzed them in and suddenly started thinking. How does Loco go in and out as he pleases. Lakhe: "who's that?" Me: "your new friend." Lakhe: "hmm....awusamthandi." Ben: "hi!" Me: "molweni Ben." he came in with his wife and I invited them to the lounge. Lorraine: "you have a baby?" Lakhe: "Yes." he said boldly. Me: "can I get you some juice?" Ben: "do you have tomato juice?" Me: "uhm....no. Its just Mango and Orange only." Sandile walked in. Ben: "water will be fine thanks." I went to fetch water andinalo ixesha lalo umuncu Uhleli ecamkwakhe. Sandile: "ngoban aba?" he followed me to the kitchen engxola ke Phof." Me: "our neighbors!" Sandile: "what they want?" Me: "to say hi. Lakhe needs some friends." Sandile: "who's baby is that even?" Me: "Zingi's." Sandile: "oh." Me: "what?" Sandile: "nothing." Me: "tell me." Sandile: "I know its stupid....but I feel used." Me: "used how?" Sandile: "Zingi ufika kum, feeling really upset, I go all out to try and make her feel special. We make love and the next morning akafuni nondibona. She dismisses me like I'm some prostitute." Me: "oh....wow. Did you discuss this with her?" Sandile: "without looking desperate? How!" Me: "aren't you desperate?" Sandile: "I'm not. Kaloku xa engandifuni as her boyfriend and just wants a shag, makatsho sizovana. Now I have to do all these extra duties and its becoming really tiring." Me: "tiring how? You wanna call it quits?" Sandile: "Andithandi uhlala apho ndingafunwa khona." Lakhe: "ahem! Sorry to break up your little meeting but you have guests." Sandile: "hahaa! Ingathi ungutata nyani. Look at you holding hands with your baby girl." Lakhe: "shut up." he walked away. Me: "talk to her and lay out the rules of this Relationship." I took the water and went to the lounge. Ben: "beyokhiwa eTsitsikama na." I smiled. Me: "drink your

water Ben." he smiled. Lakhe: "hee." Lorraine: "Ben, we're going to be late for our event." Ben: "don't you guys wanna come with? Its our annual chari-" Lakhe: "NO." Ben: "its for a charity, a good cause." Lakhe: "still no." Ben: "you don't look like a guy that-" Lakhe: "whatever you say Benedict, Benjamin, Benzilla, Benfrederick, whatever the hell your name is, I'm not coming. And I'm not letting you blackmail me into coming so that I can donate. I already have charities, so I'm not interested." I was so embarrassed. Ben: "oh. But its quite eventful. Not just about donations-" Lakhe: "this living room will become quite eventful if you don't stop talking." Sandile bendimva ngasemva ephela yintsini etsharhwa nangamanzi. Ben: "I just thought you'd enjoy." Lakhe looked at him one last time. Ben: "what charities do you support?" Lakhe was quiet then. Me: "disadvantaged schools, he helps build libraries and computer labs." Ben: "Nice. If you ever need help with engineering mentorship, never hesitate to call. Me myself I always fancied teaching but my dad said not under his watch." Me: "that would be so nice of you Ben. Lorraine, what do you do?" Lorraine: "I'm a doctor." Me: "oh...that's nice. Isn't it baby?" Lakhe: "princess needs a change. She has food all over us." Zimi took off her top wanqenqa ngecala. Me: "I'll bring her a top." I went to fetch her a top from her bag ndabuya senxityiswe t shirt enkulukazi. It looked like an oversized dress on her. Ben: "next time, I'd really like to invite you Spho. Its a wonderful event, you'll really enjoy it." Sandile: "aren't you gonna be late?" Ben: "of course, masambe babes. Enjoy your day guys." Me: "bye Ben." I walked them out. Umka kwabo I went back inside. Me: "you are so rude!" Lakhe: "me?" Me: "would it hurt you for once to just be polite to the next person. You embarrass me with this attitude! It is Not attractive. Ukwenze ntoni UBen!" Lakhe: "akazanga kum apha UBen. Uze kuwe. He must stop hiding behind my name athethe lento ayifunayo. I'm giving him a clear platform wazixela ke nyani nako nangoku eku inviter wedwa. He must leave me alone." Me: "he was trying to reach out to you and you shut him down before he said a word!"

Lakhe: "ah...sometimes uyandibora wethu." Me: "you don't even know him!" Lakhe: "well...that's the point I'm trying to make." Me: "how can you make friends, if you're bored with strangers!" Lakhe: "babe...extroverts give me such a headache. There's just too much dialogue and so much information. I get bored." Me: "you know what? MXIM! I try, for you. I try!" Lakhe: "udikiwe ndim ngoku?" his phone rang for a second. Lakhe: "babe..." Me: "what!!" Lakhe: "itsnews about your dad."

Chapter 21

Me: "utheni utatam Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "babe, you need to relax yazi. Apparently he didn't board his flight last night." Me: "why?" Lakhe: "if only we

could locate him." Me: "you can't find him?!!" Lakhe: "Spho, khaphole man. I'm trying here." Zimi: "bhuhhu." Lakhe: "yes my angel." Zimi: "Imi funi lala." Lakhe: "lala sthandwasam." she put her head on his chest. Me: "maybe I should call him." Lakhe: "yes you can try that so lon-" Zimi: "shhhh." Lakhe: "okay I'm quiet." I went to my bedroom and tried to Skype him. It didn't go through. Maybe he missed his flight? Or maybe he postponed? Right? He'll be here.. he's just having some travel trouble. I needed to calm down. I walked to the lounge. He gave me the phone. Lakhe: "answer." Me: "hello?" "hello mntanam." it was my mom. Wow. Me: "molo mama." Mama: "Unjani sisi?" Me: "I'm fine mama. Wena." Mama: "ndiright." there was that awkward silence that made me uncomfortable. I couldn't ask why or who. I had to wait for her to talk. It was culture. Mama: "ndicela uxolo mntanam. It wasn't meant to be like this." Me: "okay." Mama: "ndiyamthanda utatakho, kakhulu. Ndenze impazamo...I hope you are able to forgive me." Me: "andiyazi mama. As much as ndisiva kabhlungu, what about utata? Uzocela uxolo nakuye?" there was a long pause. Me: "you're not going to tell him?" Mama: "baby." Me: "mama, I didn't think we keep secrets in our family." Mama: "my angel this is very difficult for me." Me: "mama, I have to go. I have to look for utata. He's not answering." Mama: "why." Me: "why nton ma?" Mama: "why are you looking for him? usemsebenzini." Me: "he's my father and ndibawela ukuva ilizwi lakhe mama." Mama: "oh. Well, he had an emergency the last time he called. Bekuyizolo. The hospital he specializes in collapsed. I think upha." Me: "upha? In the collapse?" Mama: "he wasn't there when it happened. He said so." I finally relaxed. I was so relieved. Me: "oh. Okay. I'll just leave him a message then." mama: "okay angel. Enjoy the day." Me: "you too mama." I hung up. Lakhe: "I think someone just fell asleep." Zimi was fast asleep on his chest. Me: "funny how you don't vibe with adults but you're so kid friendly." Lakhe: "children are innocent and raw. I like that. No ulterior motives, no back stabbing. They're straight up." Me: "should I take her to bed?" Lakhe: "don't worry. She can stay here." he really wanted a baby. I felt so bad for losing the one we could have been expecting. He is now attaching to Zimi. That did kinda hurt. Could it be possible that I now won't be able to have kids? I've already lost two babies. How was it possible now for the third? Lakhe: "baby?" I looked at him thinking uthetha nomntana. Lakhe: "are you okay?" Me: "me? Yes I'm fine." Lakhe: "why kengoku Uhleli apho ingathi use clinic?" Me: "ndiyacinga wethu lento thethwa ngumama. Ndiyabuya vha." I went to the bedroom ndathatha phone yam. I googled a number for a good gynecologist in PE. Once I got it, I dialed the number. "Dr Ferreira?" : "hi. This is Sarah speaking, her assistant. How can I help you?" Me: "I'd like to book an appointment." Sarah: "alright. I'm speaking to?" Me: "Siphosenkosi Ngudla." Sarah: "alright, I have an opening for Friday afternoon at 3pm. How is that for

you?" Me: "its perfect." Sarah: "great. I'll see you then." I hung up. I went to the lounge. Lakhe: "come here baby." I sat by his head, he put it on top of my lap and exhaled slowly. Lakhe: "this is perfect." Me: "can I ask?" Lakhe: "yeah sure baby." Me: "uyamfuna umntana?" Lakhe: "yes but not now..." Me: "not now?" Lakhe: "I don't want a baby yet. I want us to be in a better place." Me: "I'm not sure what you're saying." Lakhe: "I want us to have a baby. But we need to focus on our wedding first. Sitshate, kube healthy endlini." kanene kusekho leyo. I haven't told anyone yet because I feel my parents need to know first. Lakhe: "so, uthini umamakho?" Me: "tata is

still in Cuba. The hospital he works in collapsed. He wasn't there when it happened but ke uyancedisa ngoku. I don't know why he didn't call me." Lakhe: "he must've forgotten babe. Hey, kutheni singayi ekhaya eMonti? We can drive down tonight." Me: "whaat." I laughed. He looked at me with that serious look. Me: "u-sure love?" Lakhe: "yes, why not. When you father comes sizobuya nathi for him." Me: "what about work?" Lakhe: "so we're going to East London. Andiyazi undibuza ngomsebenzi ingathi ndiqeshiwe pha." Me: "okay. Let me go pack then." Lakhe: "for me too vha." I went to the bedroom ndakhupha bag ezimbini. The one was Gucci and the bigger one was Louis Vuitton. I packed in the Louis V for me because I needed more clothes and shoes wethu. I took our toiletries and everything else ndagqiba. I changed into more comfortable clothing which was a chocolate brown loose maxi dress and sandals. I went to the lounge. Me: "how do I look?" Lakhe: "awusemhle. Uyaphi?" Me: "for when we leave kaloku. Should I put on a doek or.." Lakhe: "no, its not necessary. Come sit with me please." Me: "are you driving okanye we flying?" Lakhe: "I'll drive. Why u-nervous kangaka? Relax." Me: "I'm nervous because I've never met your parents." Lakhe: "yes you have. And they loved you kakhulu." Sandile: "that is a complete lie. He's trying to get you to loosen up." he walked in the lounge with a big sandwich. Sandile: "kuzokwenziwa umphako? Or are we eating in East London? I can't wait for that shame." he took a big bite. Lakhe: "Uyaphi ke wena." Sandile: "ndiye khaya tshi. Awuzondishiya ndodwa apha. Besides, I'm gonn stay there from now on." we both looked at him. Lakhe: "njani?" Sandile: "I'm moving to East London." Me: "wait, did you just make that decision now or kudala uyicinga." Sandile: "no I just made the decision about a second ago. I'm moving." Lakhe: "iyafana nawe lonto." Unjani lomfana? Me: "but...what about Zingi?" Lakhe: "I thought that would make you happy." Me: "why would it make me happy Masilakhe?" Sandile: "Zingi undenza into yakhe yodlala. Andinalo xesha lalonto ke mna. I have a business to run." Me: "will you at least tell her? Now I'll be the one having to lick the wounds and making her better." Sandile: "hayi ke." Lakhe: "go pack. We're leaving after taking Zimi home." Sandile:

"sekhe ndapakisha ndisiyaphi mna." Lakhe: "suit yourself then." I went to make sure there was nothing in the fridge that could spoil and cleaned some stuff out. Honestly, I was really nervous, annddd, How does Lakhe lie with such a straight face on. Lakhe: "heey. Look who's up?" he was carrying Zimi and she rubbed her eyes with her little hands. Zimi: "mama." she extended her hands and I took her. Me: "finally. Your time has expired." I kissed her forehead. Me: "awulambanga honey?" she nodded. Lakhe: "I'll make her some food." I got an SMS from Lulonke's school telling me its time to fetch him. Me: "baby uLulonke funeke ayolandwa." Lakhe: "hamba noSandile love. Nizobuya sendigqiba." Me: "udiniwe?" Lakhe: "no, I just feel that uZingi asked You to take care of her child, if she comes here afike ungekho wena eshiyekile umntana, it won't be nice. Some people don't just trust anyone, and nam if it was me, I wouldn't want umntanam ashiywe komnye umntu. Once Zingi says its okay, I can look after her kids, I'll gladly do so. Masingenzi izinto ngokuthanda kwethu. Take her juice box and banana with you.." Me: "you're so sweet." I kissed his cheek then took her things and asked Sandile andikhaphe uyolanda the boy. Sahamba sobay'3 with uZimi. Being a mom for the day was quite fun. These kids were well behaved and sweet. On our way back, Sandile bought them ice cream saye ndlini. When we arrived, nyani kwabe kufika noZingi and Dumu. Sandile: "hehake Sonini nanini. This? Today? Hayi Wow." Me: "please calm down." he completely ignored me and continued talking to himself. Sandile: "you really outdid yourself shame. Hayi mntaka Joseph ndincamile. Le double up yezi bindi ivelaphi? Sithengiswa phi ndiyosithenga nam? Heeeee. Goduka sathana, awuphakekwanga ndim kule game." Me: "Sands." Sandile: "I'm calm. I'm calm. Bendicel ungaqalwa qha ngumtyholi. I'm tryna do right by God." Me: "okay." we got out the car and I carried Zimi inside. Lulonke followed me with his bag. Me: "awulambanga boy?" Lulonke: "lambile-" Lakhe: "the food is almost ready. Are we staying for dinner guys?" Dumu: "yes-" Sandile: "no. I have plans." he said coldly. Me: "Sandile?" Sands: "what." Me: "can I talk to you?" Sands: "No." watsho ehlala kwi couch yakhe. The angry trait was the exact same neyaka bhuti wakhe but, what I knew is, once he figured out a plan, bekuzobamnandi eSouth Africa Kuye. That wasn't good. Lakhe: "honey? Come help me please." ndanikezela Zimi ku mamakhe and went to the kitchen. Me: "we have a situation out there, I think San-" Lakhe: "I don't even care. Its the least of my worries, listen, which plates should I use? Maroon rectangular? Or these crystal white Chinese?" Me: "Your brother is pissed off, that his girlfriend's husband is having dinner with us With their kids." Lakhe: "like I said, least of my problems. So which plate?" he wasn't taking this seriously enough. Lakhe: "bhabha, chill out. Sandile isn't dumb. He doesn't do dumb shit either. He

knows how to control himself. He's not some zoo animal. Chill." Me: "maroon rectangular." Lakhe: "perfect choice. I love it." ...

After dinner, Sandile was already outside by the swimming pool etshaya. I didn't even know uyatshaya mna. Me: "Sands." Sandile: "now's not the time." he started taking off his clothes. Me: "what.....wenzantoni!!" Sandile: "smoking. Undressing. What it look like?" he was in his briefs already. Throwing the cigarette stub on the ground and stepped on it wakhulula izihlangu. Out of nowhere, he just dove into the swimming pool. I've never been so confused in my life. Was he in love with uZingi? Phof mna the reason why I'm outside was because I was embarrassed for the both of them. Zingi and Dumi. Today I caught Dumi with that girl and He Saw I saw him see him! Then kubekho aba babini. Zingi and Sands. And if Sands is acting weird, how am I ever to be comfortable. Ibiyilo tension. He suddenly appeared after a very long time under water. Sandile: "Why are you still here?" Me: "you know why." Sandile: "hm...well, this is my thinking space, you can find your own, somewhere else. Be gone." and he disappeared back into the water ndaske ndahleka u'Be Gone' lo kqala. Lakhe: "hey. What are you laughing at? Uphi uSandile? Why you here?" Me: "Sandile is under water, he just chased me away from his thinking space and I'm too embarrassed to be inside the house." Lakhe: "so the mean one must be me? Again? Hayi sisi, come fix your other marriage. Andingo Dr Phil mna, futhi mabafokofe apha ndifun hamba mna nomfazi wam." he pulled me back to the house. Me: "the breeze outside is so nice." Dumi: "you guys have such a beautiful house. God! Is that a go kart race track? Jesus!" Lakhe: "Yes! And a put put course, a lot of other sports also." Dumi: "hayi no, its flippen cool. Do you have a jaccuzzi?" Lakhe: "yep. Its in Sandile's room." watsho ejonge straight ku Zingi. Oh Bawo. Ndingesemince. Lakhe: "he chose the jaccuzzi, I chose the walk in closet." Dumi: "totally worth it." Lakhe: "yeah...but the bubbles though. Uright Zingi? You seem a bit stiff. Would you like a glass of wine-" Zingi: "I'm fine." Lakhe: "hm... I would invite you guys for a movie, but we're driving to East London tonight." Dumi: "oh. Nihambeni kakuhle." Lakhe: "thank you Dumicles. That is so nice of you." Zingi: "we should get going." Wangena uSandile. Dripping water. The briefs stuck on his body as though ugalelwe nge honey. Everything was glittering. Lakhe put his hands on his hips. Lakhe: "hayi ke Sandile. Really? My Italian tiles." Sandile walked straight to his room without a word. Zingi: "Dumi, please get the kids." her voice was shaky. Dumi: "yima man Zingi. Bra, Lakhe, give me a brief of what you do mfondini. This is a piece of heaven if not all of it.

How do you do it?" Lakhe: "persistence, hardwork. The textbooks are only for information. Trust me, they don't teach what I know eskolweni. You need a thick skin and passion for what you do. Don't go there for your salary. Think

about the day abantwana bakho bengena sonka. Ungasekho ke wena. Don't pass up opportunities because you think you're safe. Go all out. Stretch yourself." Dumisani: "damn. I don't think I have the time for side things hey." oh??? OH??? Lakhe: "then you'll just be a regular lawyer for the rest of your life. I love my money almost as much as my woman. And I need to keep them both." Dumisani: "but for a lawyer though? What am I to do?" Lakhe: "why not open another firm? One of your more experienced would run it, uqeshe i- graduates. People that are hungry to grow and want to go far. Passionates only." Dumisani: "that is a great idea Masilakhe. I should be expanding my name." Zingisani: "Dumisani, I really need to get Zimi home, kuba late." Dumisani: "argg...okay. Let's go. Listen man, Lakhe....we should get together. Just to bounce things off. I enjoyed your company." Lakhe: "ey...hold it. I'm not gay." they laughed. *rolls eyes* uwoah. Lakhe: "I'll give you a ring when I'm back in PE." Dumisani: "woah...slow down brother. I'm really not gay." they laughed again. Lakhe: "ey man. Nihambe kakhle. Bye Zinglet. Let me fetch Lulo, I think he's still gaming." he went to fetch the boy wabuya naye. We said our goodbye bahamba. Me: "and then? Best friends?" Lakhe: "oh please." Me: "excuse me? You were all over each other, kuyintsini. Am I the only one that noticed Sandile's cold movements? Something is wrong with baby, khayom'hoya torhwana omnye umntana. He's sad." Lakhe: "baby.....ndiyakucela. Sandile is a different kind of person. Andikafuni ukungcwaba. Whenever he is in that state kubhabha izinja ziwe iintaka. Never talk to him. Just let him be. The minute he explodes kunomntu ombangela iscefe. He will blow their head off.....Literally. Myeke uSandile Siphosenkosi. Please." right then he appeared at the passage way, fully dressed again. Sandile: "Are we ready to go?"

Chapter 22

Our first biggest mistake together was letting Sandile drive us to East London. By the time singena khona, which by the way was a whopping 1 hour and 50 minutes later, intsula yam biseyi biltong. Yeeeeeyi, uyay'qhuqha itha lobhuti akadlali. And jonga ndik'balisele. Sucimba uyi cautious driver. No, no. Siphidani? He leaned on his door with only one hand at the bottom of the steering wheel. He looked as though he was watching television. Sayongena bethunana gungqu emonti umntu oko wayehleli olahlobo. Ndayiqonda apho, likhona itontsi apha. Somewhere, somehow. There is some kind of drop. Meanwhile, Lakhe ebelele ke erhona as usual. I was the only one on the verge of death, staring at it. Once we arrived emonti, noko wabuya umva ku 240 wahamba ngo 120. Which was muuuch better. I think 120 is for freeway, yes. Xa zibaleka zonke imoto iyilo marathon. Buuuut ungekavi u240. Mntaka dabs, you know nothing. I woke Lakhe up. Lakhe: "sesifikile? What's your time?" Me: "its twenty to 8." yuuuh. Sandile: "1 hour 50." Lakhe: "argg. That's

child's play. Uzukhe uhambe ngala i8. Andiyazi uyishiyele bani. Takes you an hour and a half without traffic." next time andizoyiphendula ndingekabizwa ngegama. I was tired of this secret language code or whatever of theirs. Me: "guys, this isn't healthy." Lakhe: "andicingi ndiqhube 4 hours kaloku mna. Andisoze." Sandile: "siye ICC mos?" Lakhe: "ndibawel Blue Lagoon kodwa yazi." Sandile: "me too. But ndizobase ICC. Nizondingxolela nina kulandlu. Uzoya ngomso endlini?" Lakhe: "yeah. If ndiye ngoku, asiphinde sihambe. Uyamazi umama Unjani." Sands: "okay. I'm gonn get myself into yokutya ke mna. Ya'll want anything." he drove into McDonald's. Lakhe: "I'd rather starve to death." Me: "it can't be that bad baby come on." Sandile: "give me 3 McFeast Deluxe medium meals please, eziphi drinks guys?" Me: "Sprite for me, no ice please." Lakhe: "same." Sandile: "2 Sprites and 1 Fanta Orange no ice please. And an Oreo McFlurry. Enkosi sisi." I assumed he was fine now. Ndimbona ngokutya oku. When he's mad, akafuni nokubona ukutya. He barely ate supper. We got our order wayomisa eICC. Sandile: "goodnight'ini. See ya'll tomorrow endlini." waphuma nokutya kwakhe. Me: "bye Sands." Lakhe got into driver seat and took us to Blue Lagoon. Me: "don't you book prior for places like these." Lakhe: "not me baby." he drove into the gate and parked. Lakhe: "I'll be back." wayongena reception. When he came back, he was holding keys. Lakhe: "masiyolala mntuwam." sayongena ke endlini yethu e-cute. After settling down, I put the burger and chips on a plate for the both of us. Ebe naar nje ngokujonga okakutya. I was really hungry though so I started eating. And good God, was it delicious. Yangena kamaaaandi nala drink. He sat down and ate too. Very slowly. Picking at that burger kodwa wade wayigqiba. Then sipped his cooldrink. We sat on different couches sabukela TV very quietly. It was very comfortable actually. Just being there around kodwa kuthulwe. I was finally falling asleep. Ndafunyanwa bubuthongo bendlela and let go. It felt like a short while when I heard the toilet flush. I checked the time. 00:12am. Lakhe: "baby." ebebhinqe i-towel. Me: "hey." I stood up and stretched. Ndakhulula ilokhwe yam. Me: "you okay?" Lakhe: "I'm not feeling too good." Me: "come. Let's go to bed baby. Sufeketha." we got into bed and he cuddled me under my arm. I know My Lakhe wouldn't just 'cuddle'. Une tendencies zothanda uphatha kaloku yena. Me: "baby? What's wrong?" Lakhe: "my tummy is biting me." Me: "ncaaaw bethuna ubaby wam. Awufuni amanzi? We don't even have meds here." Lakhe: "hm.hm. Sleep time." I kissed his head. Soon he started snoring nam ndozela ndalala. Short time later, I felt him tossing and turning. Kuyo Yonke lonto, one of his body parts has to touch me. If its not an arm, it has to be his leg or

head. I looked at him. Ebengombathanga tu. I sat up ndamombathisa. For a little while wa-right but again started pushing the blankets away. I was soooo fucking sleepy! God, I will Never Ever make him eat take away food ever again! Ndicela nje ubuthongo? Lakhe: "babbbby." he breathed. Lakhe: "susu." Me: "sizosithini baby? Do you think reception has something?" Lakhe: "phone." I got up ndayokhangela phone and dialed for reception. Apparently, the only thing they had was Panado. I don't know how that would help at all. But I guess for the pain? Better than nothing. I wore my gown ndayolanda ndabuya. He took one pill. Lakhe: "hold me please." -_- he was laid in between my legs, I put my arms around him. His head comfortably on my breasts. Finally he fell asleep. I too, fell asleep eventually. It felt like a minute later when he jumped up and ran out to the bathroom. I heard him throwing up. Lakhe: "baby." he muttered. I got up ndaya ebathroom. Lakhe: "you can't come in." Me: "please open." Lakhe: "no baby." Me: "Masilakhe, khavule man. Sibadala utheni na." he opened. Lakhe: "I need a mop." Me: "come here." he stepped closer. Me: "I love you, uyeva?" ndamkhulula iskipa endingayaziyo besinxitywe nini. Lakhe: "its a mess. It was dark. Bendingaboni." Me: "its okay sthandwasam. There's stuff here. Get in the shower, I'll clean it up." he switched on the shower Wangena kuyo. I fetched the stuff to clean and wiped up the floor and seat. I put a towel on the floor for him to step in xa ephuma. I washed my hands ndayosula wabuya naye from the bathroom. Me: "how are you feeling." Lakhe: "no better. I need cold." Me: "no, uzobane ngqele." Lakhe: "kushushu." Me: "masiyohlala efront ke." I took the small blanket ndamombathisa ngasezantsi. He lay there quietly wade walala. I checked the time. It was 03:56am. If I could get 4 hours in. Ndinga right. As I was about to sleep. Lakhe: "babbbby?" he moaned. Me: "yes my love." Lakhe: "kuyabanda ngoku." Me: "masiye roomin ke love. Come." I helped him up sayongena eroomin. He finally fell asleep but now I couldn't. I just stared at him. He's never allowed to have take aways. Ever again. This is not on. To think, I thought ebezenza cool by not wanting take aways. He got really sick. Ak'suba akazithandi, but akakwazi uzitya. Within an hour he was up again. I had left the bathroom light on for him. In no time, it was morning. Ndijongene ne-sunrise. I immediately called Sandile. Me: "bhuti? Please help. Lakhe is sick. he's been throwing up all night. Ndicela uze nento or come take us to the doctor." Sands: "okay, kuvuliwe chemist. I'm coming." meanwhile Lakhe bendigqibom'vasa. I massaged him and dressed him. Sandile arrived ne plastic yee-pilisi namayeza. He also brought him breakfast. Me: "Sandile...I hope this isn't from a restaurant hey." Sandile: "no relax. This won't make him sick." Lakhe took a couple of bites in. And drank ipilisi neyeza. Lakhe: "Iza." Sands: "these will knock him out for at least 5 hours. Nawe ulale vha. I'll check on you guys emini." Me: "okay. Enkosi Sands." Sandile: "no problem mntase."

he left. When he was gone, I asked myself. How in the world does Sandile get around. Akanamoto Kuye kaloku because sihambe nayo. How did he get a chemist so quick and be here in record time also? Bawo. I got in next to my fiancÃ©. Lakhe: "I love you too vha." Me: "lala mntuwam."

I woke up around 9am. For the first time akhange akhe avuke. I checked his temperature apha esbunzi. He was still very hot. At least he was asleep. I went to take a shower ndaxukuxa and came back to dress. He was really knocked out shame. Engeva niks. I kissed his forehead. Cwaka. Was he even breathing? Well Phof I could feel his breathing so he was fine. I was bored now. So what's next. I took my phone and played with it. Downloading games and such ndahlala ecamkwakhe. He woke up around 11. Really almost

5 hours later. Lakhe: "baby?" he was looking the other side. Me: "ndim lo." he smiled eguquka. Me: "uziva njani?" Lakhe: "little better." Me: "awulambanga?" he shook his head. Me: "you have to have a bite or two ke. To keep energy up usele iyeza." Lakhe: "lizondilalisa." Me: "hayi awuzoyisela Le pilisi izok'lalisa." Lakhe: "okay. Sizoya ngomso ekhaya vha." Me: "alright babe. Akhongxaki." Lakhe: "you look so beautiful." Me: "enkosi bhuti. Come, get up. Exercise your legs." Lakhe: "khandiphe phone yam, I need to send an email ku Sandile." Me: "you could just send him a text." I gave him his phone. Lakhe: "no, an email will get to him quicker." Me: "a text would." Lakhe: "he checks emails more regularly than texts. So email." he sent the email and in few minutes yabuya response. I didn't know what they were chatting about so I butted out ndaqhubekeka ngeyam phone. Around 2 midday. Wafika Sandile Sobukwe ephethe plastic again. Sandile: "ninjani?" I was yawning kukozela. I hadn't slept properly all night, it was starting to catch up with me. Me: "I'm sleepy. Someone kept me up all night." Lakhe: "uxolo mntuwam." Me: "its okay my love. I'm just going to take a nap ne." Lakhe: "okay. I'm on the balcony if you need me." he got out of bed ndangena mna. When he walked out the door I heard him ask ku Sandile in a very low tone. Lakhe: "did you bring it?" Sandile: "relax...its here." Lakhe: "let me see." I listened carefully by the window. Lakhe: "its perfect. Khange bakunike problems?" Sandile: "Nope. I gave them the invoice you emailed me. So everything is set?" Lakhe: "yep." Sandile: "are you nervous." Lakhe: "Msunu lo wakho uyeva? Sekhe nda-nervous phi mna. Don't fucking piss me off." Sandile: "Shhh.you gonna wake Spho up. Uzothini Kuye if she comes here and you have that shit in your hand?" Lakhe: "khathule nawe. Umane undibuza icala lenja apha. Vala mngxunyo lo wakho. Goodness." Sandile: "fine. I'm gonn prepare the others. You need to do this ngoku bhuti." Lakhe: "okay. I got it." Sandile: "don't shake. Go inside and fix you up. Ungangxami." Lakhe: "okay." I went back to bed ndangena

khona and closed my eyes. Lakhe moved around the room for a while. Lakhe: "Spho..." Me: "hmm..." Lakhe: "thought you were sleeping." he got into bed. Me: "trying to." Lakhe: "let me get in with you." Me: "umnkile uSandile?" Lakhe: "yeah." Me: "thought uhamba naye." Lakhe: "why would you think that babe? I'm still sick remember." what then were they talking about? Me: "hayi nam bendiqonda." Lakhe: "let's take a nap my love." I couldn't fight the sleeping temptation at all, I just fell nje. I woke up about 3 hours later all wrapped up in my fiancÃ©s arms. He was awake and staring at me. Lakhe: "you look intensely beautiful." Me: "enkosi baby. How long have you been staring at me." Lakhe: "since you fell asleep." Me: "psycho." Lakhe: "I'm feeling so much better, thanks to you." Me: "I'm glad my love." Lakhe: "you took care of me...at my weakest." Me: "you weren't that weak babe. Everybody gets sick." Lakhe: "that.....on its own. When you say that, its like kuwe its so natural. To me, its big. You don't even tell me too often uyandithanda. You said it last night. After the trouble I gave you, you told me uyandithanda.....no matter what. You're beautiful, inside and out mntuwam." Me: "awww. You gonna make me cry again." Lakhe: "I'm the one that should be crying." Me: "as long as you're feeling better. Come here." I kissed him. Me: "let's get up siyothenga some groceries kwa Pick n Pay or Spar ndizokuphekela supper." Lakhe: "we're having dinner ekhaya baby." Me: "oh." I wasn't too nervous about it anymore because I thought besisiya ngomso. Lakhe is sweet, Sandile is okay, the rest of the family can't be that bad right??? Rigghht?? I got up and went to freshen up ndanxiba decently. A black long dress. My hair was combed properly. Lakhe: "perfect. He wore his dark G Star Raw jeans. A black t shirt and all black Adidas Stan Smith's. He took his military green jacket. Me: "ready." Lakhe: "perfect." Me: "maybe I should wear the green dress. This it too much black. Ingathi sizilile." Lakhe: "whichever makes you comfortable my love." I

changed into my other dress yona it wasn't too loose fitting not too tight either. Me: "Uhm-" Lakhe: "I like this one. Masambe." Me: "but -" Lakhe: "no buts. Its perfect. At least asizilanga." he took my purse saphuma ukuya emotweni. He drove to his parents place. It was a beautiful quiet suburb. The nervous rant began. Kukhala Gu gu gu gu! Esifubeni Sam. He finally stopped outside a gorgeous white mansion. It had a huge gate with the letter S on it in the form of a snake. I was a bit skeptical about that piece. Once the gate opened I saw Sandile standing outside the house with an older looking man behleka bencokola. On the right side of the house kudwele iimoto with different foreign names. There was the regular Mercedes Benz, which I know of course. 3 of those. I absolutely loved the black one it was open on top and had white leather seats. Another car had a crown badge and a signature like name then a bigger version of it. Good Jesus, how many cars did these

people own? The grass was immaculate. The whole lawn was perfect. Me: "baby!!" Lakhe: "yes?" Me: "who's going to feed the girls?" he smiled. Lakhe: "I thought you forgot about them. Its already sorted babe. Let's go in." Me: "first, I like that car. That black open top. That is just beautiful. Benz is my favorite." *hint hint* Lakhe: "its a Mercedes Maybach love." okay? As if it made some difference kweyam i-life. We walked toward the two men. Sandile and the other guy. The conversation had died down already. Older guy: "My Lord!! What am I seeing? Ziphi iz'pecs zam Sands? Give them." he fitted on his shades ke phof. Older: "No Man. Jesus must be tricking me. Ha.a." heartbeat accelates. Lakhe: "Khawuyeke tata torho." Older: "Noooo. This cannot be real!! You brought a woman home? YOUUUU? No! NOKWAKHA! Vela mkam. Izobona!!!" Lakhe: "this is not necessary tata! You making her nervous." Tata: "this is real? Oh my God. Sandile, Iza namanzi." Lakhe: "mxim. Iza baby." hebana. Lakhe: "its okay. Come." we went inside the house. An elegantly dressed woman came toward us. "Vicky hun. Is dinner ready? My baby is home. Oh sweetheart." she hugged him tightly. Lakhe: "mama. This is Spho." she looked at me and smiled faintly. Ma: "Hi Spho. How are you angel?" Me: "I'm fine ma, how are you?" She: "oh please sweetie, call me Stella." Sandile and his dad came in. Lakhe: "this is my dad..." Me: "hello Ta." he looked at me and shook my hand. Tata: "hello mntanam. Welcome to our family." Stella: "don't be silly Rob, she's just visiting." Rob: "well, Nokwakha. She is no longer a visitor but part of our family." Me: "enkosi tata." Lakhe: "yes, and I'd like to make an announcement after dinner." Stella: "oh, please don't tell me she's already pregnant." something stung deep inside me. Something indescribable with words but only actions. Lakhe: "No, she's going to be my wife." Tata: "YAAASS!!!! Finallllyyy!!! Eyyy uMpinga madoda!" Stella: "oh Rob please stop.." she looked at Lakhe. Stella: "honey, is there something you want to talk to me about?" Lakhe: "no Stella." she stared at him bewildered. Stella: "since when do you call me by my name?" Lakhe: "since you asked my fiance to. I believe when we enter this agreement she will be equivalent to me, that would make her your daughter. If she isn't saying mama to you, why should I?" she slowly stood up and walked to the kitchen. Tata: "I'm glad you're home nyana. Phewu, ndikukhumbulile ke khona. How's the new house?" Lakhe: "it is the best. Beyond beauty. Enkosi tata. The agent really knew her work." Tata: "andthis lovely lady...? Umfumene phi?" Lakhe: "avenues tata." he blushed. Tata: "that's my boy!! Come sweetheart. Let's all have dinner and catch up." ...

Chapter 23

After dinner, the boys were together in the lounge. I was in the kitchen ndisiya ke phof ukuyoncedisa uStella. But no, she wasn't doing anything as a matter

of fact. She was on the phone making a hair and nails appointment while sitting on the high stool. Vicky was hand washing the dishes kodwa lkhona dish washing machine. Me: "ndik'ncedise phi sisi." Vicky: "hayi ndiright nontombi. Hlala." Me: "hayi wethu sisi, andinanto kwenza. Ndizohlala ndithini." I took the dry towel and wiped the dishes. Me: "uhlala apha nawe?" Vicky: "ewe ndihlala apha." her voice sounded as though there was no hope. Ukhumve umntu othetha ngomoya ophantsi? Me: "but its a beautiful house though." she smiled. Vicky: "awuyifanelanga lendawo yazi." before ndikhubeke I listened carefully and observed her smile. Vicky: "abantu balapha aren't what they seem. I just hope awuphulukani nembeko yakho. Uhlale u-sweet oluhlobo." what on earth did she mean? Me: "batheni sisi." she looked at her boss who seemed to be totally oblivious to the both of us. Vicky: "Too many secrets. Too much privacy. Ubhut' Lakhe is very lucky to have a woman like you." that last sentence was quite louder than the first two and that was because he just walked in. Me: "oh goodness!" Lakhe: "yinton ngoku?" Me: "I forgot the interviews." Lakhe: "postpone them." Me: "its last minute Lakhe. Suppose ziqala ngomso Ksasa." what was up with me? I already had no memory, now I keep forgetting things? Lakhe: "look, don't stress. I'll work out something my love. Stop frowning." he kissed my forehead. Lakhe: "umfumene umamakho? She called a while ago." Me: "my phone is in my bag." Lakhe: "okay, ugqiba kwakho uncokola umfownele please." Me: "any news from my dad?" Lakhe: "not yet unfortunately. He'll be here soon. Don't worry." Me: "ndizomfownela before I go to bed. Lakhe: "okay. We leave at 20:00pm." Me: "alright." he walked back out ndaqhubekela with the dishes. Vicky: "uyak'thanda yazi. Zange ndambona ubhuti mna enje. Not even once. Ingathi wonwabile kakhulu kulendawo akuyo." Me: "enkosi sisi. Ndiyamthanda nam. it was a rocky start but, I do love him." when we finished, I sat on one of the stools. Stella had left the kitchen. Vicky was sweeping and mopping the floor, we let it dry sihleli kwizitulo. Me: "so, ungowaphi sis Vicky?" Vicky: "Mdantsane." Me: "awunabantwana pha." Vicky: "ndinabo. USesona una 8, uAthabile una 13, lo umdala ke uKhanyisile una 18. Uzongena University kulonyaka uzayo." I could tell she was so proud. Vicky: "Athabile ungumntu we-sports. He loves boxing. Intombi yam encinci ke yona izithandela ukucula." Me: "that is so sweet. UKhanyi uzofunda phi kulonyaka uzayo?" Vicky: "ebesithi ufuna ukuya eNMMU. Andiqondi ke kodwa kuba ikude, kodwa ibeterana kunala Durban ebeyifuna. Ndiske andayazi kutheni engafun ufunda kwalapha eMonti." Me: "oh well, mama, abantwana bayayithanda i-freedom. It helps them discover themselves. If bendikhumbula mna, bendizokwazi ukuxelela how I got out of home and how it went. At least sikhona ebhayi mna noLakhe she won't lose direction." Vicky: "ewe wethu. UKhanyi ngumntana othanda icawa. And ndiyavuya

kukho wena ke endlini eBhayi. Uzokwenza njani kengoku for lento yakhe."
Me: "the best thing now is to apply, for both university and res." Vicky: "oh. I hope ayiduri kakhulu. Ebesithi uTata uRob uzom'bhatalela. Kodwa andifuni ubalu xanduva." Me: "its not that bad mama." I didn't even know. What I did know is, if Mr Rob, offered to pay, kucacile that money wasn't an issue, kakade he's wealthy. Ncanca mfondini afunde umntana. Vicky: "okay." Me: "nantsi number yam. Xa Ikhona into afuna uncedo ngayo." Vicky: "enkosi sthandwa." the time was past 8 in the evening. Where was Lakhe. I went to look for him ndamfumana in the lounge ehleli nelinye i-lady with long hair and heels

nomamakhe. Stella: "oh, Spho darling. I thought you left already. This is Dez." bendizohamba ndiyephi? Me: "hello." I smiled. Dez: "hi." she sipped her wine. Stella: "Dez was engaged to Lakhe a few years ago. Its like they never broke up judging from how close they still are." I looked at Lakhe. He was staring at the floor. Dez: "anyway, Masi, I heard you bought a new house in PE. Do you have pictures?" Lakhe: "uhm...no..." Me: "yes you do. Show her the pictures Lakhe. Of your beautiful new house. The one you share with your new fiance." Dez: "haha...fiance ? Oh please. Lakhe said he'd never get married. Who's the girl being strung along Mass? You will never change will you? You said you'd wait until I'm back, I'm here now." I could feel the fire burning my heart. I was being stabbed emotionally. All he did was sit there and play dumb. I just wanted to go home. I didn't even have a home. Dez: "Spho, can you please get me another glass of this amazing wine love?" she thought I was the maid? What ??? Wait, whaat? I stepped out the lounge ndayoma phandle ndizobethwa ngumoya. The pain slowly left me and all I could feel was rage. I was angry that he lied. I was angry that he couldn't stand up for himself or for me at that point. I was also mad that it could mean he wasn't over her. "Spho." Me: "Don't. DO NOT." Sands: "hayi fondin yinton ngoku? Its me." Me: "take me home Sandile." Sands: "No." Me: "Sandile, Take Me back to that hotel. NOW." he looked at me in the eye. Sandile: "I can't do that Spho." Me: "Sandile!!!!" I growled. Sands: "what's wrong? Why are you like this? I've never seen you like th-" Me: "Sandile. I'm going to get into that car. Count to five. If you're not in it. I'm driving." Tata: "kwenzeka ntoni ngoku?" my hands were shaking. Sands: "I don't know Ta." Tata: "my angel...what's wron-" the minute he touched me, I shook him off me and screamed. Sands: "Spho!!!" Me: "get off!!!!!" Sands: "I'm not hurting you, I swear! Listen-" I pushed him away, breathing heavily. My chest hurt as bad as that day....the day I ran away from home. I didn't have anyone to protect me. They all weren't going to protect me. Tata: "Sandile, myeke...I'm not sure what's wrong. But whatever it is, its not to be disturbed. Keep an eye on her okay?" Sandile: "I'm taking her

to the hotel tata. You can direct the doctor to Blue Lagoon. Masambe Spho." we got in the car and he drove away. Sandile: "we gonna have to make a deal. I protect you Only and if only you tell me what that episode was for? You almost strangled me and my father! Why?" I felt sick to the pit of my stomach. I hated myself so much. Why didn't that man just kill me ndingabisa phila? Why doesn't God do it? He had the opportunity to kill me in that accident but noooo, he just had to make my life more unbearable. Not only have I lost my memory and have reminder of that monster back in my head now I have fits. What grown woman has to live like this? Everytime I get hurt, There's this instinct to run so far away. Just kill me. I really don't deserve this. Sandile: "Spho, I'm here to help you. I care about you. You're like my little sister now. Help me understand kwenzeka ntoni." he arrived at the hotel ndayongena endlini. He followed. Sandile: "Spho. What happened inside there? Ngumama? NguLakhe? Who upset you?" Me: "please leave. I want to be alone." Sandile: "I'm not leaving you here by yourself!! Spho, what happened just now isn't you! Tell me what's wrong!" Me: "stop shouting at me!!" I cried. Sandile: "okay, I'm sorry. I'm not shouting. I swear. I'm sorry." Me: "I can't.." Sandile: "what can't you do?" Me: "I can't tell you." Sandile: "yes you can. Ungandixelesa nantoni na mna." I sat down on the couch. He sat down on the other one. Sandile: "utatam, is worried about you. You're all he asked about after dinner." Me: "what about Dez." Sands: "who the hell is d.....oh." Me: "yeah. Oh. Go back to your family Sandile." I looked through my bag taking out my phone. Me: "I just want my mother and father by my side now." Sandile: "this isn't about Dez Spho. Something is wrong." she had tried to call me. I had two missed calls from her. Sandile: "Sphosenkosi. Thetha nam."

Me: "please go." I was shaking again. Sandile: "Spho." his phone rang, he looked and ignored it. Sandile: "Spho. Spho. Spho. Spho." Me: "stop." Sandile: "talk to me. I promise I won't bite. It will stay between us." what would make this shaking stop!! Sandile: "I promise on my life." Me: "I was....he..." how could I start this? Where. Me: "my mother was never home. Because utatam used to beat her. When she left, he would....hurt me." Sandile: "hurt you?" Me: "he raped me. Everytime she wasn't there. Even when I got pregnant wandisa e-clinic to get an abortion then she would leave. I ran away from home. He wanted to rape me again. I had to go. It was so cold....there was a big storm. It was raining heavily. I collapsed in the highway after a very long time of running. And woke up in hospital weeks later. I'd been in a coma. Ugqirha had contacted abantu be-foster care and that's how I got my mom and dad that I have now. Every time I get hurt, something boils deep down inside of me and I have to go. I can't let another man hurt me again. My dad isn't here to protect me anymore. I have to go." Sandile: "No. You don't have to go. I'll

protect you. Come." he hugged me. Sandile: "I'm so sorry Spho. I truly am. I wish there was a way I could fix it. But I guess, I just have to have your back from now on. Its gonna be okay mntase." the door opened. Lakhe: "Sandile! What the hell are you doing?" Tata: "okay. Hold on party pants. Before you start yelling, what the hell was happening in that house? And what is that girl doing back in my house? Ubizwe nguban?" Sandile: "can both of you just keep quiet or leave? Ndiyanicela." Lakhe: "uphambene Sandile! Unxilile yazi. Get -" Tata: "Masilakhe!!! Stop it!" he pulled him away. Tata: "while you were playing host, pouring wine and eating caviar kumandi kula lounge. Sandile was trying to take care of your mess! I told you, something is wrong, siseza apha. He has established a bond. Shut the fuck up and wait your turn." after a dead silence, I wiped my face and sat up. Me: "can you please take me to my mom?" Sandile: "ye-" Lakhe: "No. Baby, ndicela sithethe. Please?" Me: "I just want to go home." Tata: "angel, please talk to your fiance. He will take you home. Masambe Sandile." I went to the bathroom. Sandile: "I'm not going anywhere tata. You can go but ndizolala apha. There's a second room." Tata: "nitheni na namhlanje? What do they feed you in PE? Ndithi kuwe masambe." Sandile: "A N D I Y I N D A W O. Is that clear enough?" Tata: "ndikufake isihlangu ke mna usandibuza ubutwetwe. You better get your things boy." Sandile: "hehake tata." Lakhe: "hamba man Sandile! Stay out of my business!" Sandile: "if you could handle it, I wouldn't have to stay!" Lakhe: "what are you trying to say-" Sandile: "you Always fuck things up! ALWAYS! You get the best of everything and I have to watch you Fuck up! Why don't you ever fucking learn?" Lakhe: "Get Out." Sandile: "you'd have to kill me first." Lakhe charged forward and grabbed his neck. Tata: "Masilakhe!! Masilakhe stop it!!" Sandile threw him off and pushed him threw the glass sliding door. It shattered to pieces. Lakhe stood up from the pieces. Tata: "Heyyy!! Stop this madness! Sandile!!!!" Sandile: "undiyeke Tata! Ndiyeke!" I got out the bathroom. Lakhe walked out the front door. Tata: "that went better than I expected. I thought I'd have to cover two hospital bills again. At least the glass is fixable. Looks cheap though." he looked at me. Tata: "Spho. My angel. Are you okay?" I didn't know if I was okay. What I did know is that I wasn't myself. Tata: "don't worry about this. The boys fight all the time, sometimes ndikhupha phone yam and play candy crush while they're at it. Its not your fault at all." Me: "I don't feel like myself. I want to go home." Tata: "okay sthandwa. I'll book you a flight for tomorrow morning. Everything is gonna be okay vha? Ndizobalungisa aba babini." I went inside my room and locked it ndayokhwela ebhedini.

In the morning, I was up and washed. Ndanxiba my tracksuit and sneakers. Packing the rest of my things. I got out the room Kukho Sandile by the

kitchen. His father was talking to some guy observing the broken glass by the balcony. Sandile: "I got you some breakfast." Me: "enkosi." Sandile: "how are you feeling?" Me: "still the same. Like There's a hole inside of me." Sandile: "stop imagining a hole. Fill it up with flowers and diamonds." Me: "I don't think that's healthy." he chuckled. Sandile: "nobody is going to hurt you. You got yourself a big brother now, if ukhona okuhluphayo undixelele. I'll sort them out." Me: "not if you're going to break sliding doors. How did that happen." Sandile: "ahh...its nothing. He'll be back. We'll talk it out. its gonna be fine. Uzoqumbela utata next. I'm off the hook." Me: "why?" Tata: "okay. Tea party is over. Time to hit the airport. Let's get going ladies." Sandile: "heee.. Hayi andiphinde ndikuse eOh Mi wena." Tata: "uxolo kaloku nyana. Masambe ke." he took my bag, Sandile opened the door. Lakhe was standing on the outside about to come in. He stared at us. Then at the bag. Wangena endlini and switched on the shower. Tata: "good morning to you too." we walked to the car. Me: "tata, your tyre is flat." Tata: "oh? Heeee..." he walked around the car. Tata: "its two of them. How?" Sandile: "we'll use mine." sahamba ukuya kweyakhe. Sandile: "I am going to Kill Him!!!" the tyres weren't even flat. They were sliced open. ONKE. Sandile marched back to the house. Tata: "oh hayi bawo. Kwakhona torho? Yhini ukuphumla Somandla." he followed behind him. Lakhe couldn't have done this. He wasn't this petty. I went after them. Sandile: "Masilakhe!!" Lakhe: "kanti ufokofa nini!!" Sandile: "you slashed my tyres!! Bendizohamba njani!" Lakhe: "and why would I do that Sandile? Ndiyinton kwama tayere akho?" Sandile: "Masilakhe I'm warning you ne-" Tata: "khanimeni. Woah. Every time you two are here. Yi-fight. Kodwa xanikude niyavana. Khanindincediseni ngale Maths. Why is that?" Lakhe: "Tata, khawuthathe uSandile umke naye. Andinalo xesha lala kaka yakhe mna." Tata: "No...I'm sick of this. Masilakhe switch off that shower uhlale phantsi. Sandile sit the fuck down. Niyandiqhela mos." they all sat down. Tata: "Lakhe. 1 minute." Lakhe: "uSandile tata akanofika azenze mna ku Siphosenkosi xandingekho. It is my job to make her feel better, yena unoske andibize andixelele kwenzeka ntoni angasuke acinge yi-chance yakhe. He must stay away from her qha!" Tata: "you still have 47 seconds left." Lakhe: "that's all I need to say." Tata: "Sandile. Talk." Sandile: "firstly, andizenzi Masilakhe kuSpho. She will attest to that. The reason why kakade she left the house izolo was because you brought your ex in the house, entertained her and made Spho feel inadequate. Furthermore, even after umbona ephuma endlini, you did below nothing to find out if she's okay or explain to her kwenzeka ntoni, ndifika kuSpho sefuna ukugoduka. Had she stepped into one of those cars and drove Again in the state that she was in, it was going to be my fault kwakhona? I was trying to calm her down and stop her from leaving, in those efforts wafika utata and assessed the situation, which she reacted to

in a very bad way. I offered to take her where she wanted to be so that angavi anymore pain than she already was feeling. I told utata, angafownela ugqirha to come here and make sure she's alright. Sisalinde leyo I tried finding out what was wrong." Tata: "and...what was wrong?" Sandile: "Spho will have to tell you. Its not my place." Lakhe: "today its not your place-" Tata: "khawume mfana. Awukayigqibi Le yakho yongahoyi izolo the woman you call your future wife. Itsho Kwenzeka ntoni?" Lakhe: "nothing happened!" Tata: "okay, suthetha nathi. Its fine. But you owe Spho an explanation And an apology. Problem is, her flight is in 2 hours time." Lakhe: "please don't leave." Tata: "ha.a. Uyava ukuba omnye umntana akaziva right. Usenesbindi sendlovu sothetha lento uyithethayo." Lakhe: "Tata, lento ifuna mna noSpho Kodwa." Tata: "fine, I'm giving you 10 minutes. Iza Sandile, help me contact Uber." they walked out.

Lakhe: "baby." Me: "Lakhe kwenzeka ntoni. Why did you not tell me you were engaged before?" Lakhe: "I'm sorry Spho." Me: "sorry isn't going to fix it. What happened? Uthe kum you stopped dating after Dez to focus on your career. Kanti benizotshata." Lakhe: "andiyazi ndingathin Spho. I really don't." Me: "Masilakhe, ndicela uthethe inyani. That's all." Lakhe: "Dez and I dating for quite a while, we were young and in love. We got engaged. Amaphupho ethu ebengafani. She wanted to travel, her family was rich, so they afforded it. My family on the other hand, was also rich but wanted me to make something of myself ndingami ngabo. She couldn't wait for that, so wathi uzokhabe ehamba and see the world." Me: "so, you never broke up." Lakhe: "we did break up. When she was in England. We broke up." Me: "you said to her you'd never get married until she came back. Was I the second choice kuba ucimba akaphinde abuye?" Lakhe: "Spho, I love you...I swear I do..." Me: "I'm just not her. Right?" Lakhe: "baby, ayikho lonto." Me: "ngeyiphi ke ekhoyo Lakhe? Are you getting on that flight with me or are you staying here?" Lakhe: "Spho, ndicela ungayiyenzi lento. I want us to properly talk about this. Please stay. One more day." Me: "Are We Going Home. Or Are You Staying Here Lakhe?" he just stared at me. I held back my tears as hard as I possibly could. My whole world was in his eyes. And it was falling apart. Lakhe: "sthandwasam." Me: "don't touch me." Lakhe: "Ndiyakuthanda Siphosenkosi." Me: "then why ungafuni sihambe? Why did you let her ridicule me? Why did you keep quiet?? She treated me like her maid and you kept quiet! Masilakhe. I'm not going to force you to do anything. You're a grown man, you know what you want." the door opened. Tata: "time to go angel." Me: "Goodbye Masilakhe." I walked out the door.

Chapter 24

When I arrived in PE, my mother was waiting at the airport for me. I collected my bag and went to her. I couldn't keep the tears in any longer. My eyes were stinging from all that. Mama: "hey baby." she hugged me and I broke down in her arms. Mama: "oh sanalwam. Kwenzeke ntoni." I didn't even know what just happened. It just hurt everywhere. Mama: "shhhh...its okay my love. Let's go." she took me to the car and we went back to her hotel room. Mama: "awulambanga?" I shook my head. Mama: "talk to me sweetheart." Me: "funu tatam." I sobbed. Mama: "okay, he's on his way baby. Uyeza mntanam." she hugged me again, rocking me back and forth. Mama: "its going to be alright my baby." Me: "I just feel like dying ma." Mama: "no man in this world has the right to make you feel that way. You're not going to keep on with that mentality. He doesn't deserve your downfall. Come sthandwa. Nantsi adcodol. Take a bit of a nap." I took the pill and got into bed. Mama: "I'm here for you mntanam. I always will be." Me: "thanks ma." I sniffed.

**School had become a lovely environment. I changed from my old one to a new one in town. I had many friends also. I was doing my grade 9 and very well too. In my classroom, there were 10 girls and 6 boys only. Which meant fight. The girls liked to confront each other about who's boyfriend was who. I sat back always and watched with Lisa. My new best friend. It was Friday, lunch break. I went to the tuck shop with my pocket money I'd collected during the week and bought myself a pie and cooldrink. Then a chocolate for mom and dad to share. If I had more money I'd buy two, but I didn't so... I went to our spot and sat down eating. Lisa came. Lisa: "not too messy. Brandon is looking." Brandon was the dork of the class. Let me rephrase, School. He wore big glasses and had freckles on his cheeks. His eyes were light crystal blue and he had blonde hair. Plus braces on his teeth. Which ruined the whole thing along with the glasses. So, actually I didn't really care, I ate my pie. Lisa: "you are so hopeless. Listen, ndisaya tuck shop. I'll be back." she ran to the tuck shop. After break, we hopped all the way to class, singing. Teacher: "okay, listen up guys. We have an Arts and Culture play next week. And its for marks." Lisa: "what's the play about?" Teacher: "the birth of Jesus." she smiled. Lisa: "but its November." Teacher: "Yes it is." Lisa: "Jesus was born on Christmas." Teacher: "will you be at school on Christmas smarty pants?" the class laughed. I didn't. She was my friend plus it wasn't that funny. Teacher: "okay. So any volunteers for Joseph?" some boy in class yelled: "Brandon!!!" the whole class laughed again. I didn't see what was so funny again. Teacher: "alright, Brandon? You okay with that?" he nodded. Teacher: "great! Mary? Who's our Mary?" I lifted my hand. I loved Mary in the Bible. Teacher: "amazing!" I smiled shyly. Lisa: "what! You're married to Brandon? Eeww." she

whispered. Me: "what's so eww about him?" Lisa: "could've at least chosen Jade." Me: "did he volunteer? No." the teacher took down everyone's names. We had a play to rehearse. For Grade 9 pupils it would've seemed a bit stupid. But, this is for marks and I promised utata I would pass. After school, I waited outside for daddy. Brandon was waiting for his dad too. Lisa had left with her older brother in Grade 12. I wish I had an older brother. Brandon: "you look pretty, Nkosi" Me: "thank you. But Nkosi is a boy name. I'm Siphosenkosi. Call me Spho." Brandon: "can I call you Mary?" I laughed. Me: "absolutely not." Brandon: "okay, Spho it is." Me: "can I touch

your hair?" he smiled. Brandon: "yeah. I wash it everyday." I giggled and brushed through the soft curls of a white boy's hair. I took out my brush and pushed it back. He didn't seem to mind. We chatted about school, a lot about Social sciences class. Me: "hey, what do you want to be when you grow up?" Brandon: "I want to be a doctor. Like my dad. He's really smart." Me: "mine too! He's also a doctor." Brandon: "that's great. We should be doctors too. Just to make them proud." Me: "yeah, I want to be a baby doctor." Brandon: "that would suit you. I want to heal broken hearts." Me: "a heart doctor?" Brandon: "yeah. A heart doctor. There's your dad." I looked behind me and waved. Me: "come say hi." we went to the car. Khaya: "hello." Brandon: "Hello Spho's dad." Khaya: "are you waiting for your dad? I can call him for you and give you a lift." Brandon: "that would be nice." Khaya: "get in guys." we got in the car and my dad called Brandon's dad. He agreed to the lift and we took him home. Brandon: "bye Spho, and Spho's dad." Khaya: "bye boy." Me: "bye Brandon." he ran to his house and we went home.**

I woke up from my nap some hours later and I could hear another voice besides moms. It was a male. I listened carefully. Ma: "I don't know what happened baby. I just feel we should be there for her and let her talk when she's ready." the other voice started talking: "I'm not letting anyone hurt my baby Zama. I swear if I ever see him, I will kill him with my bare hands." I sat up. Me: "daddy?" he stood up from the chair and walked to me. Khaya: "my princess." I jumped up and hugged him. Khaya: "Unjani sthandwasam?" Me: "I'm okay now tata. You're home." Khaya: "of course I am." we let go. Me: "I'm ready to go now." Mama: "wait baby, where are you going?" Me: "we're going home. Its me, you and dad." Khaya: "princess, home is quite a distance away. Kodwa mna nomamakho are talking about buying a house here in PE again. We want to be closer to you." Me: "I want to be as far away from this place as possible." Khaya: "but love you have your job." Me: "with him there. No thanks. I'll get another job." Khaya: "Spho...tell me what happened?" Me: "its such a long confusing story." Khaya: "I have no where I'd rather be. Start talking." I started from the beginning, waking up at the hospital. Till this

morning. It was a long draining explanation and all he did was nod. Once I was done, he exhaled. Khaya: "so where does he live?" Me: "dad....just let it be. Its for the bes-" Khaya: "no it is not." Me: "he's....not the average Joe." Khaya: "of course not. I've been living through wars for the past 6 years. I will kill him the best way I know how if he ever comes near you again." I ignored that. Dad would never kill a fly even if it sat on his last meal. Me: "tata, do you remember Brandon?" Khaya: "Brandon who?" Me: "his dad was a doctor. Brandon Verandon-Scott." Khaya: "oh...yes. He's a doctor too at his father's hospital. Cape Town." Me: "oh." Khaya: "why?" Me: "I just regained a memory of him." Khaya: "awww, he was your best friend. But he went to Medical school. You attended Nmmu." Me: "he's a heart doctor isn't he?" Khaya: "yes, he is." Me: "he always said he wanted to fix broken hearts." I giggled. Khaya: "that's sweet of him. Always been a sweet little boy." Mama: "I absolutely adored that boy and his sweet little sister." Khaya: "yeah, bakhuliswe kakuhle abaya abantwana. They respect anything and anyone they come across." Mama: "of course." Khaya: "Anyway, how about an early dinner? I need to show you guys pictures and tell you all about Cuba." Me: "perfect. I need to change." Mama: "me too." Khaya: "okay. I'll be back in a few." he kissed my forehead. Khaya: "my beautiful baby princess." Me: "I'm glad you're here dad." Khaya: "me too mntanam. Me too." ...

Chapter 25

2 days later I went house hunting with my father. We viewed two houses and went for lunch together. Meanwhile, my mother had volunteered to fetch the rest of my things at Lakhe's house. I remember I had the appointment with the gynecologist in the afternoon, half of me wanted to just cancel, but I was doing this for myself. Me: "tata, I've got a doctor's appointment this afternoon. Uzokwazi ukundikhapha?" Khaya: "sure princess. We'll go after we finish here." I nodded. Khaya: "what's the appointment for? Psychologist?" Me: "No. Just a check up." Khaya: "alright." Me: "uzohlala this time? You're not going back to Cuba?" Khaya: "well...." Me: "tata!" Khaya: "I'm kidding baby. Of course ndizohlala. I'm starting at Greenacres Hospital next week." I smiled. Me: "that's great." Khaya: "There's something I want to show you...but all in good time." Me: "its another present?" Khaya: "yes my sweet. You'll love this one." Me: "I loved all your presents tata. Especially the driving lessons." Khaya: "so when are you starting?" Me: "Monday." Khaya: "perfect, I've retrieved also, CV yakho kunye ne Degree yakho. I'm loading them onto your profile on LinkedIn. Also taking them to an agency. Soon you'll have a job you're qualified in." Me: "Oh Tata!" I hugged him. Khaya: "anything for you sthandwasam. As long as you're far away from that scum." he paid the bill. Saphuma and he drove me to my appointment. When we arrived, I was 15

minutes early. Sayohlala phantsi salinda. The doctor came to us. Doc: "Mr and Mrs Ngudla, you can come this way please." I laughed. Me: "this is my dad. I'm Miss. Not Mrs." she blushed apologetically. Doc: "I apologize." Khaya: "oh that's fine." he smiled. Khaya: "go ahead princess I'll wait here." he had his phone in his hand. My dad's looks were quite questionable actually. He was built, and physically fit. Now unale trend ndiyiqaphelayo intsha of wearing tighter clothing. Today was worse because ebenxibe denim shorts and a green Lacoste sneaker. He looked young, but the carefully trimmed beard gave it away, oo-whitey hair bebesekhona. As for hair on his head? It was always like dust. Very little and neatly combed. I went in and the doctor examined me, performing a few tests wade wagqiba. Me: "is there anything wrong?" Doc: "not that I can see at the moment but I'm taking these to the lab and I'll contact you for your results." Me: "oh. How long will it take?" Doc: "at least Tuesday or Wednesday. Since its the weekend from today." I nodded. After my appointment we left for the hotel, I had my own room though. It was leya yaka mama before. They moved into another one. Bigger I suppose. Anyway, me and dad went to their room samlinda pha while having a snack. She arrived ephethe a plastic ediniwe. I was confused. That could not have been my clothing. Mama: "molweni." both of us looked at her waiting for an explanation. Mama: "ndiyabulisa!!" Me: "molo mama." Khaya: "yinton Le ikulo plastic?" the veins on his forehead became visible kwangoko ndayiqonda ngumsindo. Mama: "its just some stuff I bought e-shop." Khaya: "kanti ubungayi kulandlu yalantwana?" Mama: "he refuses to let me take anything. Uthi ucela uthetha noSpho." Khaya: "Give me that address." Mama: "Khaya-" Khaya: "jongapha Zama. Ungak'linge undiphambanise mna. Give Me That Address." watsho evula suitcase yakhe. He took out his gun wayifaka on his back. I didn't even know he had a gun! Me: "tata, wait." Khaya: "No, Sphosenkosi. I am going alone. He's not going to come and make demands. Akayiyo i-president. Angandiqheli amasimba mna. Iphi lendawo maka Spho." she told him. Me: "mama!" my father left the house. Mama: "I'm sorry baby. Uyamazi utatakho akaphazanyiswa enomsindo." What I don't understand is utata akazange wambetha but she's still scared of him. Mama: "maybe we should just let him my angel. They can talk

man to man." Me: "with a gun mama? I'm not trying to lose my dad." Mama: "what makes you think you'll lose utatakho? Have faith in him." bendingcangcazela ndingayazi yeyiphi eyiphi. Only 45 minutes later Wangena utata with big full bags of my clothes. Khaya: "ngand'xelel ub'thuvi mna." he mumbled. How.... Khaya: "its time for our dinner and movie girls. Masambeni." I was still shocked.

Saturday morning, I woke up refreshed. Ndayovasa and got dressed. Nude leggings and a nude crop vest. I wore an olive green sleeveless summer coat. I looked through the shoes and took out the nude 6 inch pump. Me: "Christian Louboutin." I read on it. Me: "cute." I wore that and combed my hair. Khaya: "princess." he knocked on my door. Me: "ndiyeza tata." I opened for him. Khaya: "hey sweetheart. You look pretty." I put on some perfume. Me: "I think I wanna do my hair." Khaya: "I like it though..." Me: "yeah, but I want a change." Khaya: "we have only 3 hours before your surprise arrives." I was so excited, I was hoping it was a car. A big one! Me: "then masambe kwangoku. Ndiyoflerha." we left for the salon with mom also. Wenza dry curl yena. I did two french braids kuba bendifuna next week ufakela something like a weave. We left the salon. Khaya: "its time." he drove the car. I was so excited. Indlela was quite clear, the boards showed Walmer. But then yangena imoto e-Airport. Okay, so where were we going? Did he book a surprise trip? He did, didn't he? :D Khaya: "okay. 10 minutes from now." we got out the car sahamba sayongena ngaphakathi. Me: "tata cela undixelele." Khaya: "no, I actually don't want to ruin it. Ima apha." I was standing at Arrivals. Zange ndaba lost oluhlobo. I looked around me and both of them were giggling by a coffee shop a few meters away. Bendibhanxwa na apha? I looked at them. Me: "Dad? Kwenzeka ntoni?" Khaya: "look behind you." he pointed behind me. I turned around and saw him walking into the airport. His gold hair was in a roughed up angle, erhuqa bag yakhe. His eyes searched around until they found mine. I smiled. He smiled. Me: "Brandon!" I ran to him. Brandon: "hey." he hugged me tightly. Brandon: "I've missed you so much." Me: "Oh Brandon." I looked at him. Good Jesus, was he gorgeous. Ithwani na xa inje? Brandon: "well? Are you going to stare at me all day?" I laughed. We went to my parents and found them having coffee. Khaya: "Brandon! Hello." Me: "tata. You can drop the act." he smiled. Khaya: "you look well." Brandon: "I am well, thank you Mr Ngud'la." Khaya: "Princess, why don't you help Brandon check in and take him to breakfast?" I knew what he was trying to do. Me: "okay. Come Brandon." we started at Avis to fetch him a car. He drove to the Radisson Blu Hotel where he booked himself in sayobeka bags zakhe. We drove to Blue Waters Cafe for breakfast, getting a table that overlooked the ocean. Me: "my dad convinced you to come right?" Brandon: "it didn't take much convincing. When he told me about the accident and your memory, I came as soon as I possibly could." Me: "yeah well. I'm getting better now." Brandon: "it doesn't look like it. What's wrong?" we ordered our breakfast. Me: "I only remember a small part of our friendship. The first day my dad took you home, when I was brushing your hair. Remember?" Brandon: "I don't think I'd ever forget.. Well, that's where our friendship began. Couldn't spend a day without each other. When I fell sick,

you would ask your dad to take you to my house after school and spend time with me. Making me sandwiches and brushing my hair. My mother loved you so much. We also shared birthdays. We'd force our parents to throw us both a party, so basically we were both born twice a year." I giggled. Me: "tell me more." Brandon: "our matric dance, we went together. Had a difficult time trying to convince everyone we weren't dating." I smiled. He had this warm vibe about him

that I liked. I think every time I'm familiar to my positive past I feel this way. Brandon: "then the last day we spent together....it was worst. Through out all our fights that week when I had to go, you slept over at my place. You helped me pack everything whilst not even talking to me. I remember, when you closed my last suitcase and ticked off the checklist. I asked you to come with me...." Me: "why didn't I come with you?" Brandon: "you were scared, I wish you'd come with me. I needed my best friend all these years. Mom passed away 2 years into my studies. I failed dismally. Every aspect in my life just went downhill. We'd lost contact and I didn't have anyone by my side." Me: "I'm so sorry." I held his hand. Brandon: "I'm just glad I finally got out of it. Dad helped me through it. Anyway, how have you been doing?" Me: "I don't know to be truly honest." Brandon: "tell me what you do know." Me: "I just keep regaining memory one at a time. Yet its happening sooo slowly. I never know when its going to happen. On top of it all, I've had to adjust to someone I barely know, trusted him, relied on him for everything, and then out of nowhere he just drops me." Brandon: "who would do such a thing? Don't they understand what a treasure you are?" Me: "thank you Brandon." Brandon: "so what do you do now? Where are you living?" Me: "I'm still just sitting. To top it all off, he is my boss. I can't work for him. So I have to draft a resignation letter, and look for another job. I live at Courtyard with mom and dad." Brandon: "I think its good, you're starting afresh but you can't let this man compromise your career. He doesn't deserve that power, I do understand though where you're coming from." Me: "what are you up to." Brandon: "I'm a cardiothoracic surgeon." he smiled. Brandon: "I heal broken hearts." I laughed. God, I was so happy. Like genuinely happy that this human being existed. Me: "how is that working out.." Brandon: "very well actually." Me: "girlfriend? Wife?" Brandon: "I have a girlfrien, her name is Tammy." Me: "can I see her picture? Why didn't you bring her along?" Brandon: "I didn't want to overwhelm you. Besides, she sends her warmest regards, you'll meet her when you go to Cape Town." Me: "I'd love to." our food arrived and we ate. After our breakfast we took a walked to the beach. I took off my heels and rolled up my leggings. He also took off his shoes and rolled up his pants. Me: "I feel as though there's something you're not telling me." Brandon:

"what?? That's ridiculous." he chuckled. Me: "Brandon. I'm not dumb."
Brandon: "we've covered the most important parts of our lives." I stood by the shore. The cold water ran up the sand and wash my feet, sinking me deeper in its dampness. He stood in front of me. Me: "what else happened the day before you left.." he hugged me. Me: "Brandon." Brandon: "its all in the past babe." Me: "the smallest amount of information can help trigger a block of emotions.....and memories." he exhaled and looked at the ocean. Brandon: "I wanted you to marry me, so that we can elope to Cape Town together." I chuckled. Me: "what?" Brandon: "I know...you just smacked and told me that people that date get married we can't get married because we're best friends. I just didn't want to lose you." he looked in my eyes. Me: "I'm here now." he smiled. Brandon: "I'm glad." we continued with our walk.

Sunday evening Brandon was due back in Cape Town. I really didn't want him to leave but he had work to get to. We sat together at the airport waiting for his boarding time. I enjoyed talking to him and the way he looked at me when he listened. Me: "its time. Let me walk you." Brandon: "few more minutes.." Me: "for what." he smiled and shook his head. Brandon: "for all those years....I need a few more minutes." Me: "I'm not going anywhere, I'll email and text, you'll visit when you can." Brandon: "you're coming to Cape

Town right? Its absolutely gorgeous. You'd love it." Me: "okay." he got up after a while and we hugged. Brandon: "I'll call you as soon as I land okay." Me: "alright. Enjoy your flight. Goodbye Brandon." he kissed my forehead and walked away. I watched him go through the boarding gates and still waited until his plane took off then I caught a cab to the hotel. Umama ebehleli notata on their balcony. I knocked on their door wazovula utata. Ndayoziphosa ebhedini. Khaya: "and then?" Me: "I know what you were trying to do dad. Its not going to work. Brandon and I will always be friends and in case you didn't know, he has a girlfriend." Khaya: "psss...what was I trying to do? My only crime was to bring you your best friend ubenomntu woncokola." Me: "dad, I don't need a man." Khaya: "absolutely baby. You have me. I just thought seeing Brandon would make you happy. That's all." Me: "I was happy. Thank you." I checked my phone for any messages. Khaya: "he'll call, don't worry." my phone rang just then ndayiphendula without even looking. Me: "hello?" Zingi: "hi babe. Unjani?" Me: "I'm great and yourself?" Zingi: "I'm good. I'm having a little braai here endlini. It me and the kids kunye noDumi but he has a soccer game he's going to watch with his friends at Finnezz. How about you come over and keep me company?" Me: "that would be nice babe. I'll be there soon." Zingi: "okay." I hung up. Me: "I'm going to Zingi's place." Khaya: "I'll drop you off." Me: "Tata. I'm not a baby." Khaya: "neither am I. Ndizokusa kuZingi." I didn't argue with him. Me: "I'll go change

then." ndahamba ndaye roomin yam to change. I could really decide on what to wear. It was a bit chilly though, I felt like dressing up also. I took out a light brown bandage dress and a matching coat ndanxiba. Taking out red stilettos and wore them. I took my purse with phone and wallet ndaya ku tata. Khaya: "heee, princess. Uyo qhayisela uZingi ngesinxibo or what? You're so dressed up." Me: "its a girl thing tata." Khaya: "ai, andiyingeni. Let's go. Ndiyabuya my heart uyeva?" Mama: "okay baby." my dad drove me to Zingi's house. On my arrival nyani kungekho anything out of order. Khaya: "okay my angel. I'll see you later vha. Love you." Me: "bye tata." I got out the car ndayongena endlin then he left. Me: "molweni bethuna." Zingi: "is that a new man? Oh My...." Dumis peeped at the car. Dumis: "new man? What?" Me: "can we not? Please guys. Where the kids?" Dumis: "I took them to their gran." Me: "you said the kids were here Zingi." Zingi: "I forgot they weren't. Awubawel glass ye-wine?" Me: "yes why not." Dumis: "you know I love you right?" I gulped the wine. Yahla kamnandi ukufa. I needed to be drunk for this. Me: "yes." Dumis: "and....I would do anything to protect you right?" Me: "of course Dumis, can we talk about this later? Andikahlali naphantsi sana sowundithutha." he sighed. Zingi: "how about uyojonga braai injani." Dumis: "okay babe." he went out the back. Me: "another one." Zingi: "okay slow down. Kwenzeka ntoni." Me: "I just need to feel loose. Lakhe left me for some ex of his that lived in England. She thought I was her maid at that. Then my dad hears of this and goes ooofff! I didn't even know he had a gun." she poured another glass ndayisela. Zingi: "I'm so sorry b-" Me: "to top it all off, he calls my former friend, all the way from Cape Town to comfort. He is so sweet. I just can't do anything about it because I'm still inlove with that fool! He's the only man I want and he chose another woman." Dumis walked back in. I was getting tipsy. Me: "is it a thing , for men ? Uthi uthanda umntu and still have the audacity to hurt them?" he looked at me with a stupid facial expression. Zingi: "I don't think it was his intention to hurt you." Me: "of course not. Neither was it mine to fall in love. Now, I lost a place to live, I have to squat at the hotel with the parents, also, I lost a man, I have no one to goof around with, and most importantly I've lost Interest in my Job. On top of all of that. Memory." Dumis: "Spho...this was not my intention at all. I had no say in it. I was forced. Please do not hate me." Me: "I'd never hate you. I don't have the hate."

I heard a car door closing outside. Me: "we have guests? Oh wow. Just when I'm in NO Mood to meet new peepul." Dumis: "I'm so sorry. I really wasn't given a choice he....." there was a knock on the door. Zingi: "Dumis please get the door." he went to open. Zingi: "everything will be okay hun." Me: "argg Zingi, I don't want a pity party. I don't want to felt for. If I could just fly to Mauritius

right now and forget my troubles and drink this wine. Life would be amazing." Zingi: "awuzokwazi uzibaleka ke sisi ingxaki zakho. Sooner rather than later you'll have to face them." Me: "urrhh." I sighed. Me: "what's that smell?" I looked to my left, the direction which Dumi was to open the door. He was here. Oh God.... Lakhe: "molo Spho." this was like a nightmare repeating itself over and over again. Me: "eWorse yeyoba ude ufake iitshomi zam kule dyubhadyubha yakho. What do you want ngoku Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "You."

Chapter 26

I stared at him. Ebendidika ke qha, but I missed him so much. Me: "Uthini Lakhe?" Lakhe: "baby, I acted like a fool. Ndicela uxolo. Can you please forgive me?" Me: "that's it? That's all you're going to say?" Lakhe: "Siphosenkosi, uyayazi how much you mean to me. I can't sleep without you by my side. You know that I get cold. I've never had to do this, kodwa I cannot afford to lose you." Me: "after all these days. Since Wednesday. Wena uziva Sunday, that uyagodola? Hmm? Ndim caba isdenge that can only warm your bed?" Lakhe: "that's not it baby. Ndiyakukhumbula." Me: "Kwathini uzundiyeke ndihambe ke mfana? Wahhala wena eMonti with your Dez." Lakhe: "Spho, I asked you to stay but ubungafun-" Me: "oh? So that ndizoba yi maid ka Dez. Mna ndibengu Tryphina ogalela wine nge intervals." Lakhe: "No Spho. That's not what's going to happen." Me: "then what is? Ngoba awundiniki nto. Sisekula block A sasime kuye." Lakhe: "but Spho I want to marry you. That has not changed." Me: "uzamthini uDez ke yena? Phof ke ubuthe komnye uzamlinda abuye awucingi wena utshate. Hmm? Uzamthini uDreamGirl?" Lakhe: "Spho, ndidlulile kuDez." Me: "udlulile ngoku because kaloku ubuyile eMonti. Ubuye nini khona, wait close your eyes." he closed his eyes. Me: "Dumi ibuye nini tshomi yakho emonti?" Dumi stared at him. Lakhe: "ba-" Me: "Thula. Dumi ndithetha nawe andithengisi mbona." Dumi: "andiyazi ubuye nini Spho. I swear." Me: "sowabal xoki nawe ngoku?" Dumi: "he only called me last night." Me: "enkosi Dumi, so wena ubuye last night." Lakhe looked at me again. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi. Ndiyakthanda uyeva. Whether you believe it or not-" Me: "No, I asked you a simple question, all I need is a Yay or Nay answer. Cela undiphendule." I sipped my wine. Lakhe: "I came back Friday morning." Me: "amazing stuff. Noba bekumnandi eBlue Lagoon ne." Lakhe: "nothing happened." Me: "like hell." I poured myself another glass. Me: "Zingi, aninayo enkulwana kundlana? Ingathi iphela rhow kule glass." Lakhe: "Spho, ndicela ubuye endlini." Me: "umkile ngoku uDez?" Lakhe: "ungena phi uDez Spho!" Me: "first things first, don't you ever put my name in the same sentence as hers. Once we've established that, ungakuliiinge ucimbe uzoqalisa undingxolela mna. Calm your tits. Oyena mntu that forgot the

essential details about Dez, NGUWE. I am allowed to ask, because you refused to tell. Ungandiqheli kakbi." Lakhe: "asinokulwa ngento enye oko Spho. I don't like fighting." Me: "who's fighting? Nguwe umntu ozibilisa ikhwapha. Khandilwe nawe mna." Lakhe: "Siphosenkosi ndicela sigoduke siyolungisa izinto zethu as a couple. Please. I asked you to be my wife, for a reason. One, I love you with my entire heart, Two, ungumama womntanam, Three, you're my equal, you're smart, you're beautiful, and you care about me kakhulu. I can't do anything without you by my side Sphosenkosi ndiyakucela." Me: "but you need to make it clear to yourself ukuba ndimephi in your life, be clear that uDez umephi. Umxelele naye ukuba umephi na, so that roles aren't confused. Nguwe umntu o-suppose uyalungisa." Lakhe: "okay baby. Consider it done." Me: "consider what done usame apho ingathi uyafitisha kwa Mr Price?" Lakhe: "yinton uMr Price." Zingi: "usamile???" he took out his phone and made a call wayifaka ku loud speaker. "Hello." ndaske ndacaphuka worse. Lakhe: "Dez, ndicela sivane ngento enye ne. Spho is my wife now, and she's not there because you weren't, she's there because I love her more than anything. Ndicela ungabisaphazama. You and I are over for good." I heard her laugh. Dez: "if that's what makes you sleep at night. In fact, if you weren't so worried about your own feelings bungasoze ufownele mna ku loud speaker-" Lakhe: "You've got things confused again, andikufuni Dez, stop flattering yourself thinking I'm doing this for anyone. I don't want you

qha." the call was dropped. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi." Me: "Masilakhe." he knelt down on his knee. Lakhe: "we can do it tomorrow morning. As long as you're mine. Ndiyacenga mntanaka Ngudla. Please accept this proposal, will you please be my wife?" I looked at the sparkling diamond in his hand. I was torn in the middle. My dad would kill him and me. Nobody could make this decision for me. Bendimthanda but the trust though. It was still lingering by thread. Lakhe: "please baby?" well fuck it. Me: "Yes. I will marry you." he smiled. Me: "phakama kaloku." Lakhe: "funeke ndive ngawe kaloku mfazi." he got up and kissed my forehead. I just fell into his arms because I was tipsy. Me: "uzundibhanxe net. Uyowndibona." Lakhe: "andicingi mntuwam. Asoze." Me: "why did you stay so long in East London?" Lakhe: "Wednesday I attended a meeting with one of the owners of the club I want to buy into. Thursday ndadibana nomntu to manage the place on my behalf and he wasn't suitable. Ndaqondaba mandigoduke best." Me: "so Uzothini nge club?" Lakhe: "I'm thinking of canceling the offer. Its no use if ndizobe ndilapha ebhayi. And have to keep going that side every weekend. Besides, Tuesday ndiye Joburg, There's a business seminar I need to attend and I would love for my wife to join me please?" Me: "yoh." Lakhe: "yintoni baby?" Me: "I don't want to rush into this. I'm still trying to trust you after the whole East London

incident. Ndazelaphi kuzobakho nton eJoburg enophinda indikhubekise." Lakhe: "baby. I was stupid its never going to happen again. I promise you. Yilento ndifuna uhambe nam ukuye Joburg, you need to be familiar with all my business acquaintances and deals. Xa bengafumani mna, Ube ukho wena." Me: "my dad hates your guts." Lakhe: "he beat the shit out of me ngolwesihlanu." I laughed. Lakhe: "heee.. Ndisacela uxolo, he didn't even wait. Ubuzile impahla ziphi kwangena impama. Jonga iindlebe zathi Mpo! Ivakele la mpama. Yohh. Ndayicinga semnkile, I could not believe it. So yes, I am afraid of your dad." Me: "he will not let me near you. I kind of told mom, she told him and he asked me so I had to tell him." Lakhe: "its okay baby. I think oomalume bam mabasondele." Me: "not so soon though." Lakhe: "okay. Uzothi Uyaphi ngomso?" Me: "andiyazi." Zingi walked back in. Zingi: "I'm going to call him ndimcele. I'll say I asked you undikhaphe ndiye k'lo tatam emaxhoseni. Luckily the network there is supposedly bad. Therefore no unnecessary long calls." Me: "that would mean ndigoduka early ke namhlanje to butter him up." Lakhe: "enkosi Zingi. So we have that sorted." Me: "sibuye nini." Lakhe: "Thursday baby.. The seminar is on Tuesday evening. Then Wednesday I have a meeting, also a dinner and then Thursday sibuye." Zingi: "nibuye nimithi please. I want to throw a baby shower." I looked at her. Me: "nja-" Zingi: "and I need no excuses..." Lakhe: "and risk getting myself killed ngulatata? No thanks. We're doing the wedding first." I was sure she didn't tell Dumi about the pregnancy. Lakhe: "girls, khame ndiyoncedisa uDumi." he kissed my cheek waphuma. Me: "you didn't tell him?" Zingi: "not yet." Me: "Zingi, are you still thinking of aborting this child?" Zingi: "I don't want another baby." Me: "did you at least think of his opinion." Zingi: "its not his body-" Me: "you're his wife." Zingi: "please Spho, you have a ring on your for 2 minutes and you're already an expert wife? Khawundiyeke wethu." she got up and left me there ndaske ndabhidwa. Lakhe came to me again. Lakhe: "ha.a my love. Andinolunga pha. The fumes are going to ruin my outfit. I can't." Zingi ebekhuphela hormones zakhe apha kum basically. I was her bucket. Ai, mandimyeke ne moods zakhe. Lakhe: "babe?" Me: "yes." Lakhe: "awusemhle namhlanje. Ubuyephi?" yatsho yakhala phone yam. I looked through my purse and saw 'Brandon VS' on the screen ndayifaka ku silent without even taking it out. Lakhe: "and? Awuzoyiphendula?" I looked at him. His right brow was raised. Me: "oh hayi wethu." Lakhe: "oh. Ndisayothenga ice for Dumi. Ufuna undikhapha?" Me: "no baby, I want to check on Zingi. She's not well." Lakhe:

"ok." he left the house. I took out my phone and saw it ringing again, I picked up. Me: "hey." Brandon: "hey you...I've landed. I'm going to collect my bag now. I just couldn't wait to hear your voice. I already miss you." Me: "I miss you

too." Brandon: "hopefully, you'll be able to hop over to Cape Town this weekend?" Me: "I'll see what I can do." Brandon: "perfect. What are you doing now?" Me: "I'm at a friend's place for a braai. They called just after I got to the hotel. You going straight home?" Brandon: "yes. I just need a bath and my bed right now." Me: "I'm sure Tammy is happy you're back." Brandon: "I don't live with her. Don't see her much. Anyway, I don't want us to talk about Tammy. This is our time." hmmm? Uthini na ngoku mfana? Me: "oh?" Brandon: "yes..oh. Tell me when to book the return flights okay?" Me: "I will book the flight." Brandon: "no, I will... Don't worry about it." Me: "okay then. If that's what you say." Brandon: "would it be possible if I convinced you to send your CV this side..." Me: "you want me to move to Cape Town?" Brandon: "well...I'd like to have you closer." Me: "Cape Town?? I don't know...let's think about that okay?" Brandon: "alright. Or maybe I should make my way back to PE then." I laughed. Me: "don't try and be funny Dr VS." Brandon: "I love the way you call me. Brand, VS, BVS. I can't believe I once thought it was irritating. Now its what brightens up my day." Me: "aww that's sweet. You're always going to be Dr VS." Brandon: "okay Mrs VS, I'll call you once I'm home okay?" Me: "my battery is struggling on 20% if it happens to be off, leave me a message okay?" Brandon: "alright. Will do. Goodnight hun." Me: "goodnight Brandon." I hung up. I was getting confused, very much confused. I thought Brandon viewed me as a friend, umke apha sigrand mos. Singoo "peto, mtshana." all of a sudden ndingu Mrs VS. What was that all about? I turned around to head to the bathroom and to my surprise, Lakhe was standing there. I don't know for how long but I could judge from the look on his face. Sekhe wayiva langoma ye Isley Brothers ithi busted ? Ukhe uyive xa iqala? Lakhe: "is your battery really struggling on 20% or ufuna angafowni ndikhona?" busted. Me: "uhm...how long have you been standing there." Lakhe: "cela undiphendule." Me: "No and yes." ayikho enye indlela because my phone was on 52. No way I could swap those numbers. Lakhe: "ngubani uBrandon Sphosenkosi." Me: "my friend from high school." Lakhe: "kengoku, kutheni Le friend ingenofowna ndikhona?" Me: "I don't think ufuna uphazanyiswa ngab-" Lakhe: "phazanyiswa? Its not even my phone. The only thing endiphazamisayo is the booking of flights and the secret phone calls. What else are you hiding from me?" Me: "nothing Masilakhe." Lakhe: "nothing? Siphosenkosi, ngubani uBrandon. Yinton kuwe?" Me: "he's a friend-" Lakhe: "so conveniently, your friend from God-knows-where, oh wait, Cape Town, mysteriously shows up for no reason? Uqala nini?" Me: "can we not do this here? Please?" Lakhe: "no, we're doing it Here. Simxoxile uDez ndime k'lendawo. Sizamxoxa ke noBrandon-boy." Me: "my dad called him here. He said it was a gift for me because he knew how close we were sisebancinci. I didn't know he was coming." Lakhe: "your dad huh..." Me: "ewe Lakhe. This is the truth." Lakhe:

"I'm going to believe you, xa usithi yitshomi yakho then let him call. I don't mind. Just do not hide these things from me. Uyiyeke into yonyonyoba." I nodded. Did he even go buy the ice phof? Uwoah.

It was late into the evening when my father called me sisahleli kamandi. I decided to answer before he decided to appear. Me: "hi tata." Dad: "useright?" Me: "ewe Tata." Dad: "its getting late." Me: "Zingi uzondigodusa tata, not long from now." Dad: "okay my princess. Undixelele ufika kwakho." Me: "alright dad." I hung up. Lakhe: "ufuna uhambe ngoku? Yoh. Ha.a ufather usenzela nzima ngoku." Me: "you're the one that wants to go to

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Joburg. Ingathi ke ngowuba sweet." Lakhe: "no its fine...into endiy'thethayo mna oomalume mabahlangane. Bendingasoze ndisokole kangaka yazi." Me: "you need to be patient. You're still on thin ice." Lakhe: "okay ke baby. Ndiyakuva." we got ready to leave. As much as it was a risk, Lakhe was dropping me at the hotel. I knew that my dad won't be waiting at the gate anyway. So akhonto ibitheni. We said our goodbyes to Dumi and Zingi and left the house. Lonto sihambe ingathi kudala kulindwe sihambe. The atmosphere wasn't the same anymore. Lakhe drove me to the hotel kumnandi emotweni. We really wanted to just go around the city, and dance and sing kuselwe because I was the drunkard and he was the tipsyard. When we got to Courtyard he looked at me with those blazing eyes. Lakhe: "I've loved you since the day I met you. Uyayazi Phof lonto?" Me: "zange utsho kum. I don't even remember." Lakhe: "one day we'll talk about it." Me: "asinoyithetha ngoku?" Lakhe: "now isn't the time. Let's try xasikwi plane eya eMauritius together. We'll have ample time to discuss fight and make up. Ndiyak'thanda uyeva?" Me: "I love you too." he leaned over and kissed me. I held his shirt collar and kissed him some more. He smiled. Lakhe: "hayi baby." Me: "Thula." I kissed him some more. Lakhe: "babyyy." Me: "ndizokutswikila ke mna." he held my thigh and I pushed his hand away. Lakhe: "I love you so much Spho...do you understand that..." I looked at him. Me: "why do you insist on interrupting me?" Lakhe: "because I need you to know you're my queen. My entire world. Uzunditwikile net. Ima show you flames." I laughed. He kissed me again. Out of the blue someone knocked on the window. We stopped and looked. He was standing by the driver's side. Khaya: "cela uphume ndik'bone."Oh Shit.

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Chapter 27

I got out the car with Lakhe ndaya kwelabo icala. Me: "tata." Khaya: "Benditheni kuwe wena?" Lakhe: "ndicel uxolo tata." he didn't even look sorry. Me: "Tata, please. Can we talk about this?" Khaya: "I want you to get the hell out of here and stay the hell away from my daughter. Andiphinde ndithethe into enye ke mna uyandiva?" Me: "akazokwazi tata." Khaya: "Sphosenkosi andithethi nawe." Me: "dad-" Khaya: "No, andithethi nawe. This, right here, is a good for nothing low life scum, that hides behind big cars and suits. This isn't how I raised you." Me: "tata kodwa.-" Khaya: "I'm not going to argue with you. Go. And you, you better disappear." Lakhe: "Tata, ndicela uthetha." Khaya: "uthetha ntoni nabani? If my daughter wasn't standing here, I would've knocked you out immediately." Lakhe: "ndiyamthanda uSphosenkosi tata. I really do. I want to make her my wife-" Khaya: "no child of mine is marrying a criminal." Me: "hayi tata! Lakhe is not a criminal!" Khaya: "should I tell her or you will?" Lakhe: "tata. Its not even like that-" Khaya: "he's a drug dealer. The reason he doesn't want to be in the spotlight or have pictures on the internet is because he is a drug distributor." Me: "hehake tata. How did you even come up with that?" Lakhe: "I don't blame you tata for not trusting me, I did do wrong ku Spho, but all my businesses are legit. I've never dealt drugs in my life. All of what I have is from hard work." Khaya: "that cute story you keep telling yourself, mane ngoyiphinda nakwabanye. Its not going to work apha. I don't want you near my child, and asizophikisana ngalonto." he pulled my arm and I stood still. Khaya: "Sphosenkosi." Me: "Tata I'm not a baby anymore. I can take care of myself. Yes, I need your protection, but ndiyamthanda uLakhe. He's also there to protect me too." Khaya: "my word is final Sphosenkosi." Lakhe: "listen to your father Sphosenkosi. Inoba uzak'tshata ngokwakhe." he mumbled engena emotweni. Khaya: "heee? Uthini?" Me: "tata!" Khaya: "makathethe ndimve!!" Lakhe: "go inside Spho." he started the car ehlixe festire waiting for me to get inside. My father was fuming. I took his arm ndayongena. Khaya: "the nerve of that boy!! Iyadelela lanto leya!" Me: "Dad. Can you please just relax." Khaya: "Spho, he is changing you. Kutheni sow'thetha nam oluhlobo ngoku?" Me: "Tata, I know you love me. I made the mistake of involving you in my troubles only because you're here and have always been for me. I want to marry him dad. Like you did with mom. I want to have a family." Khaya: "nanku uBrandon! A sensible man with a good head on his shoulders! Not lakwekwe ingena mbeko!" Me: "I don't want Brandon dad. Ndifuna uLakhe." Khaya: "I'm going to talk to you in the morning when your head is back in its place." he walked out my room. I sat on my bed ndikhulula. All I thought about was him, I wanted him by my side. I just didn't know how this marriage was going to happen utata ekhona. Worse ba makafune nditshate uBrandon. Hehake father, hehake sana.

Monday morning I went down for breakfast ndabafumana behleli at the dining hall. Me: "molweni mama." Mama: "hello. Get your breakfast uzohlala." I went to get my cereal ndahlala phantsi. Me: "tata." Khaya: "yes my sweet." heee, and then. Me: "I'm sorry about izolo." Khaya: "its okay." Me: "Tata...Lakhe asked me to marry him. I said yes." he looked at me. Khaya: "mntanam kutheni uzenza lento?" Mama: "I thought he left you for another woman." Me: "I'm the one that left, yes besingavani and I thought it was over. He apologized and made things right. I love him." Khaya: "and if he does it again?" Me: "then it happens again dad. It would be my mistake to make." Khaya: "andimthandi lamfana for wena Spho. I can't change your decision but I'm not happy. Andinguye utata ozokuvalela. All I was trying to do was protect you. Its all because I love you." Me: "I love you too tata."

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Khaya: "I have to get ready for work." he got up and left the table. Mama: "he's really disappointed." Me: "I know ma. I just don't want to be miserable with someone else." Mama: "Brandon would never make you miserable. That man loves you." Me: "why wonke umntu epavela uBrandon? Lakhe loves me also. Maybe awkwardly but he does love me." she sighed. Mama: "I don't know but...I doubt your dad will walk you down the aisle." that cut my heart so deeply. I lost my appetite even. Me: "I've got some stuff...to do." I left the table and went to my room ndayovasa. After my long shower. I sat on my bed. I checked my phone and found messages from Brandon. Nothing too much, thank Goodness. I checked my emails and found eyaka Harold. I had more work. Would I still leave the company or was I talking out of anger? Eyy ndiske andayazi. After getting dressed I went to check on my dad ndafika egqibo nxiba. He was in his nice black suit. Me: "daddy." he looked up at me. Me: "please give him a chance. Just one." he sighed. Me: "for your princess." Khaya: "fine. We're having dinner at Blue Waters at 7pm. He must be there." Me: "thank you daddy!!" I hugged him. Khaya: "anything my baby girl." Me: "enjoy your day at work okay? Undiphathele something emnandi." Khaya: "what could I possibly bring you from a hospital baby? Hayi wethu suba spoilt." Me: "okay ke bye bye." Khaya: "bye princess. See you later." he left for work. I went to my room excitedly and called Lakhe. Me: "baby???" Lakhe: "hey my love. What it do." Me: "my dad agreed to give you chance. You need to come to dinner with us at 7 eBlue Waters." Lakhe: "no baby...tonight??" Me: "yes... What do you mean no?" Lakhe: "I have a status meeting at Zest ngo 7 nje. This is the first one I'm doing therefore funekile ndibekhona." Me: "oh." Lakhe: "I'm sorry my love." Me: "its okay." Lakhe: "how about.....you bring your dinner right over to Zest? That way, the minute I'm done I join you? Or even better, your dad can join me in the meeting since

I'm a drug dealer and so." I giggled. Me: "I'll try. Let's talk later. I think Kukho umntu emnyango." Lakhe: "love you baby." Me: "I love you too." I hung up ndayojonga emnyango. When I opened the door, my uncle was standing there. "uhhm....Spho?" Me: "Tanci!" I hugged him. He looked very confused. Uncle: "hi pumpkin." Me: "what are you doing here umbonile umama?" Uncle: "no I didn't. Where is she?" Me: "she's in the other room. Tata is home." Uncle: "that's nice. Let me go say hi to your mom. Ndizobuya vha?" Me: "okay." I gave him the room number and he left. Lakhe was texting me already. Lakhe: "baby kaloku khandihoye tu." Me: "I'm here. My uncle is here also." Lakhe: "great. Mandibize abam nam ke mos." I should invite uncle Lani to dinner too. So I went after him to mom's room. If she knew maybe ebezomxelela but only dad knew about the dinner, and me of course. The door wasn't closed properly but I could hear some arguing inside. Mama: "damn it Phumlani! Yinton ingxaki yakho! How many times must I tell you this?" Uncle: "tell me what! Akhonto undixelela yona mos Zama! I'm always the last to know. Like you, changing rooms!" Mama: "I knew you would show up unannounced! Buzofika Kukho Khaya apha, uthini kengoku?" Uncle: "Zama, you need to make your decision." Mama: "Phumlani, please go. I can't do this with you." Uncle: "Zama...don't do this please." Mama: "I can't leave my family Phumlani." Uncle: "then don't leave them." Mama: "its risky Phumlani. Khaya isn't going anywhere now. He can't find out again. It would kill him." Uncle: "okay...ndiyakuva. You'll know where to find me if you need me." I ran back to my room ndayohlala pha. I didn't even know what to do. Mama and uncle Lani? So that day.....it was him that was here with umama. Oh thank God they changed the sheets everyday. After about 10 minutes I heard a knock ndayovula. Uncle: "mtshana." he smiled more excitedly. Me: "umfumene?" Uncle: "oh yes. Thanks princess. I'm gonna get going vha." I

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couldn't even ask him to dinner. I didn't know how. Me: "okay." Uncle: "Sho mntanam." and he was out.....

Later in the day, I was ready and made up. Tata arrived from work and he looked exhausted. He got into bed and said he was going to take a nap. Me: "but tata its 6pm." Khaya: "just 30 minutes mntanam. Uzundivuse." Me: "dad, can we change our venue. Sizoya eZest ne. In Walmer." Khaya: "anything you want my love." Me: "Lakhe wanted you to join him for his meeting." Khaya: "okay princess." yep he was really tired. Mama: "give him a moment sweetie." I'd tried to avoid her all day. I couldn't just process what I'd heard. I couldn't. Lakhe texted endibuza siphil told him that we'd be a bit late and explained. Lakhe: "ok my love. Don't forget to pack for tomorrow." oh shit. I hadn't

implemented the plan with Zingi. I texted her too. Me: "babe. Nantsi number ka tata. Do it now, he's in his Yes mode." I sent it. In no time yakhala phone ka tata. He was already fast asleep. Me: "dad." Khaya: "hm.." Mama: "khamyeke man sthandwasam." she took the phone and answered. Mama: "Khaya's phone hello? Hello?? Heee." she looked at it. Mama: "ucime phone." I sat next to dad on the bed staring at him. I was so anxious for him to wake up. Khaya: "you know I'm never going to sleep if you looking at me like that." I smiled. Me: "undiphathele ntoni?" he dug in his pockets and took out a lollipop. Khaya: "Shhh." Me: "daddy?" Khaya: "hm?" Me: "ndingahamba noZingi? She's going to Transkei, visiting her dad. I want to go with her." Khaya: "okay." Me: "thanks tata." I ate my sweet quietly. Mama was sitting on the couch with her phone. I sent Zingi a text telling her it was fine. Me: "let me go pack so long." I went to my room and started packing clothes. In a few minutes my mom came to my room. Mama: "Spho." Me: "hi ma." Mama: "You've been quiet today. Uright?" Me: "yes ma." Mama: "okay. Let me help you." we packed my suitcase and went back to her room. Tata ebengeka vuki. Mama: "I think we should let him rest. Kudala esebenza." Me: "he said simvuse. Tata?" Khaya: "hm?" Me: "its been 30 minutes." Khaya: "hm.." Me: "dad?" Khaya: "you can go lovey." he went back to his pillow. Me: "go where?" Mama: "he's really tired." Me: "fine, I'll order in then." Mama: "uzohamba?" Me: "no mama. I'm staying here." Khaya: "wait...ima." he sat up. Khaya: "okay. Let's get ready and go." Me: "udiniwe tata." Khaya: "I promised. I'm gonn keep it. I just need to wash my face." mama gave me a disapproving look. Tata went to take a shower and got dressed sihleli phandle nomama. Khaya: "let's go." we went to the car and drove to Zest in Walmer. On the way there I was texting Lakhe and he was updating me which table he had reserved and how his meeting was going. When we arrived at the restaurant when we met by the door. Me: "Mr Sobukwe's reservation." Waiter: "oh, you must be his lovely wife. Come this way." we were seated down at a table and given menus. Kwangoko waza kuthi umfana. Lakhe: "molweni bazali." Khaya: "hm." he stared at his menu. Mama: "molo Lakhe." Me: "Tata, Lakhe has a meeting in process would you like to join him?" Khaya: "doesn't he have it under control." his tone was icy cold. Lakhe: "I would like for you to have an insight on what exactly I do. Getting you to see that I have the best intentions for your daughter and our future." Khaya: "we'll see about that." Waiter: "Mr Sobz. Would you like the special requests now?" Lakhe: "Yes Greg, please make sure my wife and her mother are well taken care of. I'll be in my table, Tata, is there anything you'd like?" Khaya: "No." Lakhe: "alright then. We may proceed, Thanks Greg." Waiter: "not a problem sir." Lakhe and Khaya walked to their table. I was left with my mother at the table and she was looking a bit distracted. Me: "mama." Mama: "yes hun."

Me: "who was the person in the room with you that day." Mama: "hayi Spho that is none of your business." Me: "oh." I got my drink and

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sipped on it ndijonge phantsi. Mama: "I don't want you to worry about this. It will never happen again." Me: "okay mama. It was nice of uTanci to visit us today. Just boggles my mind how he knew which room to find you in but doesn't know Le uhlala kuyo notata." Mama: "Sphosenkosi!!! I'm warning you." she hissed. We stayed in silence for the longest time, I was playing with my phone and she was texting on hers. Finally after the long hour bafika aba babini. Khaya: "no I do get it. It wasn't that strenuous. Although its a first." Lakhe: "I'm happy that you see how it all happens." they were talking???. This was a first. Our food arrived also, kodwa the table had only one conversation between two people. I was glad they were talking, it was a step closer. Khaya: "I didn't know you had such an interesting job princess." Me: "oh...I didn't?" Khaya: "yeah, if you still want to go back to work, then I guess its okay." uhm...something was wrong. Very wrong. Me: "what made you change your mind tata?" Khaya: "nothing much. Just had an insight on your company." Me: "its Lakhe's company." Lakhe: "actually, its ours." Me: "you're confusing me." Lakhe: "this was going to be a wedding gift." Me: "now I'm more confused." Lakhe: "now I'll have to think of a new surprise." Me: "okay. I don't know what you're talking about." Lakhe: "I'm signing over some of my shares to you." Me: "shares? What?" Lakhe: "yes. You're a shareholder love." I was so shocked I didn't even know what to say. What shocked me was the part where I don't know what made them friends. Lakhe: "ndiyabulela tata, for giving me a chance. I promise not to let you down." Khaya: "you'd better not." Lakhe's phone rang. Lakhe: "I'm so sorry. Please excuse me." Khaya: "go ahead." Lakhe took his phone to go answer. Me: "tata. Kwenzeka ntoni?" Khaya: "I have never been more convinced he's a criminal." Me: "Tata!!" Khaya: "his business is legit yes. I think by calculating in my head that estate and all those cars and everything else. Its impossible. He can't have that much money. I need you to investigate this. Why? I want you to see it for yourself." Me: "dad, Lakhe owns hotels, besides the company. A lot of other businesses. Can you please give him a Real chance here? Look at how happy he is xa evana nawe. Please tata." Khaya: "fine." Me: "I love you tata. Akekho onothatha indawo yakho ebomini bam. You'll always be King." he held my hand. Khaya: "I love you too." Lakhe came back to sit with us. Mama: "so, have you spoken to your family Lakhe? Uncles and so forth." Lakhe: "yes actually ma. My uncle and dad are planning to come down soon. I insisted on doing everything traditionally ke kodwa. The letters and all." Khaya: "its not much of a point now. We know what's to be expected." Me: "I

think its romantic." Khaya: "honey its not even for you." Me: "I know but imagine having to tell my daughter one day of how I got married to her dad. The letter needs to be there." Lakhe: "okay. Letter it is. If it were possible I'd finalize everything right now." Khaya: "you seem pretty excited to be getting married. Most men are terrified." Lakhe: "I'm one lucky man tata. Excitement is an understatement for what I'm feeling." we smiled at each other. Khaya: "well then." he ate his food. Mama: "I'd like to know more about you Lakhe. How and where you grew up." A man came to our table. Man: "Mr Sobz." Lakhe: "Steven. Good evening." Steven: "its been a long time." Lakhe: "yes it has been. This is my fiance and her parents. Mama, Tata, babe, this is one of my few left friends in the Eastern Cape. Besifunda kunye High school. Steven." Khaya: "lovely to meet you. Will you be joining us?" Steven: "oh no, thank you...I'd love to but Yvonne is waiting for me. It was wonderful meeting you all. We'll talk later Lakhe." they looked at each other dead in the eye. Lakhe: "yes. We'll talk later." and he let go of his hand wahlala phantsi. Steven left. Lakhe: "sorry mama ubusithini?" Mama: " How and where you grew up." Lakhe: "oh yes. I grew up eMonti. Born and bred. I studied at UKZN and started work pha. Most of my life in East London was spent in my dad's office. I enjoyed reading. I had a

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passion for my father's business magazines. It was my brother that liked being outside." Khaya: "oh you have a brother?" Lakhe: "yes and a sister. My whole family lives in East London. Sister wam ke yena is hardly home." Mama: "hm..." Khaya: "you don't mention your mother much." Lakhe: "ukhona naye upha endlini." he picked at his food. Me: "this meat is bit raw. I think I can taste the blood." I pushed away the plate. Lakhe: "you want something else? Taste apha." he gave me his food. Me: "no I think I just want water." Lakhe: "you also have to eat something Spho. Please?" Me: "can I have chicken then?" Lakhe: "sure." he called the waiter and ordered me chicken. Khaya: "what kind of business is your father in?" Lakhe: "my father was an investment banker. Retired now." Khaya: "uh..huh." Mama: "and your mom?" Lakhe: "a professional shopper." she laughed. Lakhe: "she taught me how to spoil her when I was just 14. Xa utata ebuya emsebenzin ebemphathela a diamond bracelet or something nice. So sometimes he used to leave for business, meaning I had to take over as man of the house. I afforded chocolates and flowers then." Mama: "that is so sweet." Lakhe: "yes...I just realized sendithenge convertible yakhe ukuba I was being brainwashed. But I was already older. I'm glad they taught me lonto. Now I get to do it kweyam indlu." Khaya: "but you can't buy time hey." Lakhe: "definitely not. I intend on having my wife next to me at all times." Khaya: "do you have any kids?" Lakhe: "no...no kids."

Khaya: "and when you do?" Lakhe: "I'll have to be home more often. I already am. Well that's when Spho is around." Khaya: "I see." after dinner we had dessert. I was tired and all I wanted was to curl up and fall asleep with my fiance. It was time for us to go home eventually. Tata ebediniwe and had an early morning. So we got going. Khaya: "drive safely." they shook hands. Very awkward moment. Lakhe: "enkosi kakhulu tata nani nihambe kakuhle." mama: "bye Lakhe." Me: "bye." he blew me a secret kiss bangaboni. We got in the car. My parents and I, they drove us to the hotel. Khaya: "I think its about time we move in to our new house." Me: "uyifumene tata?" Khaya: "well yes. I'm going to get in touch with the agent sibenoyoyi bona." Me: "ungalibali tata ndiye transkei ngomso with Zingi ne." Khaya: "okay princess. Nibuya nini?" Me: "I think Thursday if not Friday." Khaya: "alright. Then I guess it will be a great time to get close to my son in law." my heart raced. Would he be able to catch us in the lie? Me: "that would be great." I lied. What the hell was I to do! We got to the hotel. Khaya: "well. Goodnight my princess. I'm leaving early for work Ksasa. I won't be able to see you. Uhambe kakuhle." Me: "thank you dad. Goodnightini." I went to my room ndakhulula and got into bed. I was happy that at lease dad had tried. Lakhe tried too. Mom even. I was finally pulling them together. 20 minutes later, ndisacinga oopoqo bam I heard a knock on my sliding door. I peeped, pulling back the curtain. Me: "Lakhe! What are you doing?" Lakhe: "ndiyagodola." he smiled. I opened the door. Me: "my dad can't find you here Lakhe." Lakhe: "he won't. I just missed you so much. Some alone time finally." Me: "before you get all excited ke bhuti. No sex will be happening here. Or in Joburg." Lakhe: "heee ubaby. Nguban othe ndizele i-sex apha. Uwoah...you and your sinister thoughts. Ndiyagodola wethu mna. I need a hug." he undressed and got into bed. I locked the door and joined him. We cuddled under blankets. Me: "I hope you didn't park your car out there." Lakhe: "relax. I didn't bring a car." he yawned. Lakhe: "I love you Sphosenkosi." Me: "I love you too." in no time he was snoring. Me: "hayi man Lakhe." wothuka. Lakhe: "hm?" Me: "sleep properly." he closed his eyes again and fell asleep. Nam I closed my eyes. But they shot open right then when I heard a knock on my front door. Khaya: "Spho, its me princess, There's something I want us to talk about very quick..." I kept absolutely still. Lakhe: "is tha-" I held his mouth close. Khaya: "guess you're asleep mntanam. We will talk ubuya kwakho." my heart felt

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heavy. He sounded like he really needed me and I was doing this to him. Me: "Lakhe, baby? Please do me a favor?" he got up and dressed. Lakhe: "please be quick. I'll wait outside." he unlocked and stepped out the sliding door.

Chapter 28

I let my father in the room and he sat down on the chair by the desk. Me: "what's wrong tata?" Khaya: "he can come out the bathroom, I know he's here." Me: "who's here tata?" nda-serious mpela kengoku. Khaya: "I can smell his cologne Spho. He can come out." Me: "akhomntu apha tata. What's wrong?" Khaya: "I don't know what's wrong with me mntanam. I've got such a heavy heart and I realize I might have been taking it out on you noLakhe." Me: "no dad. Its nothing like that." Khaya: "I feel like my heart is about to pop out of my chest. Something is wrong, I'm not sure yintoni, kodwa ndiva ingathi Kukho into eyenzekayo." Me: "maybe its your fear that your little princess is not little anymore." I hugged him. Khaya: "Inoba ne?" Me: "you just need to relax tata. I'll always be here for you. My house will always be open to you." Khaya: "okay mntanam." Me: "please take things easy while I'm away dad. Don't over stress. If you need to talk, call me immediately. Okay?" Khaya: "okay my baby. You've really grown up now. You're going to make an amazing wife." Me: "enkosi tata." Khaya: "and tell him I'd better not bump into him here in the morning." Me: "dad akhomntu apha." I chuckled. Khaya: "okay. Let me go. Goodnight. I love you." Me: "I love you too dad. Iza ndikukhapha." I walked him to his bedroom. Ndabuya ndabiza Lakhe from outside. Lakhe: "I was beginning to freeze to death. Uthini utata?" I closed and locked. Me: "I think he's picking up that umama could be cheating. What scares me most is that, its not going to hurt but it might kill him. He hasn't even found anything out and he's already having heart palpitations." Lakhe: "damn.... Sizothini kengoku? He can't find that out Spho, we have to find a way to keep lamntu, whoever it is, away from your mom." Me: "its my uncle." Lakhe: "what!!" Me: "and I don't think its the first time. I think he's caught them before. Its something my mother said exoxa notanci, I was eavesdropping and she said 'he can't find out again' its not the first." Lakhe: "your dad is a great man Spho. He's a real role model. Something like this shouldn't be happening to him." Me: "I don't know Lakhe. I don't know what to do." Lakhe: "talk to your mother and uncle. Baxelegele utatakho uziva njani at this point. If they don't stop and if he does find out, they will be responsible for his death. And that would be the truth." Me: "I guess so." Lakhe: "khawuze ndiphuze. I miss these lips." he kissed me and cuddled me. After a while of just chatting we ended up falling asleep.

In the morning, I woke up ndavasa. When I was done getting dressed I went to my parents room to check on dad. He was already on his way out. Me: "ninjani?" Khaya: "siphilile mntanam. Unjani wena." Me: "I'm fine tata. Just

came to see if you're okay." Khaya: "enkosi princess yam. I have to go now. I'll be late for work. Uhambe kakuhle vha." Me: "thanks tata." he walked out the door. I checked after 3 minutes and saw his car driving out the gate. Me: "mama." Mama: "yes Spho." Me: "I have something I need to tell you and I'm going to need you to listen to me very carefully. I know you keep saying its none of my business, and I should keep out of it but lento uyenzayo is hurting dad already. He came to me last night and told me he wasn't feeling well, something about his heart. Now, as much as he doesn't know what you're doing, the moment he finds out he stands a chance of not surviving through it. I am not willing to lose my father over your carelessness mama. With all due respect when it comes to his health, it becomes my business. And if he does hear about this, and falls sick or die. Cela uyazi that I will never forgive you or uncle. Ever." I walked out the door that minute. It hurt for me to actually say all of that but it needed to be said. I wanted to shake her azoyeka lento ayenzayo and focus on my dad. When I got to my room Lakhe was awake and already on his phone. Lakhe: "I'll sort that out when I get to

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Joburg in a few hours.....Yes.....I know.....Sandile, get off my phone." he hung up. Me: "are you hungry?" Lakhe: "no babes. I have to get to the house and pack. We're leaving at 10." Me: "I've already packed ke mna." Lakhe: "then let's get going. Its already 7, we need to be at the airport at 8." Me: "fine. How do we get to your house?" Lakhe: "cab is waiting outside. Uphi utata?" Me: "he's gone to work. Mama is still in bed. Let's go now." he got up from bed and took my bag for me saphuma. The cab was waiting for us and once we got in, drove us to his house. I would always expect to see Sandile here even though ebethe he's moving to East London. Me: "ngubani ozahlala apha atyise ooZanno?" Lakhe: "taken care of." he rushed to his room and changed his clothes. I followed him wathatha a brief case. Lakhe: "let's go." Me: "your clothes." Lakhe: "we'll buy phambili babes. We're late." Me: "no. We're packing you something to wear." Lakhe: "the seminar is only in the evening. Sizofika kwaksasa and go shopping together. Ndikthele nqa uphetha wardrobe Yonke." Me: "mxim." Lakhe: "leave the bag here. We're starting over in joburg." I dropped my bag in his room taking only my handbag and laptop then we left for the airport. The drive to the airport was phone call after phone call. It was the price of dating a this kind of person. He would always be busy. Me: "have you booked a hotel?" Lakhe: "for who?" I kept quiet avoiding an embarrassing moment. Lakhe: "baby?" Me: "yeka Lakhe.. It was a stupid question." Lakhe: "no such thing as a stupid question love." Me: "just stupid people right." Lakhe: "heee. Yinton ngoku?" Me: "nothing." Lakhe: "it doesn't seem like nothing uske unditshintshele kanje?" I

sighed and looked out the window. We arrived at the airport and went to check in. Lakhe: "think I need to get my own plane. This can't be my life." he muttered. Me: "awusena drama." Lakhe: "hayi baby. Andinokwazi uma ndilinde." we finally got to board our plane sekukdala and safety-ed up.

We arrived in Johannesburg and walked straight through the airport ukuyophuma. There was a sleek black Mercedes Benz waiting with the door open. The man in a black suit ushered us in. Lakhe: "Josh." Josh: "Mr Sobz." Josh drove us out the airport to Sandton. I was in a new city but it felt like dejavu. Me: "I've been here before." Lakhe: "you remember joburg?" Me: "was I with you?" Lakhe: "no babes. Maybe ubuhamba for umsebenzi." he was staring at his phone typing furiously. Me: "what did that phone do to you?" he didn't hear me. Me: "yoh." Lakhe: "hm?" Me: "nothing." Lakhe: "hayi man Spho." he snapped. Me: "you're busy!" Lakhe: "ndik'hoyile njena uske ubene attitude." Me: "ndilambile ke. And it would be nice if I could get a nice thick unhealthy burger." Lakhe: "where do you want to eat then?" I shrugged. Lakhe: "Mugg n Bean? Steers? McDonald's? Burger King? This is as unhealthy as it gets." Me: "McDonald's." Lakhe: "uske wayi fan lately." Me: "I only ate it once. Brika motho." Lakhe: "ok'salayo..... Fan. Josh, please order us McDonald's, one McFeast medium meal, Sprite for cooldrink no ice and just my normal breakfast for me." Josh: "yes sir." he stopped at a gorgeous hotel building. Me: "bendibuzile." Lakhe: "pardon?" Me: "I asked about the hotel and you asked for what." Lakhe: "I will never book Four Seasons hun. Its already booked for me. Iza." Me: "awukavasi novasa." Lakhe: "yaziwa nguwe wedwa leyo. I'm leaving you at the spa to enjoy yourself. Mna ndiyothatha suit yam. Then be back for you okay?" I nodded. Wandikhapha ukuya kwi spa and we were welcomed by a sweet lady. Lakhe: "I'll see you in a while vha. Love you." he kissed me. Me: "love you too." She led me to a room where I could undress, put on a gown and lay on a table. After taking off the gown also I was covered appropriately and the procedure started. Ndik'xelele inyani ibindozelisa lento mna. I enjoyed it yes and didn't want it to stop. She rubbed those oils on my body slowly. This was life. After I was

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done I went to the sauna and sat there just to steam. Lakhe: "baby?" he walked in. Me: "hey.." Lakhe: "kutheni ingathi unxilile nje. Bakwenze ntoni ababantu?" I giggled. Me: "they almost put me to sleep." Lakhe: "that's a good thing." he pulled me on top of him and kissed my lips. Me: "wenzantoni." Lakhe: "we have this whole room to ourselves. For quite a while." Me: "I told you no sex is happening. You're still grounded." Lakhe: "ha.a baby sungcola please. Ayifani nawe lonto." Me: "hayi mfana. Yeyiphi efana nam?" Lakhe:

"just once mntuwam? Ndagqibela nini uviswa kamandi?" Me: "ugezile kaloku." Lakhe: "how long am I punished?" Me: "I don't know. It'll depend on how sorry you are." he stared at me with the scary look. That was not going to work. I kissed his lips. Lakhe: "yazi ndinawo amandla akho but its fine. Suka phezkwam." Me: "eshee." I sat next to him. Me: "so I spoke to umama." Lakhe: "you did? Wathini?" Me: "well basically said she needs to stop this because utata akaphilanga. I Said some bad things to her and I feel guilty." Lakhe: "what bad things?" Me: "I said if my dad found out and got sick because of this or dies, I'd never forgive her." Lakhe: "I would've said the same thing. At least now she knows you're serious. She values you more than her affair. She'll do the right thing." Me: "still though...maybe I should call and check if she's okay." Lakhe: "Spho. People need to feel a little sting to realize the delicacy of a situation. Let her feel the sting. She knows you love her." Me: "ne? Okay. I'm really hungry now." Lakhe: "I'm sure Josh is outside now. Masambe, I want to show you something endlini." Me: "endlini? I thought we were staying here at the hotel." my eyes glittered. Was it obvious? I loved the hotel. I don't want to leave. Imagine waking up to a massage for 3 days. No bhutiza. Sihleli ke namhlanje. Lakhe: "no. We can't stay here. My holiday house isn't that far. Let's get going." andatyhafa. We got out the steam room and dried off. Me: "I'll shower at home." I said the word 'home' with a disappointing tone. I was depressed. He walked me out after getting dressed sayongena emotweni. I could smell my Mcfeast ungena kwethu and shame ke I was lusting over it like a hungry dog. I knew the rule was no eating in the car but I was dying. Ndaziva ndines'ngqala. He looked at me. Lakhe: "and then?" Me: "how long till we get home?" I was near tears. Lakhe: "like 2 minutes. What's wrong?" Me: "hungry." Lakhe: "we'll eat when we get home." yangathi undihlaba ngala folokhwe ka sathana. What fuckery was thiiiiissss! I felt like dying shame. Ixesha was just after 1pm. Oko ndandivuke ngo half 6. Me: "I'm gonna faint." he laughed. Lakhe: "and I'm the dramatic one." the car parked in the driveway. To be truly honest I didn't have the time to absorb the beauty of the house. I didn't care at all. All I wanted was to get in and eat. The only thing I could think of was that first glorious bite of that burger. Jesus take the wheel. I grabbed my brown paper bag ndayoma emnyango wase ndlini. Lakhe sure took his African time offloading everything wade wazovula. I walked into the house, the first chair I saw, I grabbed and sat down. Lakhe: "awundilindi nondilinda." Me: "uhluthi kaloku wena." I sipped my cool drink first taking out my burger. The smell was getting closer. Lakhe was standing in that same position, he looked around. Me: "what is it-" Lakhe: "Shhh." he listened carefully and looked around. Lakhe: "There's someone here. Buyela emotweni Spho."

Chapter 29

Me: "I'm not leaving you here alone." Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi. Take your food and go." Me: "no." Lakhe: "why are yo-" "Hello?? Who's out there?" a woman's voice called out from down the passage. Finally she appeared with a towel around her body. She had a short cut weave on and walking barefoot. Wow Lakhe. I stared at him. Another one? Lakhe: "What the hell are you doing here Nosi!!" Nosi: "I'm so sorry. I didn't know you'd be he-" Lakhe: "Uzothini wena apha! You're supposed to be in school!" a man appeared behind her. "what's going on here?" Lakhe: "My God." he placed his hand on his forehead. Lakhe: "Nosi!!" Nosi: "uxolo bhuti." Lakhe: "GET.....Now." she could put the rest of that sentence together herself. She pushed the man back. Nosi: "you idiot! Ubusiyaphi-" Man: "I thought there was an intrude-" Lakhe: "you better get the fuck out of my house in 7!!! 6!! 5!!! 4!! 3!!! 2!!! 1!!!" wabuya umfana wabantu rushing out with his pants on enxiba nesikipa ephuma. Lakhe: "I'm so sorry baby." Me: "who's that." I finally took a bite of my delicious burger. Lakhe: "that's my sister. Yesesss!!!" he stormed to the bedroom. Ndatya ke mna mntaka dabs while she was on the chopping board. You would be surprised how that burger slid through me like water. By the time he came back I was left with one bite. Lakhe: "hayi baby. Sowugqibile?" I swallowed, preparing for my final bite. I sipped my cooldrink while staring at him. Lakhe: "you can't hear what I'm saying. Yuuh lo McDonald's wakho." I put down my cup and tossed the last piece of my burger in my mouth, chewed it and swallowed. Me: "is your sister okay?" I ate my fries. Lakhe: "you know what's more disturbing? This." he pointed to my meal with his head. Me: "so we're not talking till Thursday." I crossed my legs. Lakhe: "babe?" I ignored him completely. Lakhe: "baby, I'm just concerned. This isn't healthy and I just don't want you to be sick." Me: "I'm not sick." Lakhe: "baby. You need to stop attacking me. Andiyazi where this attitude comes from." I heard my phone rang and unfortunately he had my handbag. He fished for it wayikhupha. Me: "what are you doing?" Lakhe: "Dr Ferreira? Who's that?" I took my phone and answered. Me: "hello doctor?" Doc: "Hi Spho. I just called to tell you your results are ready. When will you be able to come to my office?" Me: "is it serious?" Doc: "I would rather I spoke to you face to face." Me: "uhm..I'm in Joburg at the moment I'll be back on Thursday." Doc: "I'll book your appointment for Friday then." Me: "okay Doc. Thanks." I hung up. Lakhe: "and...then?" Me: "nothing babe." Lakhe: "hayi Spho. You went to see a doctor without telling me? Why?" Me: "its nothing." Lakhe: "its something. Ndicela singafihlelani izinto please." Me: "but-" Lakhe: "No. Tell Me Spho." I sighed. My heart was in my throat. Me: "I thought there was something wrong

with me." Lakhe: "wrong with you how?" Me: "like my womb...I don't think I can carry babies-" Lakhe: "that is absurd Spho! Everyone has accidents it doesn't mean it was your fault. You can have another baby when you're ready. Ayizokwenza soon as possible but it will happen. Uthini udoctor?" I looked at him. I didn't want him to panic. It wasn't that serious mos, all doctors do this. I needed to carefully choose my words. Lakhe: "My God Spho!!" he stormed out of the house. To be truly real, I was also panicking. Why didn't the doctor just tell me nothing was wrong? Because nothing is wrong. "hey." I turned around ndadibana noNosi. Me: "hi. You okay?" Nosi: "yeah. Is he gone?" Me: "I think so." Nosi: "good..cuz I don't think I can face him. I'm Nosi by the way, his sister." Me: "Spho, his fiance." Nosi: "oh, you're the Spho. You're so gorgeous. What do you use for your face?" Me: "Clinique. But andifakanga niks right now. I just came from the spa." Nosi: "lovely. You're a lucky lady. Bhuti is barely emotional. I heard you arguing just now." Me: "ahh...he's kind of, still bare." Nosi: "its improved. Want

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some tea?" Me: "no thanks. I just had some.....of this." I put my paper bag ndayoy'faka emgqumeni. Nosi: "haha. Uyafana noSandile. He doesn't care what time it is, he's always eating McD's. How is he?" Me: "I'm not really sure. I haven't seen him in a while." Nosi: "oh...mom called me. I think last week. She was over reacting on the phone talking about how bhuti brought a girl home and so forth. She's mean at times, but the best thing is to beat her at her own game." Me: "I can't really disrespect Lakhe's parents." Nosi: "no boo. That's not how you do it. Mom, is a real bitch when it comes to other women. She intimidates people and feeds off their fear. Do not let it happen. Own your place and stick to it." this little girl. Me: "so what do you do? Uyafunda?" Nosi: "I wish. I travel a lot. I just ended up in joburg on Sunday. Now, I'm thinking of going to Mozambique. Hey, you should come with me." Me: "hahaa! Really-" Lakhe: "she's not going anywhere with you. Sit." was he talking to me or her? Hayi ndakhe ndamjonga. Nosi sat down. Lakhe: "what state of mind made you bring a full grown man inside my house?" Nosi: "I didn't think you'd come here bhuti." Lakhe: "that is not an answer. This is my house Nosi! Therefore, no men are allowed in my fucking house!" Nosi: "I'm sorry." Lakhe: "no you're not. You're only 20! You should be in school! Studying something. I don't give a fuck if its about clothes, just do something ngobomi bakho! Do you know how many kids out there want this opportunity? Do you know abanye abantwana banqwenela abazali babo babene Mali yobasa kwi university noba yi college e-cheap. And here you are, traveling the world on my fucking expense. All you have in your name is a poor matric certificate. Not because you're dumb, not because you're stupid. But because you're bloody lazy!!!"

Nosi: "but bhuti I'm taking a gap year." Lakhe: "your gap year will be spent in community college upgrading your matric certificate. Uyandiva? I'm not doing you any more favours. I'm taking your Jeep and your allowance is cut to 0. You will be living with other students. You will understand what struggle is today." Me: "Baby. This is a bit too harsh." Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi. Akeva lomntana." Me: "you're making her worse!" Lakhe: "then uzoyofunda eQueenstown ke. We'll see how walking to school and eating sardines for breakfast lunch and supper will make her worse." Me: "babe." Lakhe: "end of discussion. I'm not having this." Me: "Nosi, please give us a minute." she sadly walked to the bedroom. Me: "babe. Nosi isn't doing this because she wants to. She's not being paid attention to, she needs attention. Its a desperate cry for help. Can't you just sit down with her and talk about what she wants? Stop making decisions on her behalf she's almost 21 now. Thetha naye like an adult if you want her to act like one." Lakhe: "I don't have the time for that." Me: "let me then." Lakhe: "let you what? Awukwazi nondixelela ba uya kwa gqirha kaloku wena you." Me: "babe." Lakhe: "no Spho! I had the right to know. What, were you gonna hide my baby forever now? I'm supposed to be there, supporting you, holding your hand! Kanti undifihlela into enkulu kangaka?" I became so confused. How did he get to that assumption? Me: "my lov-" Lakhe: "No. Don't sweet talk me. I have the right to be there for my angel." Me: "Lakhe, look at me." he looked at me. He was really upset. His jaws were tightened and his mouth set in a firm line. His eyes were blazing red staring at me. Me: "I didn't go there to check for pregnancy. I just went for a check up. She didn't say I was pregnant and we didn't test for that. She just did blood tests and other tests wazisa e-lab. She says ngoku the results are ready. I don't think its serious." Lakhe: "I don't believe you." and he walked away ndashiyeka ndikrawuzelela indlebe.

During the course of the day, ebeshiye card and disappeared to only Jesus knows where ndacela ke mna uJosh to take me and Nosi to the mall. We shopped for clothing at various

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top boutiques, plus...I did a little his and hers matching. ^_^ I also bought shoes and two bags for myself. Then went to have lunch. I was hungry again but just didn't know what to eat. Nosi: "you okay? You look faint." Me: "I'm just a bit hungry. Maybe we should eat." Nosi: "sure. I feel like having pizza. Something thick and cheesy." my tummy grumbled and mouth watered at the thought. Me: "let's go have pizza." we went to order our pizza sahlala phantsi and ate. Nosi: "I hope I didn't cause any problems between wena nobhuti. Especially that you're pregnant with his baby. That's why he's so

stressed." Me: "I'm not pregnant. I promise. I just went for tests with a gynae and that's all it was. Nothing there." Nosi: "oh. Sorry." Me: "its fine. You didn't cause problems. Lakhe is a bit of a nut head at times. I really think you should make him proud though. Show him that you're not just wasting money." Nosi: "but I'm not. Look." she unlocked her phone and went to her gallery. She showed me pictures of artwork. Beautiful pieces. Like a gold mine type of thing. Nosi: "I've been helping these people get their equipment, get space to paint and work, give them a place to stay and food. Then find them a sponsor." Me: "oh my God Nosi. That is so sweet of you." Nosi: "I don't like seeing people suffer because of being homeless and poverty. When ubhuti said that I'm useless and funeke ndiyohlala kwi struggle, it actually really hurt. Yes I'm spending his money.....but I don't want to hurt my latest team. I'm all they have." she showed me a video. They were in a studio, she was talking in the background and encouraging the few people there. They looked young. Although in their dirty clothing and unwashed hair. She was really helping them. Me: "this is what you want to do?" she nodded. Nosi: "the only thing." I would've thought rich girls only wanted fashion and cars and hair appointments. This was so rare. Was it possible that Nosi was nothing like Stella? Me: "I'll talk to him when he's calm. This is a great thing Nosi. Also I do want to encourage you to go to school. For yourself. Still, you'd be helping these people." Nosi: "Luphumelelo. That's what I call them." ndaske ndahlutha. I was really impressed, I was so expecting a spoilt brat. Me: "you're a Godsend. Come, let's go." we finished up and went to do our hair and nails. When we were done, bekusekubetha u6. Yakhala phone. I answered. Me: "hello." Lakhe: "I hope and pray, you're with this child." Me: "yes I am." Lakhe: "Niphi? You and me have a seminar to be at ngo half 7 namhlanje." Me: "we'll be there just now." I hung up. We left for home, still being driven by Josh. Sayofika endlini. Lakhe was half dressed, ethetha efownini. He had earphones in and was focused really hard. He looked really yummy enxibe la brukhwe yodwa and no top on. I craved him so bad. He looked at me with a disapproving look. Lakhe: "I'll see you later Paul." he hung up. Lakhe: "you need to get ready we leave in 45." Me: "baby-" Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "are you still mad at me?" Lakhe: "when was I mad." I took the paper bags of clothing to our room and went to shower ndabuya ndathambisa and looked for a dress in my new clothing. After wearing my black lace under I slipped on my navy dress. It had shoulder sleeves which cascaded into an open back. It clung onto the top on my ass. Showing the round curve then had a long slit from the top side of my left thigh. I took out a red pair of 4 inch pumps. My short hair was already styled thank goodness. I wore a gown over my dress and did my make up ndagqiba. Lakhe came in xasendigqiba. He continued dressing engandijonganga. With his navy pants, he wore a white shirt and

baby blue blazer and a navy tie. He wore his happy socks and red Guiseppe Zannoti gentleman slippers. I wanted to die. Engesemhle umntuwam ingathi ngunopopi. I looked at my diamond ring on my hand. Yep, that's my husband. I took off the gown ndayixhoma kakuhle on the hanger. I went to fetch my clutch. Me: "I'm ready." he stared at me. His mouth couldn't close. Me: "we're gonna be late. Iphelile 45 minutes masambe." ndatsho ndiphuma eroomin. He followed after me

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uphuma phandle. There was a limo waiting for us. Josh was standing outside smiling crazily. Ndayongena. Josh: "you look stunning Mrs Sobz." Me: "thank you Josh." Josh: "dapper as always boss." Lakhe: "you know it." we got in the ride. Wayongena naye and played some soft music. Lakhe's eyes were glued onto the slit of my thigh. Until he clicked on a button, which divided our section of the back from Josh. Eliminating all music as well. It was a black window where he couldn't see us and we couldn't see him. Lakhe: "we have exactly 15 minutes till we get to the venue." Me: "is that so." I watched the houses while we drove slowly by. We were traveling by presidential speed. Quite slow if you ask me. Lakhe: "bhabha.....I know I've been acting silly." Me: "really?" I knew what he wanted. I wanted it too. Who the hell was I fooling? Lakhe: "baby.....I want you.....right now.....asoze kuphinde kulunge if I don't release. At this minute." he was sweating. Me: "I told you we're not having any sex. You're still grounded." he grabbed my face gently and kissed my lips. Lakhe: "I'd rather be punished another 6 months for what I'm about to do." his hand was between my thighs. He kissed my neck and rubbed softly. I was being weak. It felt so good though because he belonged to me anyway. He pulls up my dress and bites on the lace underwear, dragging it down. I undid his pants, pulling down his zip. Out popped his machine as majestic as I missed it. Lakhe: "Shhh....." he whispered onto my lips, pushing himself in....

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Chapter 30

At the function we barely heard what was said. His hands kept touching my thighs and kissing my shoulder. Me: "baby mani....people are watching." Lakhe: "because I have the most beautiful lady in the room. Let them." when the whole seminar was done we got ready to dash out. Unfortunately, a certain Mr Shaman called on him. Shaman: "Mr Sobukwe. How are you? Its been a long while." Lakhe: "hi...I'm doing great Mr Shaman. And yourself?" Shaman: "I'm good. And this lovely lady?" he held my hand. I shook it once and he kissed it tenderly on my knuckles. Lakhe: "this is my wife." he said

coldly. Shaman: "Wow. Just when I thought I was gonna beat you to it." he chuckled. Lakhe just stared at him without a trace of a smile. Shaman: "anyway, it was great seeing you. Nice meeting you as well Miss." I quickly smiled and he walked away. My fiance and I walked toward the door, again we were stopped by some couple. At this point Lakhe was in no mood at all. Lakhe: "Magole." Man: "I didn't think you'd make it." Lakhe: "I did." I thought the whole reason we came here together was that I meet his business acquaintances. Now uqumbile. Man: "hi sisi. I'm MaGee." Me: "Spho, Lakhe's wife. Nice to meet you." Man: "Sobz is married??? Whaat?" Lakhe: "yes. Almost." he smiled. Man: "wow. Congratulations man." Lakhe: "thank you. We'll catch up later?" Man: "sure no prob." we finally managed to leave after about 20 minutes of stopping and talking. In the backseat, being driven home, I could tell he was extremely tired. My phone rang in my purse, ndayikhupha kanti it was a deadly trap. Brandon was written all over the screen. Lakhe: "please answer your phone." Me: "its not that important-" Lakhe: "yiphendule kaloku. It will be nice and short." Me: "haib-" Lakhe: "are you cheating on me Sphosenkosi?" Me: "NO!!" Lakhe: "then answer your phone." I answered the phone. Lakhe: "uyifake ku loud speaker I wanna say Hi." Khange ndiyenze ke lonto. This was my phone not ours. Me: "Hi Brandon." Brandon: "hey babe. How are you today?" Me: "I'm good and yourself?" Brandon: "not too good. Its been hectic at the hospital lately, I had two cardio transplants and had to give analysis on a neuro. There was this bus accident and the whole hospital is a mess. I've barely slept." Me: "I'm so sorry to hear that. Hopefully things have slowed down?" Brandon: "kind of. My patients are recovering well. I'm just missing you that's all." now I didn't know what to say. Me: "I'm glad things are going well. How's Tammy." Brandon: "uhm...she's fine. Why?" Me: "just asking." Brandon: "ah, she's okay. Anyway, is there a chance where you could fly over this weekend. I'd really love to see you." Me: "oh....uhm Brand....There's something I need to tell you." Brandon: "I don't like the sound of that. Listen, my pager just went off, I need to rush to one of my patients quickly, I'll call you later okay?" Me: "alright. Good luck." I hung up. The car was tense. Phof it was only our section. Lakhe: "uyakwazi uyihlisa incanca yomntu shame." I wanted to chuckle but I knew he was being serious and that would be a bad idea. Me: "baby." Lakhe: "hayi sisi. Fownela Brandon wakho. You don't even bother telling him about me." Me: "I was about to-" Lakhe: "yet you didn't want to put him on loud speaker. Yinton Le kungafunekanga ndiyive?" Me: "nothing!! Yitshomi qha kum uBrandon and I'm going to tell him about you. He's busy at hospital." Lakhe: "hospital? Is this the doctor?" Me: "no man. Brandon is in Cape Town. He's a cardiothoracic surgeon." Lakhe: "like I give a fuck. He could be a carpenter for all I care." he folded his arms. Lakhe: "Inoba ikwenza happy lonto ne? That he's a surgeon.

Busy slicing people up." Me: "you're being petty." Lakhe: "kwamna? Huh. Wow." Me: "babe." Lakhe: "no....don't. Its pretty clear Kukho something ngoBrandon. And ishushu itshisa ulwimi." the car stopped. We'd reached

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home. He got out immediately and left me there staring after him. So I guess I'm not getting the D tonight.

In the morning I was woken up by his voice but engathethi nam. He was on the phone. Lakhe: "how much will that be?" I pretended I was still asleep but I felt my nose blocked. Lakhe: "that doesn't matter. As long as it covers up all expenses. I'll deposit it in a minute.....sure thing." he hung up. I coughed kabuhlungu and tried to sniff and unblock my nose. I sat up. Me: "hey." he was dressing. Me: "Uyaphi?" Lakhe: "meeting." Me: "babe. Are you still mad at me?" Lakhe: "why would I be?" wanxiba izihlangu zakhe. I coughed some more. Lakhe: "maybe you should give your best friend a call. Since he's a doctor and all. Wouldn't want the whole house catching that." he took his keys and left. Ndakhubeka ke bonanje but it was okay. I probably deserved it. I went to brush my teeth and came back to bed, took my phone and texted Brandon right away. "Hi Brandon, its not easy for me to do this. I got back with my ex. The one I told you about, we fixed things and we're getting married soon. I just thought you deserved to know." ndabeka phone, crawling back under blankets. I stayed there for hours watching TV. My whole body was aching and my chest was on fire. My nose felt swollen along with my eyes. Until I decided to take another nap. I woke up in an hour uLakhe eme ngase spilini. I got out of bed ndaye bathroom to rinse my mouth again. I ran myself a bath. Pouring some lavender salts and bath oils in. I undressed ndangena emanzini laying on my back against the tub. The water was warm and inviting yet I still sneezed and coughed. I was so tired and thirsty. Kunzima nentloko leyam. All I did was breath. My eyes fluttering closed. Lakhe: "Spho!!" I opened my eyes. He was rolling up his sleeves. Me: "mxim." I looked to the wall. Lakhe: "worse ubene attitude kodwa uyagula." he kneeled next to the bath and washed my chest and arms. I did absolutely nothing to help. He had to do all the lifting and scrubbing andimcelanga mos. Lakhe: "I need you to get up I'm almost finished." Me: "Lakhe khawuphume apha and find yourself something to do. You're crowding me man!" Lakhe: "crowding you? Ndiyakvasa mos Spho!!" Me: "ngubani othe ndifuna uvaswa nguwe? Ucelwe ngubani?" Lakhe: "I was helping yo-" Me: "I didn't Need your help!" Lakhe: "you know what? Mxim. Just whatever." he took the towel and wiped his arms. Me: "and like a coward you're going to run away again." Lakhe: "what did you just say???" Me: "akho Moya." Lakhe: "Your attitude these days is shitty. That's why

I'm leaving! As a matter of fact, I'm booking your flight for tomorrow morning, you're going home. I'm not standing for this shit." he walked out the bathroom. Me: "Mxim. As if I would." I finished myself up ndaphuma emanzini ndazosula going to my bedroom. He was on the bed, texting on his phone. Ndathambisa and went to the kitchen to make myself tea ndabuya ndazoyiphunga in bed. I took my phone and texted Zingi. Hayi ke wandibalisela u-friend nge get together aye kuyo kunye ne-drama yayo. I started laughing hysterically kunzima uphefumla. Mind you ndimane ngokhohlela ndithimle kulo process. He gave me a cheese boy side look. Probably disgusted by me spreading germs all over kodwa I cover my mouth with a cloth at all times. I finally finished my tea ndikwi nyembezi zohleka and put the phone also down. Last I checked, lo uhleliyo had a dinner to get to. I called my dad to check up on him but he was still at work. Yakhala epalini. Brandon's response to my message finally came. "Hey Spho. Sorry for the late reply. Although I don't understand why you're back with him, I hope you're happy and he treats you like royalty. Much Love. Take care." that was sweet of him. Nosi came into the room after a little knock. Nosi: "tshin bhuti usekhona? Hi Spho, I made you something to eat. You haven't eaten all day." Me: "thank you Nosi. I'll try get this in." she left us alone again.

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Lakhe: "uhleleli nton imini Le Yonke ungatyi?" I ignored him and picked at my food. Lakhe: "ndithetha nawe Sphosenkosi." Me: "why ungenothula?" Lakhe: "hehake." I started eating but couldn't finish because my chest and throat really hurt. I put the food aside ndatshona ezingubeni. Lakhe: "Spho." he pulled me closer to him. Lakhe: "why are you acting crazy? And insulting me?" Me: "nawe mos undishiye emotweni wazongena apha and ignored me all night." Lakhe: "after what you did? Bufuna ndithini mna? Praise you? Hayi ubu unfair kodwa Spho. I always do what you say kodwa when it comes to Brandon kukho specialty." Me: "he's my best friend-" Lakhe: "all of a sudden? Where has he been all this time?" Me: "he says we lost contact. I remember him from my childhood Lakhe. He's very special to me." Lakhe: "then kutheni mna kungafuneki ndimazi?" Me: "its too soon. All in due time." Lakhe: "masambe siye kwa gqirha. We need to check you out." Me: "for what?" Lakhe: "your health baby." I didn't trust that at all. He was going to do something. This was another distraction. Me: "I'm not going anywhere." he calmed too quickly for my liking and his mood from angry to loving. Something was amiss. Lakhe: "baby. You're sick... You need the doctor.....ASAP. Get dressed." Me: "you have a dinner to get to." I blocked. Lakhe: "its nothing I can't miss." Me: "I just need a chemist." Lakhe: "why are you so afraid of going to the doctor? Are you hiding something from

me?" I shook my head. Lakhe: "you lied to me? About your previous visit?" I shook my head again. Lakhe: "then what's the issue? If There's nothing wrong." Me: "I...don't feel like being outside. If I could just get medicine-" Lakhe: "no....actually I want us to go to the doctor. So if you're hiding something. It would be best for you if you told me right now." Me: "I told you everything." Lakhe: "I don't think so... You wouldn't be so against ukuya kwa gqirha." I was afraid also....he was planning something else. I know him. Me: "I'm not against it. I just think....I should let it die down." he was staring at me now. With lazy eyes and he bit his thumb while at it. I panicked. Lakhe: "fine....no doctor." he went to the kitchen wabuya namanzi. What was his mind working on? Lakhe: "ina. Sela." I drank some water ndayigqiba glass. He poured again ndaphinda ndasela. Me: "enkosi." I sat in bed for a while. About 30 minutes later ndatshiswa ngumchamo. So I got up. Lakhe: "bamba apha baby." he gave me a plastic bag waphakama naye. Me: "what's this." Lakhe: "open it." I checked inside. Two small blue boxes. They were home pregnancy tests. Lakhe: "shall we?" ndaske ndomiwa.

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Chapter 31

Me: "andizoyenza ke lonto mna." Lakhe: "ngoba kutheni? Umithi?" Me: "no I'm not! You just need to trust me." Lakhe: "nako ukwazi undifihlela ngo Brandon." Me: "mxim!!" I went into the bathroom ndayiqhaqha lento. I pee'ed on the first one ndamnika. He took it and walked around the room staring at it. When I was done ebathroom ndabuyela ebhedini. Lakhe: "awuyenzanga eyosbin?" Me: "no. One is enough." Lakhe: "okay." thank God he let that go. Suddenly he jumped on the bed excitedly. Oh My God..... Lakhe: "its negative. So ubusoyika ntoni kengoku?" why did negative make him so happy? He didn't want a baby? Me: "I told you mos andikho mithi. Andiyazi bufuna ndithini." Lakhe: "Great. Now funeke sikuse kwa gqirha for this flu. Its really nasty babe." Me: "later." Lakhe: "but we leave tomorrow morning love." Me: "then ndizoya xandise bhayi." Lakhe: "is there something wrong?" Me: "No baby." actually, I forgot again. It was a regular thing now and it was beginning to bother me manyani. All this time ndihleli and I forgot I had driving lessons. All that money paid, went down the drain. Lakhe: "is it something I said?" Me: "I forgot my driving lessons. Like I'd forgotten the helpers' interviews, like I'd forgotten the ducks. I keep forgetting." Lakhe: "babe. Not everyone remembers everything." Me: "except you." Lakhe: "because I'm used to it. Take your time and enjoy baby." he hugged me. Lakhe: "I want you to get better, only focus on yourself. Yonke enye izolandela. Do you really need to learn driving so soon?" Me: "its been over 2

months now. I want to get back on the road!" Lakhe: "okay baby. Tomorrow. Sizobuyela ebhayi, I'll get you a professional teacher." Me: "thank you." Lakhe: "just two hours a day though." Me: "that's all I need. Kutheni ungayi kwi dinner yakho?" Lakhe: "my wife is sick, I need to take care of her." Me: "I want us to talk though." Lakhe: "ndizophinda ndixhaywe ngoku?" Me: "no. About Nosi." Lakhe: "I've made my decision Spho, uzoya eQueenstown." Me: "ucimba akukho madoda eQueenstown? Do you really think she's going to be stranded pha ngenxa ungamphi Mali? A little reminder ke Phof...your new friend uDumi, do you think his young girlfriend is moneyless? Hm? You do understand that utyiwa ngu Dumi lamntana in return for clothes and food. Probably even tuition fees and turn up money, plus transport-" Lakhe: "Okay!! I get it." Me: "getting her away from the city won't help at all! Hlala phantsi naye uthethe naye ba kwenzeka ntoni. She spoke to me, and I am impressed with what she's doing. Its your turn to sit her down and talk to her. Guide her as a big brother not a boss. Maybe, just maybe, she'll listen to you!" Lakhe: "so you're saying uzobane sugar daddy." Me: "nobody calls them that anymore. They're called blessers. And trust you me, you don't want your little sis caught up kulanto. Imagine one of your older business partners on t-" Lakhe: "Stop it!! I get the picture unfortunately its going to be stuck in my mind. Thula ngoku." Me: "I'm just saying. Thetha naye and hear what she has to say. Don't yell." Lakhe: "fine." Me: "I want to call my dad. So you can go now." Lakhe: "besekukdala ndingagxothwa." he got up waphuma. I dialed my father's number and it rang wayiphendula. Khaya: "my princess." Me: "hi dad. Unjani?" Khaya: "I'm great. Zinjani iilali?" Me: "very peaceful. And a bit cold." Khaya: "wombathe ke. Are you fun?" Me: "ewe tata. Wena uright apho?" Khaya: "yes. I'm fine baby girl." Me: "ukhona umama?" Khaya: "yes, uyavasa." Me: "okay. I just wanted to make sure you're okay." Khaya: "that's sweet of you my angel. Listen, I want to surprise your mom before aphume kwi bath yakhe. We'll talk later vha. I love you mntanam." Me: "I love you too daddy." I hung up.

On Thursday we were back in PE by 11am because Lakhe had a meeting at 1pm with his staff. I on the other hand waited for my driving teacher wafika ngo 12 sahamba to go start

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at an empty space. He taught me the controls of the car, the movements I needed to make on a regular and finally started with the moving of the car. It seemed really familiar and easy. I quickly got the hang of it but I was still afraid to join the main roads. My lesson was over at 2 ndabuyela endlini to pass time. I thought there was supposed to be a cleaning lady here by now. I

started cleaning the house for a while before my phone rang. I was just done ndayiphendula. Me: "yes?" Zingi: "Spho....I need your help bhabha." Me: "yeah sure. What's up?" she sniffed. Zingi: "I need you to fetch the kids from school and keep them till I'm sorted." Me: "is everything okay?" Zingi: "no....no its not." she was crying. Me: "Zingi, kwenzeka ntoni?" Lakhe walked in from work. It was around 4. Zingi: "I can't talk about it right now. I just need time by myself." Me: "okay. Alright hun. I'll go fetch them. Zimi naye is she at creche?" Zingi: "she's at aftercare now. Lulonke is at rugby practice." Me: "okay. I'll be there shortly." I hung up. Lakhe: "hey love." Me: "hi sthandwasam. Baby?" Lakhe: "what is it?" he bit on his apple leaning on the kitchen counter. He looked so adorable and free in that position. Me: "Zingi needs us to take care of the kids. I think something happened." Lakhe: "oh...yoh. I wonder." all he did was stare at his apple ke Phof. Me: "babe." Lakhe: "I hear you hun. Masambe kaloku, then we'll go past their place and fetch their clothes." Me: "perfect." we took his big car. He drove to Zingi's place first. Maybe it was best we assessed the situation before fetching the kids. Zingi's car was outside the garage ndayongena endlin with Lakhe. She was on her couch ezombathe ngengubo. The house was a complete mess. Me: "Zingi! What happened?" I started picking up the pieces on the floor. Zingi: "I don't know Somehow, I thought everything was perfect and I was the whore. Instead I got played." Me: "what are you talking about?" Zingi: "Dumi has been seeing this girl. Some chick ofunda eNMMU. He pays her fees. Buys her expensive clothes. Hair. Takes her out.....that's why ebengenalo ixesha lam Apha endlini. Because he was out there getting some cheap ass." she cried. I hugged her. I felt guilty for not telling her the truth in the beginning. Lakhe was cleaning up ecaleni evale umlomo wakhe. Umazi ngongathandi uzifaka. Me: "I'm so sorry." Zingi: "I confronted him and he told me" she chuckled. Zingi: "he said to me, kanti wena uyinton efownin yam.... He said that to me." I didn't even know what to say. Zingi: "he didn't even say he was sorry. He just took his things and left. Spho, my husband left home for iimpundu zase varsity!" Me: "maybe he is a bit embarrassed. Maybe he also needs space." Zingi: "I'm going to be away for a few days....can you please hold the fort for me? If I stay here, I swear I'll lose my mind. Ndifuna uyobona abantu bak'lo tatam." Me: "okay love. Not a problem. I'll take care of the kids." Zingi: "don't tell him anything." Me: "but he's gonna see the kids." Zingi: "of course he will. Ngabakhe. Just don't tell him where I am." I nodded. Lakhe: "should I pack them a suitcase? What do they need?" Me: "let me do that." I went to pack two suit cases for Zimi and Lulonke. Lakhe made Zingi some food and encouraged her to bath. Akeva yazi uLakhe but I'm glad he's a bit of a bully nakwabanye abantu bakhe bamve nabo. In no time, the house was clean. Zingi was fed and bathed. She packed a few clothes. The kids' suitcases were packed, the baby seat

ready. Everything was in order. Me: "you can't drive unje though, at least wait for your eyes to swell down." Zingi: "no I'll fly to East London ooTatomkhulu bazondiphuthuma khona." Me: "okay. Uhambe kakuhle sisi." Zingi: "thank you so much guys. Your relationship is a blessing." Me: "aww enkosi friend. I think your Uber is outside." we all left the house. Eyethu indlela ibiyolanda abantwana, eyakhe isiya eAirport. Lakhe was smiling apha endleleni so before we got to Zimi's creche I asked. Me: "why are you so happy? Yazungcolile. Omnye umntana uva kabhlungu and here you are gleaming like a daisy." Lakhe: "hayi baby ndiyeke

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mna." Me: "izithi kanti nawe une blessee ndiyonitshisa nobabini mna nidibene ningandiqheli kakbi." Lakhe: "heee. Awuyiboni wena lento yenzekayo?" Me: "what are you on about?" Lakhe: "she's flying to East London right after she snooped on her husband's phone and found him cheating. Suddenly she's going to East London... Who lives in East London." Oh Wow. Me: "I did not see that coming." Lakhe: "she'll be fine. Relax. Sandile will take good care of her. Sizi gentlemen ekhaya. Its a thing." Me: "I think that 'thing' missed you because you are mean. Worse Uthi kumntana bantu uyanuka. You have no shame." Lakhe: "ha.a baby don't twist my words. I said, xa kaloku kwenzeka izinto ezinje akho need yoba kube muncu Yonke into makaphakame ayovasa." Me: "what in the world does that mean? It means Uthi yena unuka muncu. Wow. I'm done with you. Andiphinde ndingavasi ukho. Kanti use kangaka." Lakhe: "uzaw'qina wethu." he stopped at Zimi's creche ndayongena and signed for her. She started screaming and dancing around when she saw me. Me: "well someone is pleased to see me." she ran into my arms. Me: "hey pumpkin." I took her to the car ndamfaka kwi seat yakhe. Zimi: "Bhubhu!!" she held her little hands out. Lakhe: "hey you!" they blew kisses at each other. I got in the car and we drove to Lulonke's school. They were at the rugby field so we all got out the car sayoma with the other spectators. Just two parents and other kids. Lulonke was sitting on the bench, looking at his boots. We walked to him. Lakhe: "hey buddy. What's up?" Lulo: "hello uncle. Nothing much." Lakhe: "kutheni Uhleli wedwa apha?" Lulo: "they don't have space for me to play." Lakhe: "I think they can make space." wahamba waya ku coach. After a few minutes, he was called in. He ran nervously into the field. Lakhe: "go on boy. You can do it!!" Lulo: "I'm not sure uncle." Lakhe: "just grab the ball and run as fast as you can okay? You'll be great." and so on ran Lulo. Zimi clapped her hands for him. Me: "and how did that happen." Lakhe: "well....a bit of arm twisting with the coach. It was fun. I want to see that boy have fun. Look at him." he was running like a lightning bolt! Lakhe: "what the" and he scored a try. Coach: "your boy is quite an athletic. He

runs like thunder but I'd rather have the other boys also get a chance." Lakhe: "why play if you not gonna win?" Coach: "they're 6. They just having fun." Lakhe: "the quicker they learn the better. Instead of sidelining him for his talents, how about you do your job and train the others to be just as good." Coach: "you might as well take over since you know what's best." Lakhe: "I'd love to, its just that being CEO and owner of the country's biggest hotels pays so much better..... You go boy!! That's the spirit!" the coach walked away. Me: "and then?" Lakhe: "aren't you seeing this? Lulonke yedwa ohlelsw phantsi because 'he doesn't have space to play' which is bullshit because he's not white. Look at that field. Its lilies all over. I'm gonn be here everyday, akazongadlali uLulonke ngenxa yala racist. He's gonn be on that field everyday." Me: "okay dad. Slow down. Mr CEO." Lakhe: "unomona ke. Mrs MD." Zimi: "mami, funi Lolopop." Me: "sizohamba ngoku vha baby?" she nodded. After Lulonke's practice sahamba. Lulo: "thanks Uncle." Lakhe: "did you have fun?" Lulo: "yeah." he smiled. Lakhe: "you did great out there." Lulo: "uzoza Saturday ne?" Lakhe: "kwenzeka ntoni Saturday?" Lulo: "we're playing a game." Lakhe: "for sure boy! Ndizobakhona. All of us will be there." Lulo: "I don't think my dad will come. He's busy." Lakhe picked him up. Lakhe: "don't worry about your dad. I'll be there. Okay?" the little boy smiled. So Lakhe enjoyed playing happy families with other people's kids but didn't want his own? Funny. He drove us home and when we got there, I ran the kids a bath. Lakhe: "I'll make dinner babe." Me: "sure." I undressed the kids ndabafaka emanzini. I bathed Zimi, Lulonke washed himself. After ndimgqibile lo umncinci I took her to get dressed in pajamas. Her mom had left her diapers for xa elala kuba ebengekamfundisi i-toilet. I put on her diaper ndamnxibisa. She

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also had this cute pink fluffy gown and kitten slippers. And Jesus, I could've just died of Cuteness overdose! Lakhe: "babe." Me: "yeah." Lakhe: "what did I do now?" Me: "you were excited when the test came out negative. Why?" Lakhe: "where is this coming from?" Me: "you clearly enjoy having kids around you." Lakhe: "I do...but why are you upset." Me: "I'm not upset I'm just confused." Lakhe: "okay. Okok'qala, I said this before, I'm saying it again. I want you to be 100% back on track. You are still getting on your feet, it would be unfair for mna ndisuke ndikumithise kodwa awukaphili ncam. Also that gives us a chance to know each other better, thus focusing on our wedding. You don't need the extra stress..." Me: "I'm sorry...its just that I wish I wasn't so dumb and gotten into that car only to crash, because today I'd still have our baby in my tummy. I still blame myself." Lakhe: "its not your fault. It happened and we're over it now baby. Maybe it wasn't the right time, kodwa liyeza

ixesha. Now we get to practice, with.....where is she?" he panicked. Me: "she's behind the curtain." Lakhe: "I don't know what I'd do without you." he kissed my forehead. I really felt better that I'd let that out my chest instead of holding it in and being mad for no reason. I understood now and I was moving on. Me: "you could check on the boy. I'll dish up supper." I went to pick up Zimi from her hiding place andiyazi noba ebecimba I won't notice the pink slippers poking out underneath the curtain. Me: "come angel. Masiyotya." she giggled. Lakhe helped Lulonke get dressed in his pajamas sayohlala sonke at the table. We were officially temporary parents....

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Chapter 32

Friday morning I got the kids ready for school, Lakhe was on the bed using his iPad. Me: "babe. You need to get up, we're almost done." Lakhe: "okay." Me: "nawe funeka uphangele ke. Uzovasa nini?" Lakhe: "now." Me: "what are you busy with?" finally he looked up at me and put the iPad down. Lakhe: "nothing." waphakama wayovasa. Zimi was done with her things. So was Lulonke all I did was make sure they had breakfast and stayed clean. Lakhe came to the lounge 20 minutes later ephole enqayini Le angenayo phof. Me: "Masilakhe. Where's your suit?" Lakhe: "its Friday." ndaske ndamjamela. He was wearing his tight jeans that had a grip on the ankles. A crisp white shirt that also fitted him perfectly tight. He rolled his sleeves up and unbuttoned the two top buttons. My concern with this outfit was that he was wearing two completely different shoes. Zimi laughed hysterically until she fell off the couch engayekanga nohleka. Lulo: "uhm. Uncle?" Lakhe: "before you judge me." Me: "I'm already done." I packed the lunches. Lakhe: "wait. I'm not sure which shoe I should wear. My Boosts or my formal Louboutins?" Me: "your formal louboutins. Please hurry." Lakhe: "awukanxibi nawe nje." I undid my gown. Lakhe: "oh." wajika wayongena eroomin. Soon enough we all went to the car, taking the smaller Benz this time. I don't know why but ke. I put on my shoes while he drove. We dropped the kids off and we went to the office. I stayed for only two hours ndambona he's a bit busy so I called for a cab to take me to the doctor. Me: "Sobz." I peeped in his office. Me: "ndisaya kula appointment ke vha. I'll be back soon." Lakhe: "what appointment?" Me: "doctor. Its Friday." Lakhe: "right now?" Me: "yes." Lakhe: "wait for me then. I'm taking you-" Me: "uhm...no." Lakhe: "no what? Ndizohamba nawe ke kanti." Me: "you don't have to, I called a cab." Lakhe: "why would you do that? Cancel it." Me: "but why? You're busy njena." Lakhe: "hayi baby. Hayi. Don't do that. Kutheni ungafuni ndihambe nawe?" Me: "its not that at all. I just..." Lakhe: "you just what? I thought we're engaged to be married izinto sizenza

kunye. What now?" Me: "okay then." Lakhe: "okay then means what?" Me: "you can come with." Lakhe: "une tricks kodwa wena yazi. Lonto zi-funny ezi tricks zakho." Me: "whatever." I cancelled my cab and we drove to the doctor's office together. Bendi tense in the car because I was nervous. I didn't want him next to me in that doctor's office. This was my business. We arrived and I booked my name ndalinda. Lakhe: "yazi ndilambile. What are we having for supper?" Me: "I'll cook something." Lakhe: "I was thinking maybe we take the kids out since its Friday." Me: "awuzityi take aways." Lakhe: "McDonald's and all the other unhealthy places. I think I trust Spur. They have nice veggies and steaks. Also a playground for the kids." Me: "okay." Lakhe: "also, the game is at 9am ngomso. Funeke sivuke early to take Lulonke there azoba ready." Me: "you're really into this ne." Lakhe: "being an uncle? Most definitely. I like spoiling kids." Me: "okay baby. Calm down." Lakhe: "stop stressing. Everything is going to be okay." we were called in by the doctor sayongena kwi office yakhe. Me: "this is my fiance, Masilakhe. Babe, this is Dr Ferreira." Doc: "lovely to meet you sir." Lakhe: "likewise." Doc: "Spho, I have your results here. It is my policy not to share results over the phone which is why I've called you to fetch them." Me: "is it bad?" Doc: "no, you have absolutely nothing with your womb. You're healthy." Me: "oh." I was so relieved. Me: "is there anything else?" Doc: "no dear. Here are your documents. Please sign here for me. If you ever feel There's a problem, feel free to call me." my heart was light and I felt my shoulders loose. I signed with a big smile on my face. Lakhe: "ubune stress santoni ke?" Me: "I don't know." we left the doctor's office, driving back to ours. Since it was Friday. The kids were coming out of school at 12. I had my driving lesson then so

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Lakhe would have to fetch them. Everything today was smooth sailing and going according to plan.

Saturday morning I was woken up early by Lakhe for a change. The minute I woke, I thought of my dad. He was probably expecting me home soon. I didn't know how I was going to tell him ndihlala noLakhe again. Or if I would just lie and tell him I'm with Zingi at her house, helping her with the kids kuba Dumini engekho. I just didn't know. I showered quickly and went to get dressed. Lakhe was dressed and ready ebusy nabantwana. Zimi was the only one refusing to get dressed. I had to chase her around the house until she got tired, wathatha dummy yakhe and stuck it in her mouth. I don't even know where she found it but I'm guessing kungoku bebeghubhulula bag noLakhe. I dressed her in white leggings and long pink top with pink pumps. Lakhe had managed by the grace of God to tie up all her hair into one bun on the top

of her head. She was finally ready. Lulonke wasn't much of a hassle. He was done in no time with his rugby shorts and t shirt. They played barefoot so bekungekho need yee takkie he just wore his flops. I made some sandwiches and packed fruit and juice for the kids. Sahamba ukuya emotweni. Taking the big one today. Ungandibuzi nge chop and change of cars. I know nothing. We made our way to the field. A lot of the parents came out as well and I was surprised to see other black parents as well. Kodwa I didn't see black kids at practice. I kept wondering kwenzeka ntoni kakhle kakhle. Lulonke went for his warm ups and I finally got to feed Zimi who kept bouncing about on my lap. Lakhe: "you look beautiful." he kissed my cheek. Me: "you tell me everyday. Unazo nemini ukhe undibhanxe." Lakhe: "hayi baby I always mean it. You're always going to look beautiful." Me: "have you decided what to do with Nosi?" Lakhe: "she has good intentions. I like her idea. So maybe I might fund it." Me: "maybe? Its great baby." Lakhe: "I know, but is it viable. Does it work? So she gives artist a place to work, some food, what if the sponsors aren't interested their work? So far only two of them have been successful." Me: "don't you think with your name on it this initiative would go much further than just 2 artists? You have a big name. Use it." Lakhe: "the time." Me: "Lakhe, stop trying to prove you weren't right." Lakhe: "look, I'll give it some thought. Maybe on the condition that she returns to school. I'd do it." Me: "good." Lakhe: "I'm glad my family is taking to you. Utata ebek'buza." Me: "really? Phof I left rather suddenly ndingekho right so.." Lakhe: "yeah...and I got a hell of a lecture that day, ndathi ndibuya ebhayi ndavuthuzwa ngempama still. You got all these men so crazy for you." Me: "nooSandile bakufaka amanqindi uyongena kwi sliding door. Awuna luck shame." Lakhe: "hayi uthandiwe. Think that should be igama lakho lase mzini. Thandiwe." I laughed. Me: "mxim wena." Zimi was done eating ephinda kwakhona encanca idummy. Me: "ifunyenwe phi Le?" Lakhe: "in her bag. At least it keeps her grounded and looks adorable." Me: "she's two! Get rid of it." Lakhe: "while she's still in diapers? No chance. Yeka umntana Abe happy. If bingowam ebezobase beleni kungoku." Me: "2 year old? Breastfeeding?" Lakhe: "uzoyeka xa ena 5." Me: "uphambene." Lakhe: "utsho kum? Ndim lo uphambeneyo. I'll show you just now umntu ophambe-" Me: "I'm kidding!! But andicingi ndincancise ixhekwazi mna. Maybe at 2 angayeka." Lakhe: "3." Me: "I wonder libele likabani Eli lizobalide." Lakhe: "Lelethu." he smiled. Lakhe: "Lelethu." he said again. Me: "that is not going to be -" Lakhe: "our child's name!" he laughed. Me: "mxim. The game is starting." we watched the game as we possibly could, I mean 6 year olds playing rugby? Okay. It was cute though. Probably half time when the teams met up and discussed whatever strategy. I don't know much about rugby. I just paid attention to the score. Zimi jumped up and ran to the field. Ndaske

ndayihleka before ndiyilungise. She was running to her brother and futhi wafika wabambelela kuye. Lulonke didn't even know what to do. Imagine Zimi is short already, all the team members are huddling in a bent position waske watyhoboza umntu wama naye. I hurried over to fetch her sabuyela kwi bench zethu. Engayihlekanga uLakhe. He was standing in a distance with other dads. Zimi: "mami, uBhubhu. Bhubhu!" she pointed at him. Me: "baleka uye ku Bhubhu." she got on her feet and paddled All the way to Lakhe. Wamtsala nge jean. He picked her up ndambona enqenqa on his shoulder. So for sleeping purposes she knows where to go. Good thing. I was chatting up to one of the mothers. She was Xhosa also, husband at work. *rolls eyes* she was an internal auditor by profession. Cute. Me: "so what does your hubby do?" She: "oh. He has a computer engineering company." she said proudly. Me: "that's really nice, nihlala phi?" She: "in Humewood, and you?" Me: "oh, we're in Kragga Kamma. Here's the man of the moment." Lakhe: "baby. Ulele ke umntu wakho andiyazi noba ndiyi bhedi yenu okanye." I see jealousy....ngoku bendihleli ndodwa Khange aqalise undihoya, now I'm with ufriend he has excuses to come. Me: "bring her blanket ndizom'bamba." Lakhe: "no its fine I got her. Nawe uright mos? Do you want juice? They're selling juice and hot dogs." Me: "no baby I'm fine. Enkosi." wahlala phantsi umntu. (let me breath inner peace.) Me: "I never got your name." She: "Onetta. And you?" Me: "Sphosenkosi. This is the man, Lakhe." he looked very far away ingathi akhange ave niks. Onetta: "oh that's nice. Hey, nanku Gummy. I didn't think he'd make it." she squealed in excitement and waved. I saw well built man, very light in complexion coming in the gates. He was dressed in sweatpants and a t shirt plus sneakers. Khange kuthiwe usemsebenzini na. Okay shut up Spho. You know nothing. I pretended to fuss over a sleeping Zimi while Onetta and her husband hugged and kissed. Lakhe: "baby, hold her please. I'll fetch her blanket from the car, I think Lulonke needs my motivation on the field. His game is a bit weak today." I took the child and he casually did that cat walk of his emane ngozijonga ke ubhuti wakho not wanting the spotlight on anyone else but him. Onetta: "Spho, this is my husband. Nangamso. Gummy, this is Spho. Umama ka Lulo." YIMA. My phone rang ndisazo cacisa. Me: "excuse me." I picked up. Me: "hey babe." Zingi: "hi tshomi ninjani?" Me: "we're great love. We're at the game." Zingi: "which game?" Me: "leya ka Lulo ye-rugby. Zimi just fell asleep, ukhangele uLakhe wambhaqa and ran to him. Xa emfunqule she fell asleep on his shoulder." she laughed. Zingi: "uwoah. How is Lulo doing?" Me: "he's doing great hey. He plays really well." Zingi: "I miss them...I'll be back on Monday vha." Me: "okay tshomi." Zingi: "please give them a kiss for me." Me:

"will do babe." I hung up. Lakhe was already here with the blanket. Me: "Zingi says hi. Ubuya Monday. Have you heard from uDumi?" Lakhe: "nope and akazoyokhangelwa ndim." he put the blanket over the baby. Me: "aren't you worried?" Lakhe: "I'm not getting cheated on, so nope." he kissed me full on the lips and walked off. You don't even know the amount of embarrassment I was in. No regard whatsoever for the poor man standing there. Me: "I'm sorry....he's too distracted by the game." Onetta: "totally fine. We'll meet him afterwards." xa sekukdala sendilibebe wavuka uZimi. She looked around first and looked at me. Me: "hey baby..." she smiled. Lakhe was on the sideline pha kude cheering and yelling like I've never seen him do before. The game finally ended ndaya kubo. Me: "Lulo, that was a great game boy. You're really amazing!" Lakhe: "I took a video of his victory. Did you see that last try baby? He's a super star baby. Andithi boy?" Lulo: "yeah." he blushed. Me: "hun, Kwathini kengoku ungahoyi kubuliswa? I introduced you to Onetta and you didn't say a thing." Lakhe: "I don't like her. She's forward. She looks like the type ethanda indaba zabantu and compares a lot ngee lifestyle. I can see the way she talks and it irritates me."

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Me: "andik'understand yazi." Lakhe: "she's too much babe. The husband looks like he's being pulled around yena kqala akazazi noba uphi. I can't mna." Me: "okay. I just thought we'd make more friends. Thought it'd be nice." Lakhe: "we will baby. Just n-" Onetta: "Hi again!! We'll be having a braai at our house this afternoon would you like to come?" Lakhe looked at me. I just couldn't tell his facial expression noba ibisithi 'I told you' or 'what did you expect' Me: "we'd love to Onetta but we have family plans. Next time perhaps?" Onetta: "no problem love." I put zimi in her chair and buckled her in ndakhwela kwi passenger seat. Lulonke and Lakhe got in the car. I saw Onetta walking back to us kwakhona. Me: "Drive." I looked down at my phone so that ndingamboni. Lakhe drove off as haste as possible. Lakhe: "uthen ngoku awuyfun itshomakho?" Me: "she was holding her phone ezothatha number yam. I could tell." Lakhe: "thought you wanted more friends." Me: "maybe you're right. I'm still going to find friends though." he shrugged. We got home around 1pm. I took the kids out to the pond. We played with the ducks and went to the back of the house badlala khona with a ball. As I walked to the house ndiyo sela amanzi I step in and hear a voice in the kitchen. Khaya: "I just came to check on my son-in-law. Bendisithi ndiyeza iveki Le Yonke but I've been busy with work. How's everything going?" Lakhe: "uhm.....I.....its great." I could tell he was shit nervous. Khaya: "Why u-nervous? Is there someone here with you?" Oh my God....

Chapter 33

I instantly panicked. I didn't know what to do, so I quickly turned around ndabuyela kwabantwana. Me: "guys. We're playing hide and seek. Uncle is counting and he's going to come find us. Let's hide!" sabaleka nyani and slipped in through the sliding floor that leads to our bedroom. Kanti naye uzongena apha eroomin. The kids were hiding in the closet. Me: "please tell me you got rid of him." Lakhe: "absolutely no way I can do that. I offered to take him out for a drink and thank God he has agreed. So I have to go baby." Me: "not a problem. You want a jacket?" Lakhe: "Ikhona emotweni." Me: "how did he get in?" Lakhe: "I didn't close the gate ngoku besingena thina. I'll see you later vha. I love you. Kiss the kids for me." Me: "I love you too." he walked out the room and I waited until they left. Me: "Zimi." they came out the closet. Me: "Bhubhu cant find us so uyokhangela utata to help him. Come lets go Eat." i cannot believe they actually bought that because they laughed and chased me to the kitchen. Lakhe had almost finished cooking, I just started where he left off. In a few minutes ndaphakela abantwana and they ate. Phofu it was Lulo that ate, Zimi was just watching TV playing with food in her mouth. I cleaned up in the kitchen still a bit nervous about my father and Lakhe spending time together alone. What did they talk about? Where are they going? When would they be back? All of these questions lingered in my mind for at least 2 hours before I heard the gate ring. I went to check who it was. The only man that didn't know how to enter this estate. The one that suggested its purchase. I opened for Lakhe's dad wazongena. I'd known it was him because he was driving the car I'd liked from first sight. He entered the door wancuma. Rob: "you're back?!" he came for a hug. I hugged him. Me: "molo tata." Rob: "hello my angel. How are you? You look well!" Me: "I am. Enkosi tata. Unjani wena?" Rob: "I'm fine mntanam." Me: "can I make you tea?" Rob: "please." Me: "that is Lulonke and Zimi. My friends kids. She asked me to babysit for her for the weekend." Rob: "lovely. Uphi uMpinga?" Me: "him and my dad went out for a while." its been a very long while now. I put on the kettle. Rob: "okay." Me: "is everything okay tata?" Rob: "yes. Everything is perfect. Iyandonwabisa lento yoba ubuyile. Yaziz, uMasilakhe uyak'thanda. He really does. I would love that you two put a date on it already." Me: "tata..." I blushed and made the tea. Just talking about this wedding was giving me jitters. I was going to get married!! Rob: "now I just hope Sandile finds someone too. I always thought he would be first. Lakhe was never that interested in commitment unless it was a business contract." I laughed. We had our tea in the dining room viewing the lounge for the kids supervision. Lulo: "sisi, can I go play playstation?" Me: "for an hour baby vha?"

Then come back for a break." Lulo: "okay! Thank you." he ran to the play room. Zimi could not be bothered because she was watching her Mickey Mouse Clubhouse. Rob: "have you thought of having kids?" Me: "Lakhe doesn't want kids yet." Rob: "nonsense. Does he think he's getting younger? Kutheni ephambene nje." I figured Lakhe never told his parents about my accident or the miscarriage. Me: "its still a bit early tata...maybe next year. Zimi, eat your food hun." she looked at me then back at her food. Waphakama waza nako kum. Me: "alright..." I fed her emane ngobaleka aye tv'in while she chewed and swallowed. Rob: "you're natural for this. Masilakhe would be ecstatic if he knew he'd be a dad. He always tells me he'd do a better job than me." we chuckled. Me: "he thinks everything is a competition right?" Rob: "don't tell him that." we laughed. Lakhe: "what's so funny?" he walked in taking off his jacket. Rob: "heeeey!!" Lakhe: "stop trying to distract me tata. Nihleka ntoni?" Me: "your food is in the microwave." Lakhe: "thanks my love, yuh. I'm starving." Rob: "good one." Me: "beniyephi?"

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Lakhe: "just drove around plus he took me to his work. Met some of his colleagues. He said I was his son in law." he beamed. Lakhe: "oh and we looked through x rays and says that the next time I come I can watch from the gallery." Me: "oh." Yes, I was very disappointed that they had a perfect son-father day. I never even met his colleagues! I was never invited to sit at the gallery and watch him work! Wait.....was it because I was a woman? Did dad think about having a prince also? I was the only princess allowed! Rob: "so I'm being replaced now..." Lakhe: "by a surgeon. Yes. Haha get it? Because surgeons replace orga-" Rob: "I got it." he sipped his tea. So, ayindim ndodwa that feels side lined. Lakhe: "okay, I'm feeling a vibe. Not sure if its bad or ugly." Zimi came running back ezokhamisa, I gave her a spoon full waphinda wemnka. Lakhe: "Spho? Tata? Kwenzeka ntoni ngoku?" Rob: "what ever do you mean?" Lakhe: "its like anifuni ndibelapha. Ever since I walked in, ndingene kwi bhotolo ye tension." Rob: "no such thing." Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "yes?" Lakhe: "did I do anything wrong?" Me: "nope." it wasn't him, it was dad. He was the one that sidelined me. Or did I side line myself? I'm not sure about before, but ever since he was back, I hadn't been to his workplace. He never offered. I never asked because I thought it was too early. Lakhe: "I feel like I did. Please talk to me." Me: "you did nothing wrong." Zimi was back again, wakhamisa and left again. Rob: "I have the letter here with me Mpinga, uzoyithumela?" Lakhe: "ewe tata. I can't wait to finish." Me: "finish?" he kissed my cheek. Lakhe: "you look so beautiful." Me: "Lakhe." Lakhe: "I'm not allowed to say." Rob: "she already knows anyway." Lakhe: "no she doesn't tata. Its a surprise." I asked no further because bendisazi andiphinde ndiyixelelwe.

Later that evening, Lakhe and his father had a braai. It was only us three plus the two kids. Rob: "your brother has mysteriously disappeared again. Lord knows uyow'buya xasendilibe." Lakhe: "disappeared when?" Rob: "oko kwango lwesithathu." Lakhe: "njani tata ungatsho?" Rob: "I thought he was here with you. Uyamazi mos Sandile he comes and goes." Me: "did you call him?" Rob looked at the floor. Me: "what's wrong." Lakhe: "again tata???" Rob: "I didn't know he'd disappear again!" Me: "again? What's going on?" Lakhe was trying to call Sandile. Lakhe: "damn it Sandile!!" I didn't know what was going on. Lakhe: "he's gone....." Me: "wait....maybe Uhleli noZingi." Lakhe: "then call her and ask." I dialed her number and she picked up. Zingi: "hi hun..." Me: "hello. Zingi, is Sandile with you?" Zingi: "no babe. Bendithe ndiya ekhaya kaloku mna nje. Why would he be here with me? What's going on?" Me: "oh nothing tshomi. Bendim'khangela qha." Zingi: "okay." I hung up. Me: "he's not with her." Rob was visibly upset and remorseful. I rubbed his shoulder. Me: "I'm sure he'll turn up somewhere." I hope and pray he was okay. Especially that he has an illegal hobby and very strange habits, also unfamiliar anger problems. Lakhe: "did he say anything to you?" he was staring straight at me. Me: "uhm, no. We haven't spoken since East London." Lakhe: "did he say anything." Me: "no....he didn't." Lakhe: "Spho. Is there anything you know about Sandile that the rest of us don't?" Me: "no...." he's YOUR brother. Damn. Lakhe: "you look like you know something. You're too calm." he turned and walked back inside the house. I didn't even know where Sandile might have disappeared to. I went after him. Me: "Lakhe, I know nothing about Sandile. Why aren't you telling me what's wrong-" Lakhe: "he disappears when something is wrong or doesn't go his way. We can never trace him. He doesn't own a single bank card, he never uses the same name and has absolutely nothing in his names. He is a literal float! If he disappears, asiphinde simbone because There's no trace of him! The last time this happened he was gone for over a year. I didn't know if he was alive or dead. I can't afford to lose him again." his voice was shaky.

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Lakhe: "not now." Me: "the day you came home and found him here was the day I bailed him out of jail. Some robbery of a bank or something, I don't remember clearly. He called the house efuna wena, I answered and he told me he needed to get out. I went to get him, but he asked me to keep quiet because he didn't want to upset you." Lakhe: "and you never told me this!!!" Me: "he made me promise!" Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi!!!! Uze ngabani kulendlu? Me or him? Where should your loyalties lie?" Me: "maybe I shouldn't have said anything. I'm clearly no help." I turned around to walk out. He grabbed my arm. Lakhe: "everything that happens, I expect you to tell me. I don't care if

God Himself came down in a balloon and asked you to keep a secret, if that balloon lands on my property, I have a right to know. It might not be fair, but it applies to you too, if kwenzeka something, as my wife I have to tell you."

Me: "I'm sorry. I didn't want to cause problems between the two of you."

Lakhe: "its fine." he let go of me. Me: "I'll get the kids for their bath." Lakhe: "no baby I'll do it. I promised Lulo we'll shave his beard tonight. Take Zimi, I'll take him." Me: "he doesn't have a beard." Lakhe: "imagination baby. Stop being a buzz kill." Me: "oh wow." I went to go get the boy. Bayovasa. I bathed Zimi and today she just fell asleep right after. Rob decided to go lie down. I still had to call my parents but I didn't want to talk. The house was locked and everything in place I went to bed ndafika Lakhe engena naye in bed. It had been a long day. I'd looked forward to getting into bed and falling asleep. I got under the blankets. Me: "my back hurts....andiyazi bendisenzani that could've near damn broken it." I was also expecting a massage. Dololo sana.

Me: "baby?" Lakhe: "sorry babe. What's up." was he awake dreaming? Me: "back hurts." Lakhe: "oh, uzoba right vha." Me: "you serious???" Lakhe: "I'm kidding!" he laughed. Lakhe: "come here." I was on my stomach and he rubbed my back. Me: "was the day honestly perfect with my dad?" Lakhe: "no....because you weren't there. I missed you so much. I had to hold my breath in the whole time because I was afraid I'd slip up. I tried my best to be perfect." Me: "you already are perfect baby. You don't need to hold your breath in." Lakhe: "your dad is cool mntuwam. Kodwa he made himself clear that I shouldn't mess up." Me: "you think too much." Lakhe: "I don't want to mess this up.....this, is my dream." he kissed my back. Me: "must be nice huh." his hands moved slower. Lakhe: "the nice part about not having a baby yet, is that we keep trying...." he whispered in my ear. Me: "we agreed to not yet." Lakhe: "yes baby..buuuut.." Me: "but what? You are the most confused individual I know." Lakhe: "please?" Me: "please what?" Lakhe: "let's try." Me: "no baby...." Lakhe: "yes baby..." he kissed my neck. It tickled softly ndaske ndayihleka. Lakhe: "baby manii..." Me: "its ticklish." Lakhe: "uyathanda udlala wena yazi." Me: "I love you too." I looked at him, laying on my back. We kissed slowly at first. He finally let himself go. I could actually feel him calming..... then he suddenly stopped. Me: "what?" Lakhe: "oh my God.... That's why he's gone." Me: "don't tell me you're thi-" Lakhe: "he probably missed his court date! Or even worse, he's in prison." Me: "baby.." he was already on his feet. Lakhe: "which police station did you take him from?" Me: "Humewood. Wait for me-" Lakhe: "no baby. Abantwana kaloku. I'll be back as soon as possible." he was dressed and out the door in a wink. Lakhe drove to Humewood police station quietly by himself. When he arrived the station was quiet with only one constable behind the desk filling out papers. Lakhe: "excuse me, Mr Fani. I'm looking for my brother." the officer looked up at him. Fani: "what is his

name?" Lakhe: "Sandile Sobukwe, he was arrested for robbery a few weeks ago." the officer paged through a book. Fani: "date?" Lakhe: "I'm not exactly sure but I think beginning of August." Fani went through the computer. Fani: "he was never here." Lakhe:

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"yes he was, my fiance fetched him from here. On the day of his bail." Fani: "Nope. We have no one by the name of Sandile Sobukwe on our system. At all."

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Chapter 34

Lakhe was back home in a short space of time which made me wonder what could have gone wrong now? Me: "baby? Kuthwani?" Lakhe: "they don't know him. They say he was never there." Me: "that's impossible. I went to bail him myself." he just sank into a chair staring at the floor. I sat on the opposite chair trying to think about conversations with Sandile. He's never for once mentioned angahamba. If anything, ngoyena mntu uhlala endlini. There was a slight rattling noise in the room. I looked at Lakhe, his hands were shaking, and his Rolex was rattling on the wood. He held on to the chair but he was still shaking. I wasn't sure noba ibingu msindo or what. He looked really pissed off though. Maybe some television would help ease his mind. Ndithe ndisaya kwi remote. Lakhe: "don't." I sat down immediately. Now what? Me: "baby.....maybe you should get some rest, we'll think of something tomorrow." Lakhe: "My brother is missing. What rest am I supposed to have apho?" Me: "Sandile was not kidnapped. Uphume ngokwakhe endlini wahamba. He is a grown man that can take care of himself!" he stared at me as if I was the devil himself. Lakhe: "Uthi kutheni?" Me: "undivile mos Masilakhe. Sandile is fine where he is. He's left before, wabuya. Uzobuya this time as well." Lakhe: "mxim. Problem yakho is that you don't think." waphakama umntu wemnka. And by that I mean, out the house, drive the car type of left. I sat alone in the dark and it felt like a light bulb just switched on in my head. I got up and switched the lights on ndisiya to the forbidden passage. I opened the door and clicked the light switch on for the hallway, ndawela uyongena kulamnyango wosbini. I felt the wall for the light switch and pressed it. Cwaka. The room was cold and dark. Me: "Sandile." I heard my echo. Me: "Sandile." something in me felt so strongly that he was actually here. I don't know how. Or why. Me: "Sandile please say something. I know you're in here." I stepped inside slowly. I couldn't see anything, I actually felt blind. Maybe he wasn't here. I was just hoping he would be. For Lakhe's sake. I sighed and

turned away to walk to the door and I heard a small creek. I stopped. My heart raced at the possible threat that was somehow around me. I was beginning to sweat in a cold room. Me: "hello?" silence. I quickly walked to the door and ran out to my room. My heart was in my throat. I knew that tonight I wouldn't sleep a wink on my own. With Lakhe gone and the cold still shivering in my bones, plus having to protect the kids in the next room. I had to keep my door open. Who was I fooling? I got up and went to the kitchen to make myself tea ndayohlala on the living room couch switching on the television.

Naturally without so much as a blink, I stayed up till morning. I was watching Keeping up with the Kardashians and realizing how stupid and time wasting this show was but surprisingly entertaining. "Spho?" I looked up. It was Rob. I checked the time seyingu 6:45am. Me: "hello tata." Rob: "uleli apha?" Me: "hayi tata. I just got here." he didn't look like he believed me. Me: "I'll check on the kids." Rob: "Uphi uLakhe?" Me: "he left. Uyokhangela uSandile." I think. Rob walked to the kitchen. I went to the room occupied by the children. Zimi was awake and playing in her bed with teddy bears. Me: "come angel. Its morning." Zimi: "hello." I picked her up ndimsa kwi bath yakhe. We bathed and got dressed within an hour. Lulonke wavuka wayovasa naye. I fed Zimi her breakfast then started feeling woozy. The fatigue was coming back. I needed my rest. I tried calling Lakhe, the phone was on voicemail. I even left two messages for him to come back. Around 10am. I was starting to drink water and walk around to exercise. Someone rang at the gate ndayovula. I'd seen that it was Dumi. Probably concerned ngabantwana. As soon

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as he entered the house I could see the anger on his face. Me: "hello." Dumi: "hi Spho. Uphi uZingi?" she told me not to tell. Me: "I don't know. I'm just taking care of the kids." Dumi: "she's left me Spho. She left me!!!" Me: "okay. Calm down. She'll be back eventually." Dumi: "no she won't!! Uthathe izinto zakhe and left me. What am I going to do without her?" he cried. What an interesting turn of events. Me: "what happened?" Dumi: "she caught me.....I didn't know what to do.....I just froze and panicked. Ndaphuma endlini to get some fresh air and think. I can't lose my wife Spho. What the hell was I thinking!" Me: "what were you thinking kakade?" Dumi: "I don't know. Andizazi ndizokwenza njani without uZingi. She took care of me. Loved me. All I did was hurt her." Me: "okay. Dumi. You're going to have to calm down and give Zingi space to calm down too. When she is back, uzothetha naye and fix this right? I hope you're no longer with that girl. Dumi, you could lose your whole world trying to impress the streets. Those streets won't be there for you when

you struggle. Kunini wakunyamezela uZingi. She was your one and only friend and number one supporter. You can't mess that up for umntu ongamaziyo Uzothini next. Do you think that girl loves you or your money? Would she stick by you? Where is she now?" Dumini: "she's....with her friends. Going to some party in Jeffreys bay." Me: "wena that time ulahlekelwa ngumfazi. She's having fun." Dumini: "I made a mistake." Me: "fix your mistake Dumini." I sat down. Dumini: "I'm going to take the kids with me vha. Thank you so much Spho. I really miss them and I can't stay in that house alone." Me: "I'll let Zingi know." he's their dad after all she did say he had access to them xa ebafuni. Dumini: "thank you Spho." now I was barely focusing. I just wanted to sleep. Rob: "molweni." he came from the bedroom. Me: "hi tata, this is Dumini, my friend, Zingi's husband and the father to the kids. Dumini, ngutata ka Lakhe lo. Mr Rob Sobukwe." Dumini: "Noo!!" Me: "huh?" Dumini: "thee Rob Sobukwe!" Rob: "in the flesh." Dumini: "my uncle and dad were such huge fans of you!" I was now confused. Rob: "why thank you.." Dumini: "Rob Sobukwe was the leading champion in boxing apha Eastern Cape. Also went on to win the heavy weight championship against the Beast. Back in the day, he was a super star!" he explained to me. WHAT. Me: "how come I was never told!" Rob: "oh hun....its so long ago." Dumini: "I'm so happy that I've met you. This has officially made my day. No, make that my year! This is so amazing! Lakhe never said a thing about this!" Rob: "he was never really happy about having a champion dad." Dumini: "but why? Its the coolest thing!" Rob: "Lakhe is not a boxing person. He's more rugby, soccer type of person. He hates boxing." Dumini: "he doesn't know art. Boxing is the best." Rob: "do you spar?" Dumini: "I used to with utatam. Its been a while now." Rob: "you should bring your gloves some time. The only other person better than me, who can knock out a street pole ngu Sandile. Now that is who you should be afraid of." Dumini: "haha...akasethule uSandile though." Me: "please don't test him." I yawned. Rob: "Spho, did you get some rest last night?" Me: "only a little bit tata." Rob: "then you should lie down. Ndikhona, I'll take care of the house and the kids with Dumini." Dumini: "yeah definitely! Its not like I have anywhere to go." Me: "okay. I'm just going to take 2 hours okay?" Rob: "alright mntanam." I went to my bedroom and crawled into bed. Oko bendisuke last night I didn't come back to bed. Something was making me uncomfortable here. I turned and looked another direction. Still. So I sat up and looked around the bed. Nothing was wrong here until the curtain blew wind lightly into the room. I got up ndaya kula curtain, closing the slightly opened sliding door. I went back to bed. Me: "what the hell is it!!" ingaba kutheni na. I took my phone again and called Lakhe. Still on voicemail. Yazi naye une drama e-unnecessary. Ngoku ebehamba ebesithi uyaphi? I forced my eyes closed and tried to get in some sleep which took almost an hour till I started drifting off.

I stared at the sun setting, behind the beach I kept saying. The ocean was calm and the water cascaded small little waves at the shore. I was waiting anxiously, he said he'd be here by now and it was getting dark. I watched the skies turn from orange to peach, then purple blue. The sky was a moisture of colors that symbolized the end of yet another beautiful day. Just as that last perfect purple color went down, he appeared from underwater walking toward me. "why do you insist on waiting here for me? You should be at home." his body was dripping wet. Me: "why do you insist on disappearing?" he smiled and walked up to my side. His hand rubbed my cheek. Sandile: "don't come here...when its time, I'll come home." Me: "what is it that you're doing?" Sandile: "taking care of our family. Go back home." Me: "Sandile..." he was fading away back to the ocean. Me: "Sandile!!" and he disappeared into the water. I jolted awake. My heart was pounding in my chest. I looked around the room. That stupid curtain was blown by wind again. The sliding door was open. I sat up straight. Who keeps opening that door? I never once opened it and it keeps opening, emveni koba nditixa. Lakhe walked out his closet ephethe outfit. He stared at me, I stared back. Lakhe: "nenzana ntoni emaphupheni noSandile. Ndlela okhala ngayo." he was being sarcastic as he put his clothes on the bed kakuhle. Me: "uvulwe nguwe lomnyango?" Lakhe: "omphi umnyango." Me: "the sliding door." Lakhe: "that door is closed." Me: "No, but...the curtain moved. Just when I woke up." Lakhe: "uhm....its closed." he revealed the door wabe evaliwe nyani. Me: "but..." my mind raced. Me: "someone was inside the room." Lakhe: "what?" Me: "someone, Masilakhe, keeps coming in here!! I didn't sleep here last night, I was in the lounge. Xandizongena to take a nap, that door is open! I closed it. Ndazolala. Now that I wake up, that curtain moved as if utyhalwa ngumoya." Lakhe: "maybe you're-" Me: "if you dare say I'm crazy!!!" Lakhe: "no baby. You're just tired and stressed." Me: "someone was here Lakhe. I could feel it." Lakhe: "baby. I know I left ndinomsindo izolo and a bit upset, I'm sorry, also There's no one here." he thought I was imagining things. Me: "I dreamt of him. Your brother." suddenly he kept quiet. Me: "wherever he is, usecamkwa manzi. And he doesn't want to be found. He says he'll be back on his own." Lakhe: "what?" he looked confused and I saw from the look on his face that kwamna kqala andiziva ndithini. Lakhe: "you dreamt that usecamkwa manzi and doesn't want to be found." Me: "yes. I know it doesn't make much sense-" Lakhe: "no it does actually. It makes perfect sense." ndiyabhidwa kengoku. Me: "Lakhe." Lakhe: "what??" Me: "yinton ngoku ingxaki?" Lakhe: "akhongxaki Siphosenkosi. Why do you think Kukho ingxaki?" there was definitely a problem. Bendisozela still but couldn't really sleep. Masilakhe went to shower. If he can be mad then I

can be mad. Xakukho argument qho funeke aphume yena endlini ingathi utshiswa sisihlangu? Ha.a kaloku. I lay my head on my pillow pushing my hand under it. My hand caught onto something.....

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Chapter 35

I pulled out a small paper and unfolded it. There was just a small white flower inside it. The paper had only one word on it. "STOP." that was it. I stared at it for a good 10 minutes because Lakhe came out the shower. He was curious but ezixelele akazothetha uzondilinda. Nam ke andizothetha engekabuzi. I got out of bed ndayibeka on the dresser next to me. Lakhe: "Uyaphi?" Me: "home." Lakhe: "home? Why?" I could see the panic in his eyes. Me: "the only that kept me here longer were the kids. Bazohamba notatabo. Nam I should get going." Lakhe: "just?" Me: "just what?" Lakhe: "you're just gonna leave?" Me: "ubucimba ndizohlala kude kuthini? Ndithini kwabazali bam?" Lakhe: "utata is here for the negotiations nje. My uncle is also coming down." Me: "which means I should be home." Lakhe: "baby." he sulked. Me: "hayi Lakhe tshin." I made the bed. When I stood up straight from bending down, I turned around and he was standing right behind me. He wasn't pleased. Me: "yinton ngok-" Lakhe: "yinton Le?" he held the paper and flower." Me: "I found it under my pillow." Lakhe: "Kwathini ungatsho?" Me: "its nothing-" Lakhe: "yeah but what does it mean? Stop what?" Me: "I don't know Lakhe!!" I screamed. He stared at me calmly. Lakhe: "kengoku ungxolela bani?" Me: "you're frustrating me." Lakhe: "I'm frustrating you?" he stepped closer to me as if there was anymore space. Lakhe: "I frustrate you now?" he said in a very low sarcastic voice. I brushed my hands down his chest, ndimjonge emehlweni. Me: "what is your issue?" Lakhe: "nguwe umntu with frustrations." Me: "you're always meddling. And probing. Sometimes its a little too much." Lakhe: "I'd promised your dad I'd take care of you." Me: "hmm..." Lakhe: "uyayazi lento uyenzayo....." Me: "ndizothini ungayazi...." he held my waist and picked me up. I wrapped my legs around his waist he climbed on the bed tucking me underneath him, kissing my lips and skin. He dragged off my leggings and underwear, holding my thighs apart. Me: "Lakhe.....baby?" his mouth was already devouring between my legs. I held his head trying to close my open mouth. I moaned his name as he sucked and licked on the clitoris. Me: "baby!!" he came up to my face and kissed me again, I held his dick in my hand massaging it. He groaned holding on to the sheets. Lakhe: "faka mntuwam." I pushed him over and climbed on top of him. I held it, pushing it inside me. It slid up into position. Lakhe: "ohhh.....myyy..." I lifted myself up and pushed it back in. Lakhe: "baaabbyy..." I upped my pace, bouncing my ass

on him. Lakhe: "yiima yimaa....wait baby." he held me down and breathed. Lakhe: "izondicithisa lento uyenzayo." Me: "yiyeke baby....please?" I breathed. In one split second move he flipped me over and I landed under him. He drilled in and out of me hungrily holding my body down. Me: "ooooh!!! Lakhe!!!!" my nails dug deep in his skin. Lakhe: "ooh. Baby wam.....I'm gonna cum...." I could feel the excitement inside me, the juices bubbling in me. He banged harder holding my body close. Me: "yeeesss!!!!" Lakhe: "fuuuck!" I wrapped my legs around him tighter and he came to a shuddering stop. Lakhe: "Spho.....sentliz....iyo.....yam." Releasing his everything in me. For a few minutes, we stayed in that position of intimacy. After some time he got up and pulled out slowly, esiyolanda i-towel. He wiped me and himself then planted a kiss on my pussy. Lakhe: "I love you." Me: "mna or yona?" he revealed a naughty smile. Me: "you're nasty." I got up to take a shower. Under the lukewarm water I was thinking and just day dreaming. Uqgiba kwam ndaphuma ndabuyela eroomini. Lakhe was on the bed, naked watching TV. Lakhe: "khawuzapha..." Me: "I have to get dressed and go..." Lakhe: "yima kaloku baby." Me: "ndimile nje. Ezi negotiations nizozenza phi? At the hotel conference centre?" Lakhe: "that isn't a bad idea actually." Me: "hayi kengoku Lakhe!" Lakhe: "yinton baby...I'll always be

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exclusive, therefore negotiations zam, will be in a conference room of my hotel. I'll talk to your dad." Me: "ningandiphambaneli ke mna uyeva?" he laughed. Lakhe: "you love the idea don't you?" Me: "what can I possibly like about it? Xandizoboniswa funeke ndize nge lift?" Lakhe: "precisely. Gqitywa kwayo Yonke lonto, we can have dinner at Tabu. I'll ask them to make a traditional meal fo-" Me: "that's not going to happen!! We're not doing my negotiations at a hotel. We're doing them at home!" Lakhe: "which home baby? Endlin ka tanci wakho?" Me: "argg. Don't." Lakhe: "babe. This is the modern times. Get with the program." Me: "my dad will never allow it." Lakhe: "we'll see about that." Me: "senizi friends ngoku?" Lakhe: "we're cool." I got dressed. Me: "I'll call you later. Please stay away from my dad." I yawned. Lakhe: "usozela?" Me: "I barely slept." Lakhe: "why?" Me: "hehake Masilakhe. You left here uqumbile, andiyazi noba ke ibiyi lullaby yakho for mna leyo." Lakhe: "lonto you're quite sarcastic these days." Me: "andiphinde ndithethe." Lakhe: "please stay one more night?" Me: "no Lakhe. Ambondicela ekhaya." Lakhe: "awungcole." Me: "ndigqibovasa?" Lakhe: "mxim." Me: "I'll call you when I'm there." Lakhe: "ndihamba nawe tshin." waphakama naye wanxiba. Me: "utatakho umshiya nabani? Your friend yena?" Lakhe: "akhomntu pha. They both left." Me: "oh." I took my bags to the car and he drove me to the hotel. Ufika kwethu ezam iibag ndazisa kwi room yam, then went up to my

parents' room. I found them sitting on the patio drinking tea. Me: "molweni." Mama: "hey. Look who's back." Khaya: "hello my angel." I hugged them both. They seemed so happy. Did I disturb something? Khaya: "guess what princess?" Me: "what's up tata. I'm bad at guessing." Khaya: "phof ke..... We finally got a house. Its beautiful and just enough." Me: "okay. Where?" Khaya: "its in Newton Park." Me: "when do we move in?" Khaya: "we have to finalize the sale first. I'm sure in a month. Bekunjani kwi trip yakho mntanam?" Me: "it was fine tata. Just a bit tired kodwa andikwazi ulala. Ndiphupha nakakubi." Khaya: "Iza...I'll help." he kissed mom's forehead. Ndiyayazi ebefuna uthetha privately. In my room, I lay on my tummy phezkwe bhedi. Tata rubbed my back and shoulders. Me: "is everything okay?" Khaya: "yes.....everything is fine. I'm just worried about you and your mother. Kutheni ingathi anisathethi nje?" Me: "akhonto irongo tata." Khaya: "u-sure?" Me: "yes dad.." Khaya: "I hope so. Maybe I'm just imagining things." Me: "ubuyile for i-check up for the heart palpitations?" Khaya: "hayi wethu....I don't feel them anymore." Me: "can you at least have it checked out ke tata?" Khaya: "I'll do it tomorrow. Get some rest okay?" Me: "okay. Enkosi tata." he left my room.

3 weeks later. Moving day. The house was a 4 bedroom with 2 bathrooms and one lounge. Ibintle and quite spacious. The furniture from our old house was transported to the new one early in the day. Umama notata had gone back to the old house in King to sort out the sale of yona. I on the other hand was the Tryphina of this one having to clean and tidy up. I was sooo tired by afternoon, I closed the entire house, locked it and climbed on the couch to take a nap. It felt like in no time at all, there was a knock on the door. I dragged myself up and to the door ndavula. Lakhe: "hey baby." he came inside the house wayohlala phantsi. I locked again ndabuyela kwi couch yam. Lakhe: "uhm....Spho?" Me: "I just want to sleep please?" Lakhe: "but I brought you red velvet cupcakes." he took one out and started eating. Me: "put in the fridge." I closed my eyes to prepare for my nap. Lakhe: "heh baby." Me: "a.a man Lakhe!" I snapped. Lakhe: "nditheni ngoku?" Me: "I'm trying to fucking sleep damn it!!!" Lakhe: "well damn then." he finally kept quiet. Ndakwazi ulala. I woke up some odd hours later ndinukiselwa kukutya kwe cephe. I was hungry but too lazy to get up. I finally gave in ndaye toilet kqala. After washing my hands I went to the kitchen. Lakhe:

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"Spho." iyawa yintoni ngoku?! He just crawls under my skin everytime esithi 'Spho' when did he become so dependent? Me: "Lakhe." Lakhe: "I made you supper. I hope you're hungry." Me: "I'm not now." Lakhe: "ndikwenze ntoni? Oko kwa last week ndixhaywa. Noba ndenza ntoni na its never good enough

for you! Now I've been patient for too long, you need to tell me ngoku if you don't want to be with me ndikuyeke! Andinomelana nokwenziwa i-mhumhu kaloku." Me: "I'm just tired Lakhe. And you're justsometimes.....you're too much." Lakhe: "so now I must be less? Months ago, you were pleading with me to be more open, namhlanje I'm too much?" I hugged him. Me: "khathule." Lakhe: "now I'm confused." Me: "just be quiet." Lakhe: "cela sitye ke...I'm starving." Me: "ok." we sat at the dining room table to eat our supper. The house was quiet, just the way I wanted it. My parents were scheduled to be back tomorrow, I'd called today to check if kuhamba kakuhle na and a few more things needed their attention. After our supper, I washed the dishes and he cleaned the kitchen. The lobola negotiations were to start in a few days, I was eavesdropping ngoku bethetha nomama utata. I was a bit nervous, that the two families were going to meet for the first time. I don't know if they would vibe. It took my dad and Lakhe a rocky start. I know his dad was great, but what about his uncle? Yeyi. Zange ndabhidwa. Anyway, bingafuni mna. Lakhe: "love. Can we set a date please?" Me: "a date? For what?" Lakhe: "our wedding." Me: "now?" Lakhe: "ewe...I want a sunny atmosphere, enendawo epholileyo. Kind of like between summer and autumn." Me: "I see." Lakhe: "maybe we could have an intimate wedding at the Maldives. Then spend the rest of our honeymoon there." Me: "we have a lot of family and friends nje. Bazofika njani pha." Lakhe: "we don't have that many friends baby. My family will find their way there. We'll take care of yours, and our friends. Just 30 people tops." Me: "30???" Can't we do this in Durban bab-" Lakhe: "no. We're having an island wedding." Me: "I'm beginning to think this is more of Your wedding than OURS. First it was the venue ye-Lobola negotiations, now its the venue of our wedding." Lakhe: "you're not even interested in this wedding. Maybe if you had an input, it would be OURS." Me: "I just said Durban-" Lakhe: "I lived in Durban and LEFT. Why would I go and get married there?" Me: "Lakhe, an island wedding is an unnecessary expense." Lakhe: "answer me this, uyafuna utshata kwi island? White sand....crystal blue water running at your feet, short white lace summer dress....the sun kissing your skin." Me: "okay, okay! It sounds nice. But what about the traditional wedding?" Lakhe: "sinoske siqale ngayo ke. Right after the negotiations." Me: "woah....wait." Lakhe: "why wait?" Me: "why are you such in a hurry?" Lakhe: "awufuni unditshata Sphosenkosi?" Me: "I do...." Lakhe: "then? What's the problem? After the negotiations, we plan our traditional wedding, which will probably take one month." Me: "but if we start with the traditional wedding, I'll have to be a makoti and stay that way for a few months." Lakhe: "you'll be taking it off in a month, we need to have our white ceremony and honeymoon the next month." Me: "how about we consult our parents first. Masive kubo bathini." Lakhe: "plus we could do a bit of island

hopping. After Maldives maybe go to Bali and probably Fiji, or even Bora Bora." Me: "or home. Island hopping won't be such a great idea. Bali is in Indonesia, Laucala Island in Fiji and Bora Bora in French Polynesia. This is flying across the globe to 3 destinations spending more time in the air than on land." Lakhe: "I'm more concerned about how you know all these places." Me: "that's not the point. Choose one island, and one country very close to it for a chilled baecation." Lakhe: "okay baby. Its fine. Where is this Laucala island situated then?" Me: "Fiji is in the South pacific. Laucala island is the resort where you can book exclusively private accommodation." Lakhe: "nice. And Bora Bora?" Me: "in the Pacific ocean." Lakhe:

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"accommodation wise?" Me: "the four seasons resort. It offers different types of accommodation. There's the overwater bungalow suite, the beach front villas estates with private pools, the pool cabanas and only one private island.." Lakhe: "baby, siye Bora Bora." he concluded. Me: "are you sure?" Lakhe: "we'll do more research. So tell me.....how do you know all this?" Me: "you think I would let you pick a honeymoon destination by yourself? Usile." Lakhe: "so wena une interest kwi honeymoon more than the wedding?" Me: "I just don't want a big wedding baby. Nothing too extravagant and over the top." Lakhe: "masiyotshata e-court ke and leave for our honeymoon. Whatever makes my wifey happy." Me: "uphambene kengoku." Lakhe: "then start planning ke sisi." Me: "fine."

The first day of my lobola negotiations was a bit tough on me mntu ungazi niks. Everytime I tried asking a question, I'd be shut down by umama. Anyway, we were up at 6 and I started cooking while she cleaned the house plus the yard. Zingi came to help me along with another "friend" of mine uZintle. Bendiqala shame umbona I'm not sure how close we were prior my accident. Anyway, she showed me pictures of us together on holiday in Durban and some few more snippets of our times here in PE. She had relocated for two years in Dubai so that's why ebengekho apha. After we were done cooking we went to the bedroom to get me dressed. I didn't see the whole fuss at all. Zingi saw the fuss, she saw it in the comrades marathon reaching for the finish line. She saw it in the car that chased the orange light at robots and still passed just before it turns red. She was the time keeper in the race and the traffic cop on the road. Zintle on the other hand was like me, she didn't understand the whole fuss. Zintle: "babe, just wear what you're comfortable in. Add a little style." Zingi: "oh? Because you're married?" Zintle: "oh please Zingi. We all know how bitter and miserable you are in that marriage. Quit fronting." Zingi: "how da-" Me: "OKAY! Can we just relax for a minute?" Mama:

"kwenzeka ntoni apha? Why aren't you dressed?" Me: "I'm about to mama." ndakhupha my olive green bandage dress. Mama: "Spho, awuzonxiba ilokhwe ezokufinca apha." Me: "ayindifinci nje mama Lena." Mama: "iphi Le i-navy? Unxibe ne jersey kunye neqhiya. Ungaphumi kule room." what if I need to pee? Mama: "uyandiva Spho?" Me: "ewe mama." I got dressed. She went to the kitchen. Ugqiba kwam unxiba, Zingi helped me with iqhiya yam. Ndikwazelaphi uthwala mna? Uwoah. I saw myself as Lakhe's wife, yes. But Le process Yonke scared me to death. Especially the traditional wedding. Yima, yinton Le ndizay'tyiswa? Why? Zingi: "bhabha....are you nervous?" Me: "not really. Ndine worry yomtshato." Zintle: "everything will be fine love! Just know that you're forfeiting your freedom. All is well." Zingi: "Zintle, yazi uyi influence emdaka?" Zintle: "please don't get me started Zingi." my phone rang and I answered it ndabashiya bexoxa. I stood by the window. Me: "my love." Lakhe: "hey baby wam. Unjani?" Me: "I'm good. Unjani wena?" Lakhe: "nervous. I hope zizogqitywa namhlanje yazi." Me: "apparently you're not allowed in." Lakhe: "I know...I wish Sandile was here with me." Me: "its gonna be okay sthandwasam. He'll show up soon." Lakhe: "I hope I withdrew enough cash." Me: "I don't even want to know what enough is." Lakhe: "yoh baby. Awuna idea how quick I want this to end. I want you as my wife qha. Thank Goodness ootata bavumile siqale nge white wedding." Me: "but that means short honeymoon." Lakhe: "we have the rest of our lives to honeymoon. As long as ungowam qha. I love you so much." Me: "I don't." Lakhe: "ndiyayazi kaloku ukuba uyandi pretender wena. You're just with me because of my penis." I laughed. Me: "uyadika vha?" Lakhe: "admit it." Me: "I'm not admitting anything." Lakhe: "sisi, Thetha inyani. Its the penis." Me: "its not! You're such an

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idiot." I giggled. Lakhe: "I know it is. Awundifuni tu. You've been fighting me these past weeks. Iphele nemini ungandihoyi tu. Uzivezile shame awunalo uthando lwam." Me: "kamandi ke akhange ndikufihlele. Uphi utatakho and uncle?" Lakhe: "nabaya beme ngase motweni balindele mna." Me: "Uyaphi ke wena?" Lakhe: "kanti kuyiwaphi?" Me: "how many times must you be told, you're not allowed?" Lakhe: "ayikho lonto. If abafuni ndihambe nabo bazothi chuu ngenyawo ke. Aziyi ndawo ezimoto without my driving. Ndihleli phezkwe ztixo." Me: "can you stop being stubborn please?" Lakhe: "it doesn't make sense-" Me: "your father has been through this, he knows what's best." Lakhe: "shame." he really missed his brother. The only person that spoke sense to him. Me: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "sthandwa sentliziyo yam. Abacingi bandishiye ndodwa kulendlu." Me: "ubuthe ufuna zikhaw'leziswe ke ezingxoxo. Kodwa zibanjwe nguwe." 'Mpinga! Masambe kwedin! Yeey uyahlupha man! Yeses!' I heard in the background. Lakhe: "see? It worked.

See you in a bit honey. Love you." I smiled. Me: "I love you too baby." I hung up the phone. I couldn't describe the butterflies in my stomach. My heart felt such warmth. Was I dreaming? This was really my future husband? Zintle: "hmm.....someone is in love." Zingi: "what a smile..." Me: "hayi suka nitheni na nina?" Zintle: "hayi sisi akhange uzibone oko uncume uyi cake kula window. I so wish to see this Mr Lakhe. Or should I say Lucky? Because my friend is a catch kaloku, she's beautiful, she is caring, very smart, did I mention gorgeous? Angak'linge ke andenze ndiyokhupha i-bazooka yam lomfana. Ndisene bullet zika Simphiwe." Zingi: "he's not worth your energy tshomi. Ela twetwe lendoda alinazo nentloni. Lisahlala kulandlu yayithengwe ngu bhabha. Imagine?" Zintle: "tshini!! Ungamkhuphi nje peto? Yoh! Ulunge gqithi wena. Ngendamgxothe kaloku mna mntaka Somnci andinalo nexeshalakhe." bendibava bethetha and all but ingqondo yam, ibiku Lakhe. I really missed him. Bendimgqibele ngalamini ebezile then he went to Cape Town for a meeting wabuya waya eDurban for his property ebeqala ubuya izolo late. Again I won't be seeing him today and I don't know until when kodwa into endiyaziyo was that ndiyamkhumbula qha. Most importantly the penis. Lol. Zintle: "hayi ndincamile mna. Umntu uhlale naye angabikho ngoku ekhona. Mandibhidwe." Zingi: "bekunjani eDubai? Did you meet anyone?" Zintle: "I did. Its nothing serious though." Zingi: "ngubani igamalakhe?" Zintle: "Ahmed. He's some senior engineer pha. Ungandibuzi nam andiyazi ndabona nje nge Lamborghini emnyama. Kaloku abekho oojikeleza pha. And awuzomiselwa yi Conquest. Send'tshuba i-levels." I giggled. Zingi: "okay. So awukatshintshi. Usathanda imali nangoku." Zintle: "ewe tshin tshomi. Love won't pay my bills, ndiyoy'thini into yo'hugger iManager yakwa Edgars for ubhatala account yam?" Zingi: "kuthen une account yakwa Edgars wena kodwa uhlala eDubai?" Zintle: "for oo-sister bam kaloku. Ngabo abantu abasebenzisa la account. That is beside the point. You can't pay accounts with kisses." Me: "kodwa uyaphangela njena." she stared at me. Zintle: "says the woman who's about to marry one of the richest men in the country. Thula sisi. Thula. Yes, Zingi told me he's wealthy, akanaye utanci? I like my men well brewed and mature." Me: "okay, this conversation is taking a turn for the nasty and I am not going to be part of it." I heard a car door closing outside. Me: "Shhh....they're here." my mom came into the room. The only people in the lounge were my dad and uncle. That's all we had, same as Lakhe. I'm not sure if uzongena yena or what? The way angeva ngayo lomfana bethuna. Mama: "don't be nervous mntanam. Everything is going to be okay. Your father and uncle are sure of what they're doing." Me: "nyani mama?? Have they done this before?" Mama: "okay Miss Sarcasm. Sit." I sat down. Then heard yelling from the gate. Baphola sana abasekhaya abantu.

Akunyakazanga nomnye because I could hear my dad and uncle talking and laughing in the lounge. I was

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panicking. When umama wasn't looking I quickly peeped out the window, it was only his uncle and father. Where was my he? Inoba after an hour, kwaqalwa uphendulwa. The negotiations were starting, I hope to a good note....

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Chapter 36

Finally!!!!!! My negotiations were done! It really took a day? I thought it would take forever but luckily the families actually vibed. We had a celebratory lunch where my dad invited Lakhe in finally because ubrothers ebequmbile that he wasn't allowed in. The two were growing really close and sometimes it scared me a bit. I went to make refreshments for the family after dinner, utata wandithuma to Greenacres to fetch a cake with Lakhe. We left together ingathi sizi teenagers that were given permission by their parents. Lakhe: "umfazi wam." he kissed my hand as he drove to the mall. Me: "haha....not yet bhuti." Lakhe: "awulambanga?" Me: "we just ate baby. Ulambile wena?" he nodded. Lakhe: "bendi excited kakhulu, I couldn't eat." Me: "I'll make you something at home. Sithunyiwe ngoku." Lakhe: "didn't they order my cupcakes? Sizothenga Milk tart ne?" Me: "ugqibele nin uye gym'in?" Lakhe: "heee. Uzama ukuthi andikho healthy kengoku?" Me: "I just asked a simple question." Lakhe: "I know what you're implying. You think I'm getting fat." Me: "there is no such thing." we arrived at the mall and walked to the bakery sayolanda cake. We left again for home. He was on the phone with one of his partners for the hotel. I hadn't been hearing much since ngoku besiphuma emall now that we were in the car, he connected it and I could hear the entire conversation. Lakhe: "No sir, that will not be possible at all. I'm getting married and will not be able to purchase more shares than I already have." Partner: "but Sobz, you can afford this." Lakhe: "money is not the problem here Michael. Time is. The only thing I can do is find you someone to buy your shares." Michael: "I don't trust anyone else but you." Lakhe: "Mike, let me call you back some time later today okay?" Michael: "okay." he hung up. Lakhe sighed. Me: "problem?" Lakhe: "Michael wants to sell, he's moving his family to Germany. Akamfuni omnye umntu. He just wants me to buy. I can't buy because it will mean another load of responsibility that I don't need. I would....." he looked at me. Lakhe: "yeah. This could work." Me: "why are you looking at me like I'm the last piece of fried chicken?" Lakhe: "I could buy

from him, and sign them over to you." Me: "no." Lakhe: "yes." Me: "you already gave me half your big company! Now your shares kwenye business yakho?" Lakhe: "baby...you won't have to work a day in your life, just make sure the hotel is in good shape, check in on the books, do the service things. Yeah?" Me: "that's sounds like working everyday to me." Lakhe: "babes, one day I'm not gonn be here. Ndimdala. We both know this, you're gonna need financial independence. This will be so much better for you if you have things already in your name. Either your MD position, or the hotel. Choose." Me: "why don't you sign Michael's hotel shares to Sandile?" Lakhe: "Sandile? Pssss. He wants nothing to do with that hotel. Or anything else in that matter that binds his name in a contract. This you know." Me: "just try him." Lakhe: "fine. If he comes back-" Me: "when he comes back." Lakhe: "When he comes back. I'll ask him. After a good ass whooping." Me: "okay Tiger. Calm down." he parked the car in our yard. Me: "why ungazange undixelele ukuba utatakho was a boxing champ?" Lakhe: "uwoah. He told you that? Never misses the opportunity to be a star." Me: "you're jealous of your dad?" Lakhe: "I'm not jealous. I think its quite ridiculous to be truly honest. A grown man, running around in boxers, punching another. Its insanity." Me: "its a beautiful sport." Lakhe: "which I don't like." Me: "but he was good at it. A heavyweight champion baby." Lakhe: "yeah...he was the best." Me: "and wena? Which sports did you partake in?" Lakhe: "chess." Me: "that is not a sport." Lakhe: "oh? Because boxing is?" I giggled. Me: "you are so impossible." Lakhe: "I played rugby, never liked soccer, but I don't mind watching it. I also played tennis-" Me: "you played Tennis?" Lakhe: "Yes. I played

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tennis." Me: "and you skipped ballet?" he frowned. I laughed uncontrollably. He got out the car with the cake. Me: "baby! I'm joking." I followed him to the house. Me: "Lakhe. I'm sorry." Mama: "umenzeni omnye umntana?" Me: "I was just joking mama. Lakhe?" he ignored me wayohlala koo-tata. I helped uZingi with the dishes. The Sobukwe's were leaving soon. It was nice having them over. Even better that my father loved them. Tanci was cool with everyone bendingenayo worry yakhe. Just that it was a bit weird for me ekhona endlini katata after what they've done nomama. If tata had caught them before why was he so forgiving? I would've cut someone's throat and left no witnesses. Rob and utanci ka Lakhe said their goodbyes. Lakhe was walking with my dad bencokola. He gave me the look that signaled war. Lakhe that is. Was he trying to turn me against my dad? Haha, good luck soldier. After they were done Lakhe walked out the house. Mama: "khapha omnye Spho. Yuh awuse krwada." Me: "hayi wethu mama uhamba notatakhe mos akazolahleka." enyinto u-childish man, kuyadlalwa mos. Plus I said sorry

ebefuna ndithini? Mxim. My friends also left ndashiyeka nabazali bam. Which quickly got awkward for me because tanci was still here and by the looks of heavy things akahambi. Me: "I have a bit of a headache. I'm going to lie down." take note of the second last word of the sentence. Mama: "okay mntanam, awuy'funi i-Adcodol?" didn't get it? Wow. Me: "ha.a mama. I'll be fine." I went to my room, closing the door behind me ndakhwela phezkwe bhedi. I opened my Macbook, checked my emails and browsed the internet for wedding dresses. Since we were getting married on an island, I couldn't wear something really long. So instead, I'd have to wear a short dress. I can already see it in my mind. I loved it!! I took my phone and dialed Lakhe's number. Me: "baby!" Lakhe: "what." Me: "look, I'm sorry about earlier, it was a joke. Also, I don't have time to dwell on that, I think I have the perfect dress in mind! It would be great for a beach wedding. Imagine, you and I under our white linen bridal arch. The water running up to our feet. You're dressed in white shorts and a white shirt. I'd be in a short white dress." Lakhe: "and the pastor should also be wearing shorts otherwise his pants would get wet." Me: "haha. I don't know about that. I'm looking through short wedding dresses now." Lakhe: "hm....nam I must look for white shorts now. We leave for Maldives in a month. I'm calling the wedding planner that side to start the planning." Me: "wait....we're sticking to Maldives? I thought Bora Bora. Or Seychelles." Lakhe: "yoh...bendithe Bora Bora kanene. We'll do our second honeymoon kwezinye man baby." Me: "a month is too short baby." Lakhe: "no its not. Its 30 days actually. Very long time. You book the tickets. Sort out your list of guests and email it to me before ulale. Only 15 people." Me: "I don't think I know 15 people but okay." Lakhe: "people who will be available ke Spho. Andifuni upanic'kelwa ngumntu all way across the globe esithi funeka aye emsebenzin." Me: "okay. I hear you." Lakhe: "can you come over tonight?" Me: "how?" Lakhe: "oh you know.....out the back door xabelele. You'll be back in the morning before sunrise." Me: "fine but only xabelele." Lakhe: "okay ke baby." I hung up. My heart was racing. Heeee! I was going to sneak out? Ndimdala ndimngaka. It was late evening and I knew ukuba bazoyolala soon aba. Especially umama kuba kaloku Kukho utanci, then utata since ezophangela Ksasa. I waited. I don't know ulala nini ke u-uncle. I don't remember his schedules. In a while, I heard umama eyolala. Then soon after utata followed. Uncle stayed in the lounge. I waited for about 30 minutes. Lomntu uzixelele akayi ndawo. I got dressed in skinny jeans, a vest and a sweater. Ndachwechwa ukuya e-kitchen. He didn't see or hear me. The only thing on was the TV anyway. I went to the main switch and plucked it down ndabuyela eroomin yam nge speed sika sathana. Lucky for me, he didn't go to the kitchen I just heard his bedroom door open. And another door opened. My ears

were on high alert now. So I coughed and yawned. Both doors closed simultaneously. I waited again. In the next 30 minutes. Lakhe texted he was outside. Ndatsho uphuma as quietly as possible. I ran to the car ndakhwela a little out of breath. The adrenaline rush! I told Lakhe about my escape and he laughed. Lakhe: "ustout yazi. Ude ucime switch." Me: "I don't know why utanci engagodukanga bonanje. Its really unsettling." Lakhe: "your dad isn't stupid." Me: "did he say something to you?" Lakhe: "no. Awulambanga? I don't think There's food in the house." Me: "I'm fine."

We arrived in Kragga Kamma and went straight to bed. All of a sudden, ndaphelelwa ngumdla. Not owakhe, just everything else. I wanted to be with him but Andifuni. Ingaske ndibe ndodwa. This was so damn confusing not to mention frustrating. I undressed and got into bed. Lakhe: "ndenzeni ngoku?" Me: "what?" Lakhe: "you look pissed off and I'm not sure what it is I did wrong." Me: "do you always have to do something wrong Dan? Can't I just be ugly in peace." Lakhe: "I should've been quiet." Me: "I'm hungry." Lakhe: "ufuna utya ntoni?" Me: "I don't know..." Lakhe: "take aways or home made?" Me: "take aways." Lakhe: "Steers? McDonald's? KFC?" Me: "the wings at kfc, a Big Mac and McFlurry." Lakhe: "okay. I'll go buy. Ndiyeza." Me: "please hurry." Lakhe: "okay baby." he took his keys and left the house. I was really hungry now. Yangathi akasabuyi. I don't know how long it was but I eventually fell asleep. He woke me up when he took off his jacket and his phone fell. Me: "where have you been?" Lakhe: "Humewood. Naku kutya. Still hungry?" Me: "No." I immediately regretted it. Me: "I am hungry, just too lazy to get up." he brought the food to me. Me: "I'm sorry I'm such a nag." Lakhe: "you're my nag. You know I'll do anything for you no matter what time of day or night it is. As long as you're happy." Me: "I don't know if I'm happy. I'm always grumpy and annoyed." Lakhe: "you're happy....just a little crazy." he kissed my forehead. Lakhe: "itya mntuwam. I fell asleep on two drive thru's for this food. You better finish it." I ate my burger and chips ndagqibezela nge wings. By the time I was done, he was long snoring next to me. I got under blankets and cuddled him. Me: "ndiyabulela sthandwa Sam. I love you." I kissed him. Lakhe: "ndiyaniithanda nam baby." Me: "ngubani kanti omnye." he was already snoring again. Me: "Masilakhe!" voicemail. Uwoah. Mxim.

The next morning I was brought breakfast in bed. I went to brush my teeth ndazoty. Lakhe had his fruit salad next to me while watching me destroy this plate full of kilo's. Lakhe: "your dad is at work now. Kushiyeke umamakho endlin uzothi uvelaphi ? I tried waking you up and you threatened to bury me in the garden so ndakuyeka." Me: "hayi wethu. Ndizobona xandipha ba

ndithini." Lakhe: "you still have some of your clothes here from joburg. We could go to work, ubuyele kokwenu in the afternoon." Me: "oh so ndithi ndihambe before everyone woke up. You so sneaky." Lakhe: "ndifuze wena." after breakfast, we watched a bit of TV ndahamba ndayo vasa. I came back to him still watching TV, kwafuneka ndiyicime before aphakame ayovasa. I made the bed and tidied the room ndaphuma ndaya kitchen still wearing my gown. I loaded the dishes into their machine, switched it on, loaded the soap and let it do the work. I cleaned the kitchen also, swept and mopped the floor. He didn't have a regular mop anyway, it was the one that soaks up water. Newer version of floorwizpro. The kitchen was clean. I had to get into the dining room. Cleaning was a way for me to let loose and think. I enjoyed it because it was quiet time. Same as cooking. Sometimes ndiyonqena yes, but most of the time, I'm game. I wiped the glass table, the chairs. I swept the floor, going to get that super mop again. I walked back to the lounge, a little tired now and dizzy. I fondled my way to the lounge, it

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was quite a simple straight way, I went around the couch that had its back facing me and I flopped into and sighed. After a good minute of trying to regulate my breathing, I realized I wasn't the one breathing. Actually, I could feel another presence somewhere around me. Their eyes piercing at me. It suddenly became cold. Ndagodola ngaphakathi. Please Lord let it be Lakhe. He is being awkward again. I promise not to be mad. Slowly, I began to open my eyes which were looking straight across the room where Lakhe should appear since esuka kwi bathroom. This presence was seated right next to me. Dark and cold as death. From the corner of my eye, I could see the form of someone's body covered in black. How did I not see this before? Oh wait, I was acting blind, walking into the lounge with my eyes closed. I turned my head around to look at it.....

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Chapter 37

I screamed my lungs out! Me: "LAKHE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" I cried jumping off the couch. I stumbled on the table, scraping my knee. I could not stop screaming. My own noise was tearing my ears. Lakhe picked me up from the floor trying to calm me down. I could feel that he was numb and shocked by what was sitting on our couch. Lakhe: "Iza Sphosenkosi. Come baby....I...." he took me to the bedroom. I was shaking out of my skin. Who would do such a thing? Lakhe got on the phone. Lakhe: "Tololo, khazapha bra yam. Uze ne skeem." he hung up and hugged me close to him. Lakhe: "I'm so sorry baby.." I could

barely say a word. How could I? Lakhe: "I don't know who that is and how he got there olahlobo.....uxolo mntuwam." everytime I closed my eyes, I saw the dead body sitting next to me. His body covered in black plastic, his face peeling off, his mouth open and eyes half shut. I got up and ran to the bathroom, throwing up in the toilet. I stayed in the bathroom for a while feeling nauseas. Lakhe: "izonxiba baby. Its cold here." he picked me up and flushed the toilet ndayonxiba. I washed my mouth then stuck by his side. His phone rang. Lakhe: "hlala apha. I'll be back just now." Me: "no..." Lakhe: "baby, funekile ndisuse lanto pha before it starts to rot." Me: "its him..." Lakhe: "who?" Me: "the man that raised me." Lakhe: "what!?! Spho....I'm confused here. Isn't Khaya your dad?" I tried to wrap my head around it and I couldn't. Lakhe: "baby Thetha nam.....what happened out there?" Me: "I was cleaning the kitchen. Then the dining room. I felt dizzy and went to sit down with my eyes closed. Did you call the police?" Lakhe: "we're not calling the police. Uthi this man raised you, how?" Me: "Khaya and Zama adopted me after I was....." I breathed. He waited patiently. Me: "after I was abused, I ran away from home." Lakhe: "this man abused you?" Me: "yes...." we stayed quiet for a very long time. Then he kissed my cheek. Lakhe: "let me fix this. Okay? I won't be long." he walked out the room. Lakhe: "Tololo!!" Tol: "Sho boss." Lakhe: "please remove this. Uphi lamjita wase gravini?" Tol: "ukhona boss. Use span." Lakhe: "call him, tell him to dig up u-number 12 sibenogqumelela lento." Tol: "Sho boss. Ngenani majita." I stood in the passageway. The men came inside the house. How? They carried the stiff cold body out of the house. A part of me cringed at the brutality of his death but a large part of me was relieved. The person that destroyed my childhood was dead. Who couldve killed him? How did they get in the house? But most importantly, WHY. Lakhe: "baby, ndithe stay in the room. You don't need to see this." Me: "why aren't we calling the police?" Lakhe: "we have a dead body in our house Sphosenkosi. Do you really want the police involved? Nobody will believe you or me." Me: "how do your dodgy friends come in the locked gate?" Lakhe: "Tololo has a remote for the gate. He takes care of things xandingekho." Me: "then how did this body end up here?" Lakhe: "I don't know Spho. I wish I did but I don't." oh shit..... I stepped away from him. Lakhe: "what is it..." Me: "Oh My God....." Lakhe: "Spho!" Me: "what have I done." Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi!!!" he grabbed me quickly. Afraid I was going to escape. I couldn't breath properly. What the hell have I done!! Lakhe: "kwenzeka ntoni ngoku?" Me: "I killed him...." Lakhe: "W H A T T T!!!!!!!" he shook my body. Lakhe: "Spho!!!! What did you say?" Me: "its I killed him..." I cried. He let go of me and stepped away endijamele. Lakhe: "you killed a..... man?" Me: "I didn't mean to tell him.....I'm so sorry." I broke down to the floor. Tololo: "boss? Huzet nou?" Lakhe: "Hamba Tololo. Call me once you're

done, I'll sort you out." Tol: "sure boss." he left the house. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi. I need you to make sense. You killed him? How? When?" Me: "its all my fault!!" Lakhe: "so you didn't kill him directly but paid someone to? Please make sense!!" I tried getting up from the cold tiles. I was shaking.

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Lakhe: "baby, I would never judge you. This will die down soo.....I mean, it will passuhm. Be over soon. I've sorted it out and....." Me: "Sandile." Lakhe looked around. Lakhe: "where is he? What about him?" Me: "I told Sandile." Lakhe: "what did you tell him?" Me: "I told Sandile about him....the man that abused me. He said he'd never let anyone hurt me ever again." Lakhe: "are you fucking serious!!! Out of all people in the world you choose to tell Sandile! A lunatic??? Wow!" I wiped my tears with my sleeves, sobbing. Lakhe: "I'm sorry baby....I apologize." he sighed and hugged me. Lakhe: "its not your fault. You didn't kill this man. Just that.....well.....Sandile reacts very differently to ordinary human beings. He's not 100%sane. Which explains, the physical proof of death." somebody should've told me that Sandile was crazy. Mentally unstable actually. Why bring a dead body as evidence? Lakhe: "let me make you some chamomile tea." he held my hand to the kitchen. Lakhe: "my kitchen smells so nice and clean. Its so refreshing." he kissed my forehead. I was still a bit shaken, every few seconds I had to look over my shoulder and around me. Lakhe: "baby. Its over now. You're safe." Me: "why are you so calm to see a dead body in your house!" Lakhe: "I'm nothing near calm Spho but one of us needs to comfort you! You're not okay, I'm doing the best I can to make sure you're better! I can handle my emotions and will deal with them accordingly. Me: "Please tell him to stop....please baby, I don't want to see any more." Lakhe: "if only we could find him sthandwasam. If only..."

During the weekend I was home with my family. I had been home since that Wednesday. Lakhe had slept at his hotel. We just met at work and worked because things were going to start falling apart soon if we carried on relaxing. I didn't tell my parents anything. I knew they would freak out, which would prove my dad right in his initial theory that Lakhe is a criminal. Which he wasn't. Saturday late afternoon, Zingi and Zintle invited me for movies which I wasn't in the mood for. Khaya: "my princess." I looked at him. Khaya: "kwenzeka ntoni ngawe? You've barely said a full sentence since the day after your negotiations. Did something happen? Nilwile noLakhe?" I shook my head. Me: "just busy with work tata." Khaya: "no Spho. Something is wrong.... I can see it in your eyes. Its almost as though you see a ghost everyday." I swallowed. Mama: "honey, are you having second thoughts in marrying Lakhe." Me: "I don't know ma." Khaya: "is it something he did?" I shook my

head. Mama: "mntanam, akukho lula emtshatweni. You can't run everytime There's a problem. You have to face matters with your husband nithethe." Khaya: "I'm always here for you my angel." Me: "enkosi tata." they looked at each other. Khaya: "when I spoke to uLakhe izolo, he was like this naye. Almost as though kunento efihlwayo. Sphosenkosi, are you pregnant?" Mama: "awww my baby!!" Me: "I'm not pregnant." Khaya: "There's no need to be afraid love. Why ningasixelelanga?" Me: "bec-" Mama: "I'm going to be a grandma!" Me: "mama!" Khaya: "it would be nice having a baby in the house." Me: "dad. I'm not pregnant." Mama: "did you take a test?" Me: "I don't have to mama. We're not there yet. I'm not having a baby yet. I just some-" a knock on the door disturbed me. I hope ibingengo tanci bonanje. Seriously I don't understand where he purchases the liver to show face apha after what he'd done. I went to open the door. Mama: "okay ke mntanam." I could hear her whispering with utata. I opened the door. Zingi: "heyyy!" they came inside. Zintle: "molweni mama. Ninjani?" Mama: "siphilile girls ninjani nina?" Zingi: "siright mama. Sizoboleka lentombazana for the weekend. Kudala sizama umkhupha as girls but she just doesn't want." Khaya: "that is a lovely idea. Kodwa I hope aniyosela." Zintle: "no tata. Just dinner and a movie then sibuyele endlinam." Khaya: "okay. Spfo needs some

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fresh air." Mama: "ambonxiba sisi." I went to my bedroom and texted my fiance. "Help me." he responded quickly: "what's happening? Uphi?" Me: "double Z is here for a girls night out. I'm tired. Please kidnap me." Lakhe: "have a meeting at 7 till around 9. Will kidnap you when I'm done vha." Me: "ok ke." Lakhe: "try and enjoy yourself." I took out jeans and a loose white shirt ndanxiba. Tucking the shirt in. The faded blue jeans were a tight fit. I wore the black studded Louboutins. Took my bag, wallet, phone and charger. Zintle: "what's this?" Me: "what?" Zintle: "hayi ntombazana. Kushushu phandle uzozitixela nge jean? Ha.a sisi. Uphi u-short? A dress?" Me: "Zintle, my parents are out there." Zintle: "and they don't seem to mind me. Or Zingi. Why uzenza umakhulu? You're still single my love, the minute umfundisi esithi 'I now pronounce you Husband and Wife,' is the minute you'll start going out in jeans. Okwangoku, marital status? Single mntase." she looked through my wardrobe. She found a white two piece. High waist shorts and a tight crop vest. Zintle: "this is so perfect!" Me: "no it isn't." Zintle: "urrrggg! You are such a granny! Ubuzithengela bani kanti? And this?" the black short jumpsuit I wore when Lakhe proposed to me. Me: "I can't wear that again. Caba qho xandiphuma ndaziwa ngalo look." Zintle: "fine. This?" short red dress. Me: "I don't feel like wearing a dress." Zintle: "you are impossible. With a beautiful body. Sufficient curves, flat stomach and still...you are impossible!!" Zingi:

"what's the issue?" Me: "ufuna ndiveze ithanga." Zingi: "and the problem is? Be quick, Fez is waiting for us outside." Me: "kuthen engangeni?" Zintle: "she's afraid of your parents." Me: "why?" Zintle: "you'll know soon enough." Zingi: "nantsi Le jumpsuit. Nxiba yona. Just don't change your shoes." Me: "no. Not again." I found a navy blue one similar to the black jumpsuit but this one.....it had the Rihanna shoulders. It had puffs but the cool sharp type. I changed my black studs to red stilleto. I went to do my make up. The girls fixed my room and we were good to go. Me: "let's go. Xasiphuma, Sibe quick, very quick singabaniki xesha lobuza." Zintle: "sure." we strutted out the room. Me: "ndiphumile guys." Khaya: "please be safe!" he yelled from the lounge. Khaya: "Spho!" Me: "yes tata. We'll be safe." Khaya: "undisendele message." Me: "I will tata." we left the house sayokhwela kwi Audi A1 ka Fez.

Fez: "nantso i-gurrrll eruyyt! Ibashaya ngesichathulo siku Guisey'sey. Iya'banyisah!" okay, someone forgot to tell me Fez was gay? Nice. So much for 'she' Me: "haha. Khayeke wethu. Unjani Fez?" Fez: "ndiyaphila ntombi UThixo undigcinile nakwezi bulalayo senditshuba ndim lo ndisay'qhuba i-happiness akhonto. Wena? U-good?" Me: "I'm good. Kuyiwaphi?" he started or should I say she? Anyway, he drove the car. Fez: "side sathini girls? Is it Cubana or what?" Zintle: "let's just go to Zest for dinner then have drinks at Balizza then turn up in Cubana." Me: "how about not dinner at Zest? Let's just do Finnezz for dinner and pre drinks." Zingi: "why?" Me: "Lakhe is having his monthly meet, greet and eat there. I don't want to be like I'm spying on him since last month bendiyawa khona with my whole family." Fez: "okay, Finnezz it is." he drove to Humerail, parked at Finnezz sayongena phakathi. It was still relaxed and chilled wethu, we got a table outside then ordered. Fez: "SO. Masiqale ngosisi womtshato. Ithini into? Details mfazi? The venue? The date! Oh my goodness the theme? Funeke ndiyothungisa soon kaloku. Yoh akasemhle lamfana ujonge apha. Thetha sisi, ungayihoyi Le ize caleni.. Look at his jaws." I laughed. Me: "we haven't decided on the date, still fighting about the venue. The theme is all white beach wear though." Fez: "perfect! Ndizofaka i-bikini yam and sip on a cocktail xa umfundisi ethetha." Zintle: "do they make your size?" we laughed. Fez: "uyi pipi yomntu yazi. Ipipi ewileyo encinci yogqiba ya-shrinka yali sende. Sies." Zintle was laughing too hard to even care. Our

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drinks came first. Zingi: "I wonder ngubani lomntu bawo." Fez sipped on his raw vodka and ice. Fez: "ayingo Craig tshomi? Thiza undiza kwelicala lidumbisa indlebe la tata! I mean really now." Zingi: "ebe right nje tshomi uCraig kwaske Kwathini?" Fez: "heeeee!" he clapped. Fez: "ningahleki." he

took one more sip. I laughed before he even started. Fez: "sudika." he smacked his lips apart. Fez: "andithi mos sidityaniswe yi mutual friend. No problem. Siqalise ke uSkype'a since mos ebese Spain. Ndacela ke imali yentloko wazulisa, so ndamxelela aze abuye xa e-serious. Yaphela two weeks ke tshomi wacela bank details zam. Ndaqondba yeke. Ubawela indutsu Le ndandimbonise yona ku Skype wakhutywa. Fine. Yangena ke imali ye weave, ndayofakela ndamhle ndayi gurl. Sho. Wathi ke yena uyeza eSouth Africa andiphathele ntoni? Uyayazi uthetha naban? Ndabuza yimalin i-budget yam? Wathi yena its 10k. Ndabuza in Dollars or Rands because i-questions of relevance zi-important kwi life chronicles. Wathi yena nge Dollars, thizaaaa! Ndathi buya nayo mfana. Iza nayo ngobunjalo bayo. Yifake kwi gift box uze nayo!!!" we laughed again. Phof oko ndiphelile yintsini. Fez: "hayi ke mntase ndayongena ku Googling ndakhangela exchange rate ye dollar to the Rand. Oh sweetie. Zange indi disappoint'e tu. Yabe ibime ku R14,74. I calculated very much quick apha eHead kuba kaloku ndiyi top student kwi mathematics yaphuma isithi I'll be R147 400 richer! Yiyhhoooo! Ndayogida mntase. Kwamanzi phantsi. Mind you, Khange afake confirmation ubhutiza ndim lowo ndiyi millionaire esela idumpie ye-fourth street kwa Gqalane ndiphole ikhwapha. Wafaka uSkype utata wabantu andam'phendula kwacac'ba ndimthukile. Khange kuphinde konwatywe. Long story short, wafika umntu last week. Sadibana in Durbz. Sayovisana kamnandi, yeeyi, ibiyi admin work ke naleyo." Zintle breathed from her laughing. Zintle: "meaning?" Fez: "tshomi ayiphakami. Ndiyenze u- CPR ndayincama. Ndalala ke mna kuba ndizothini ulinda i-train e-airport? Cingi sweetie. Ndithe ndisathi sebesebe ubuthongo ndava ngo giligidi gilidi! yeeyi! yavulwa indutsu yam wangena umntu gwabha gwabha ingathi utya ingqina lenkomo. Oh bawo." he held his forehead. My stomach hurt so much from laughing. We almost fell off our chairs. Fez: "zeniy'hleke. Heeee. Akasakhali utata womnye umntana, andiyazi ingathi ndikhwele ujikeleza ogqajukelwe Li tayere sana. Dyubhubhu dyubhubhu dyubhubhu. Lilo ke elo endleleni.." Zintle crawled away from the table, engakwazi uphefumla. I couldn't breath neither! Everyone else was staring at our table ingathi we escaped a looney bin. Fez: "but ke ndanyamezela wethu ntombi kuba ndizaw'hini. Nokok'nyamezela phofu kuphele kwangoku ngoba kaloku umntu wabantu waminyitheka ingathi utyiwa zintakumba wade wagqiba. Uwoaah. But shame utatabantu une swekile so ke une excuse evakalayo. Anyway, bekunjani eDubai?" Zintle: "not as interesting as Craig." she wiped her laughing tears. Fez: "hayi sudika. Busenza nton pha? Bungasebenzi? Kuthen hleli nje ingqondo igcwele indoda. Kunjani emsebenzin?" Zintle: "heee uthen na wena." Fez: "su-jumpisa. Lamfana ujonge apha kuthi kunye ne friends zakhe ezi hot. Masithethe izinto ezi serious ngoku. Babalekiswa ngezintsini

zenu ingathi ningokrebe abadlala undize." Zintle: "uwoah...hayi wethu. Things were good kodwa ndigrand nobushushu bayo landawo." Me: "what about Ahmed?" Zintle: "Ahmed utshatile tshomi une family yakhe." Zingi: "hayi Zintle nawe..." Zintle: "hayi sisi ungazenzi ngcwele please. Sisese high school? Ubudyola nabani?" Zingi: "mxim." Fez: "wethu.....umntu udlala i-role yakhe. There's only a few men in the world, too many women. Worse ngoku Kukho nathi ke as ii-gurlz 2.0. Kodwa zekhe net ndibhage ikritsi ecamkwe ndodam mna. Anganya ii-blade ze-planga sana. Rhaaaa. Ndine picture yakhe ingqumfuzo. Tshintsha topic Zintle nanku uboy esiza." Zintle: "the climate change can absolutely affect our economy kodwa guys. Don't you think that with less rain and so forth, the farmers suffer droughts having a scarcity in certain products and they

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increase pricing? Businesses as well..." Me: "I agree with uZintle, take for example the price of ingxowa yetapile now." Zingi: "ndothukile wena ungena kwam kwa checkers!" a Tall light skin man with the cleanest fade I've seen all day was standing by our table. He was dressed in a black t shirt, denim shorts and all black leather All stars. He had a tattoo peeking out his t shirt running down his arm. Also up his neck. "molweni." Fez: "Hi love. Uright? Do you need a chair?" Him: "uhm...not really...I'm good. Me and my friends say hi, and would like for you to join us. Sizoya Cubana later on tonight. But for now sizongena sihlale pha e-lounge." Zintle: "I'm sorry you are?" Him: "Oh where are my manners. Apologies. My name is Max." Zintle: "by birth?" Max: "my full name is Xola Avela McGriff." Fez: "skew'zin me. What is thart?" I giggled. Max: "Xola Avela. McGriff." Zingi: "did you just make that up or....." Max: "no....my dad is McGriff. He's from Switzerland." Fez: "oh so you're colored." Max: "ndingumxhosa mna sisi." Fez: "yuh. Uxolo." Max: "not a problem. So will you guys be joining us?" he looked at me. I was the only one who hadn't said a word to him. It was a bit awkward. Zintle: "Spho?" Me: "what?" Zingi: "you're mother hen. Can we join them?" everyone stared at me as if their lives depended on it. Me: "why am I mother hen all of a sudden?" Zintle: "sisi, are we joining or not? We want to have fun. You on the other hand, are you comfortable?" Me: "I'm fine mna." Zingi: "perfect." Max: "so its a yes?" Fez: "its a yes Xam." Max looked at him with a sadistic smile. Bendizohleka but ndathula. Max: "its Max." Fez: "did you work in the navy? Yaziz, you look so familiar, bendiyi chef pha a few years back and there was this man-" Max: "its not me. I've never worked in the navy. I'm McGriff & Co. I do computers and software." Fez: "nyani? I'm a nurse!" Imfao! And being a chef? Zintle: "I'm a graphic designer." Zingi: "beauty shop owner. Magic Hair." Max: "my mom loves your salon. She's there every two weeks." Zingi: "that's so sweet." Max

looked at me. What now? Everyone else looked at me. Oh my occupation?
Me: "I'm MD at GoldenCell Telecom." Max: "you're the Managing Director of that whole company?" Me: "yes." Max: "Wow. That's a big company." Fez: "yes, she's engaged to the CEO." all of us stared at Fez. Now was the time?
Fez: "kanti???" Max: "I didn't think they had a CEO." Me: "we do." Max: "cute. we'll be at that table for about an hour, then off to Cubana." Zintle: "how about we meet at Cubana?" Max: "not a problem. Lomzuzu mna let me go get us a table pha then and you'll order when you get there. Who can I call to confirm you coming?" he took out his phone. Fez: "ME." He pouted and stared at his nails. I laughed first. Max gave me the phone. I gave it to Zingi ecamkwam who gave it to Zintle who gave it back to Fez. Before a single digit was dialed, Max took his phone and put it back in front of me. They all giggled. Me: "how about, I take yours and call you when we done." Max: "fine by me. 071" I saved the number. Max: "see you guys later." Fez: "bye Xam." Zintle: "bye." Max left our table and our food arrived shortly after satya dinner yethu saxoxa indaba, yasikwa i-fillet. We had two more rounds of drinks when we asked for the bill. Zintle: "this one is on me guys." Zingi: "uyathanda ke wena ubheja xa unxilile." Zintle: "sekhe ndayicela i-refund kuwe ngengomso? Thula sisi." Fez: "heeh sana!" he sat upright. Zintle paid the bill. Me: "what is it?" Fez: "Zingi. Ayondodakho leya?" he took off his earrings and tied up his weave. I looked by the parking lot and nyani nankuya uDumi hand in hand nalentombi yakhe. Zingi looked utterly disappointed and when I tried to comfort her waphakama waphuma. Fez followed her. I took ii-bags zabo neyam. Zintle really was drunk, she didn't even know what was going on. I had to wait for her ayo chama kqala and then Saphuma. Fez was standing on the side esonge iizandla. Zingi was confronting Dumi. I didn't want to be part and parcel of any of this. Ndava nge mpama. Thwaxa!! On someone's cheek so hard even mine jiggled. Zingi was attacking the girl! Me: "Zingi!!!" I tried pulling her off.

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Fez: "myeke Spho! Makayazi lonokritsi ayityiwa indoda yomntu estratweni! Unesbindi rhaaa!! Khaba lo rubbish peto." Dumi: "baby please stop this! Usijongisa ngabantu." yangena yaphelela Kuye impama, you could probably feel that sting 2 weeks later xa usiva amanzi ovasa before ungene kwi shower yakho. Dumi: "Zingi man!" I managed to pull her off. Kwangena uZintle. Hehake Bawo really? She sat on top of her, slapping her emnyola esbunzi. I pulled her nge top ke yena kuba eyokoyoko kakade. Me: "Fez!!! Do something?" Fez: "uzayeka uqhela lomntana. Ndiyamoyikisela gqithi elibhityo nje. Wena, nguwe eyona ntangam!" he pointed at Dumi esiya Kuye. I

couldn't anymore. I had no more hands. A police van hit their sirens and stopped..... Oh my God....

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Chapter 38

The police officer walked to us. Fez: "ndiyay'betha kaloku mna sana indoda. Ndiyay'khaba inye nyiii phezkwe stoep sase Bhisho. Mna ke sana." Me: "Fez, nali polisa." Fez grabbed the girl getting up. Fez: "uzuyithethe net uyowndibhaqa." Police: "what's happening here?" Fez: "Officeeer. The man with the big tummy is hitting his lady. We try and sort the mess." Police: "Dumi? Is that you?" Dumi: "misunderstanding Lorenzo." Police: "is everything okay?" Dumi: "yeah. We're sorting things out. Thanks." Police: "okay." he looked at us and walked back to his van. Fez: "uthe kanti uyakhonza." he said to Dumi. Fez: "peto. Mayeke amadoda abantu. Mayeke peto. Because into ozoyifumana uzokhatywa qho qha ndiyak'bona usemncinci umnandelwe yimali." he reached his boob wakhupha money bag. He gave her R20. Fez: "goduka apha. Hamba. Unguban gama lakho?" Girl: "Yamkela." Fez: "hamba Yaya peto. Uyekane namadoda abantu." Yaya ran to catch a taxi. Fez: "wena! Tshongobudala!! Njani uthathe advantage yomntana ulixhego unje? If bendingcolile ke mna ngendam'hlaba wanya lamntana ebusweni. She would be in hospital fighting for her life, then wake up to live a life with a scar on her face. Qha i-problem ndisindiwe, omnye umntu akazomelana nobobubhanxa. Yinton ngxaki yakho Dumbellz??" Dumi: "Zingi, baby can we please talk." Zingi: "akhonto ndinoy'thetha nawe mna." Me: "Zingi, ngumtshato wakho lo. You will Have to talk to your husband." Zintle: "and asikatshati peto thina so asinokwazi uku adviser ngendlela yomfazi kodwa one thing I know is for sure xa une problem nomnyeni wakho, uthetha naye ngayo. All we can do is support you." Zingi: "ndiyaniva guys ne. But Andifuni uthetha noDumi mna ngoku. Ndizothetha naye xandisiva entliziyiweni." Me: "okay guys. Let's go to my place, and chill there for the night. I'm sure Lakhe won't mind." I needed something to make that house feel normal to me again plus Lakhe doesn't even live there anymore. Zingi: "uhm no....we're going to Cubana sana. Siyojaiva thina." Zintle: "yeah. We're just going to fix ourselves up." Fez: "ndihamba nabahambayo mna mntaka somnci." we went to the car sashiya uDumi kweyakhe imoto. Fez drove to Cubana. I called Max. Max: "hello?" Me: "hi. Its me. Spho. We met at Finnezz." Max: "I recognize the voice. Where are you now?" Me: "we on our way." Max: "perfect. I'll wait at the door." Me: "sure." I hung up. We found parking and we walked to the entrance. Fez: "ndizokhe ndizithande ke namhlanje." he strutted in front. Fez: "heeyy Maxie." Max: "hi again." he looked at me. Why was he looking at me.

Zingi: "hi. Nihleli phi?" Max: "VIP. What are you guys drinking?" Zintle: "Grey Goose." Fez: "yoooh safa sana ngu Zintle." Max: "okay. Is two bottles okay?" Zingi: "one for now." Max: "okay, let me introduce you to the fellas." we went to his friends. Max: "only now I realize I didn't catch your names." Fez: "not an issue. I'm Fez. Short for Feziwe. Family woman." Max: "hm.....and this is Spho." Zintle: "I'm Zintle and this is Zingi." Max: "perfect, this is Xylo. Mzi. And Mhlahli." the guys greeted us and made space for ba sihlale phantsi. Max: "cela undikhaphe, ndiyothenga." uhm.... Okay. So we went to the bar, he ordered the bottle and another one ye-Hennessy. Wathenga dash some ice and glasses also sabuyela kwi tafile yethu. We could've waited for a waiter but nope. Fez opened our bottle wasenzela raw double shots first. Me: "kodwa yintlonti lena." Fez: "sela wethu peto uphole ingqayi. Ina." I down the double shot feeling the burn in my chest. After the shots, he mixed the vodka with juice sasela. Max wayosilandela straws. Then sat next to me. I was leaning back on the couch feeling the alcohol swirling around my head. Max: "you okay?" Me: "you do know that I'm engaged right?" Max: "so I've heard." Me: "ndibona i-fondness Le yakho towards the girl." Max: "I acknowledge that the girl is out of bounds because of her commitment, which I respect.

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Kodwa if the girl is attractive, and smart andizongajongi mna." Me: "haha. You funny." Max: "am I?" Me: "yeah. Flattery will get you nowhere." Max: "luck had to be tried." Me: "thank you..." Max: "for?" Me: "the compliment, attractive and smart." Max: "no issue. The man is quite lucky. I hope he knows that." Me: "I'm sure he does." Max: "kodwa ndikhubekile but its fine. We can still be friends. You'll have to find me a girlfriend though." Me: "nantsiya i-girlfriend. She looks pretty." Max: "the white dress? Well.....yeah....but." Me: "but what?" Max: "I'm not sure. There's just a but." Me: "okay, and that one." Max: "okay, see that's the one. She looks lovely. I'll go say hi." Me: "good luck." he got up waya kuye. Fez was chatting to Xylo ehleka bhuti wabantu iziqhazolo. I was jealous nam bendibawela uhleka. Zingi was talking to Mhlahli whereby uZintle encokola noMzi. Here I was by myself. Wabuya Max. Me: "and then?" Max: "not feeling it." he downed a raw shot of Hennessy. Max: "maybe I should just stick to my friends for the night." he was staring into my soul with his lazy eyes. I looked away. Max laid back on the couch too. Max: "so everyone seems sorted. Organizer Nguye ongafumenanga nto." Me: "sorry wethu. Organizer naye must do his research prior." Max: "ezinye izinto zibamnandi xazine tyiwa." I wasn't catching that at all. Max: "that is a beautiful ring." Me: "thanks you. Don't you have a special person in your life?" Max: "used to." Me: "what happened?" Max: "it wasn't working out. We had different goals. I'm more family orientated. I love my family, I'd also like to

have kids in the near future. Noba unothi umntu ngoku soze ndithi hayi. She on the other hand, wanted a steady career. I did everything to support her but she couldn't give me what I wanted. Told me that akafuni, not even in the near future. So, we broke up." Me: "you broke up because she didn't want to have a baby." Max: "she broke up with me because I asked for one. Apparently it was too much, plus a whole lot of other things." Me: "did you cheat?" Max: "I did. Once." Me: "really? Once?" Max: "how did you meet your fiance? Tell me all about him?" Me: "I'm not sure really. First time I remember seeing him was when I just woke up from a coma in hospital. I'd been in an accident and he was the first person there for me. He stayed with me till I got out and accommodated me after. So we'd been dating for about 3 weeks before my accident and yeah." Max: "that's hectic. By the obvious looks of things you still don't know how you met him?" Me: "yeah...its crazy. People keep popping up in my life and I don't know who they are." Max: "no wonder you don't recognize me. I thought I'd lost you forever. I've been trying to get hold of you and I couldn't." I laughed. Me: "mxim. Yazi uyagula." Max: "it was worth a try. Uhlala phi?" Me: "in Newton Park with my parents. Now that I say it, it sounds weird." Max: "it doesn't actually. I lived with my mom till I was 27. If I had a choice ngendise pha still but she chuck me out saying I'm too old. Really, I think I was a cock blocker so that's why ndigxothiwe ne?" I laughed again. Me: "yeah. Imagine indoda endala inside the house kungena enye. Uhlalaphi ngoku?" Max: "Summerstrand. But deep down." Me: "uhlala wedwa?" Max: "yes of course. Occasionally I have the boys over for a chill and swim. Now that we have female versions of us maybe singane pool party." Me: "without me. I'm usually always home with the Mr." Max: "uzaw'shiyeka kalok sisi. Icacile njena. Khange siku lobole thina therefore akhonto sinoyenza." Me: "oh?" Max: "but you should bring him though." Me: "he's not much of athis type. He's a stay at home nigga." Max: "the streets have nothing better for him because he has it best at home. I think I'd stay at home too if I was married to you. Kungaphela ukuqava oku. I'm sorry to say this Spho. But you're really beautiful, nonke netshomi zakho nibahle. Except Fez because andiy'ncomi enye indoda. Unless he's into women." I laughed. Me: "argg Max.." Max: "yeah....and I'm actually quite cool with being a friend. Maybe ndizofumana world class advice apha. It

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would also help my house decor. And my fashion sense." Me: "your fashion sense is fine I'm sure your house is fine too. As for advice, you can't blame me if you ruin your life because I'm not even licensed as a psychologist." he laughed. Something was starting to register in my mind. Then it hit me. Lakhe! It was way past 9 and where the hell was my phone. When I took it out I only

saw 2 missed calls. It was a little after 10pm. Maybe he decided to let me chill with my friends, he did tell me to enjoy though but I called him just in case he was mad. I stood outside the balcony. The phone rang to voicemail ndaphinda ndafowna. Now I was panicking. Luckily waphendula. Lakhe: "hm." Me: "baby?" Lakhe: "hm?" Me: "ulele?" Lakhe: "yes....." Me: "oh. Ndise Cubana ngoku." Lakhe: "ok..." Me: "you gonna come?" Lakhe: "no." what? Me: "why?" Lakhe: "nd'lele. Tired. Called you awaphendula ngo 9. Sleeping mna ngoku." Me: "hayi njani kengoku Lakhe? Khange ndiyive mos phone ikhala." Lakhe: "ndiphakame ezingubeni kengoku ndizok'landa eCubana mna?" now he was awake. Lakhe: "Mna. Ndiyeye obam ubuthongo? Kuba wena use stratweni?" Me: "I thought we had agreed-" Lakhe: "no, I said I'll call you when I'm done, I did. Awandiphendula caba kumnandi. Next thing undifownela just before 11pm usithi ndizok'landa? Ha.a Sphosenkosi. Khasele amanzi uzive ba uthin. Andizoyenza lonto leyo mna. If funa ukuza apha endlini where I am, you'll get Uber or something. I'm not about that life." wacima phone. The sliding door behind me opened. Max: "is everything okay?" Me: "yeah." Max: "you wanna go home?" I nodded. Max: "uya eNewton park or....." Me: "the other place." Max: "you don't seem okay." Me: "I'm fine Max. Its just time for me to go now." Max: "okay, let me contact an Uber." Me: "thanks but I'll manage." I started clicking my phone looking for the app kanti its on 1% and right then it switched off. Me: "great. Just great." Max: "so should I contact an Uber?" Me: "ewe Max. You can contact an Uber." he went on his phone Wenza ke. Max: "thina ke we'll be going to my place for a morning bang. Do some swimming and breakfast." Me: "good for you." Max: "that's if you wanna join us....." Me: "I have to be home." Max: "understandable. Your Uber will be here in two minutes." I went to go and say goodbye to my friends who were a bit upset to see me go. Max walked me out to the cab outside. Max: "the app will notify me ufika kwakho kule address. Please text me to tell me you're safe ufika kwakho. Ungafiki utixelwe pha." I giggled. Me: "ndizothin ke xandinofika kutixiwe ndingenaso nestixo." Max: "if I don't hear from you in 10 minutes after arrival. We're coming to fetch you. So if ungene kakuhle, charge phone, text and I'll know uright." Me: "okay. Bye Max." Max: "bye." I got in the cab yahamba ukuya eKragga Kamma. Upon arrival I rang the gate. Multiple times akuvulwa. The Uber had left. I stood by the gate. What if someone would attack and kill me ndisame apha. At least I knew if I passed the 10 minute mark bazoza abaya then I won't have to spend the night here. Within 3 minutes yavuleka gate. I went in and jogged up to the door, it was unlocked. Ndangena. I took off my heels, locked and sprinted to the bedroom when I closed the door behind me ndabe ndisiva intliziyo yam ingombha isifuba. I switched on the light nanku Lakhe in bed fast asleep. Snoring actually. Me: "baby?" he got a fright and

looked at me. Lakhe: "Spho?!" Me: "hello to you too." I unzipped myself ndayofaka kwi washing basket. All he did was stare at me. Me: "Masilakhe. Why ungafuni uyondilanda xabendikucele kakuhle?" he kept very quiet. The look on his face was still blank. Instead he looked around him for a stupid minute. Something was wrong. Me: "baby? Were you having a bad dream?" I stepped closer to him. He sat up as if to move further away. Me: "Lakhe? Kwenzeka ntoni?" I was panicking now. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi.." Me: "yes." Lakhe: "howdid you get inside the house?" Me: "hehake. Undivulele duh. I rang the bell, waiting outside and in a few minutes wavula. Then opened the door." Lakhe: "I've been in

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bed since half past 9." I swallowed hard. Me: "what do you meanYou've been in bed since half past 9." Lakhe: "I mean, I didn't open that gate. I didn't open that door. If I had....I'd be waiting by the door for you to get inside." Me: "if.....you didn't open..for me. Then Who did?"

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Chapter 39

I looked at him. He looked back at me. I locked our bedroom door. He got out of bed senomsindo. Me: "you're not going out there!" Lakhe: "andizohlalanto endingayaziyo endlinam mna!" Me: "Lakhe. NO. We'll do this in the morning." Lakhe: "it has to be done now! Yindlu kaban kanti Lena?" Me: "jongapha ungak'linge undiqale. We're doing this. In the morning. Siyavana?" he breathed and went back to bed. I got into bed too. Lakhe: "this can't be Sandile. He's never been so odd before." Me: "just don't give it too much thought. Masilale." Lakhe: "easy for you to say." I was actually sleepy. The bed was warm and I was a little tipsy. Lakhe: "so you had fun I presume." Me: "almost got locked up. Dumi clearly isn't sorry for what he did. He went to Finnezz nala cherry yakhe. Zingi went crazy and attacked her. Ncediswa ngu Zintle. I stopped them kwafika amapolisa but luckily zitshomi zika Dumi." Lakhe: "Dumi is also suspecting Zingi. Uyayazi phof lonto? She's too cool about everything that happens. He is starting to have doubts. He was insecure kwakqala now he's damn paranoid and annoying me." Me: "Uthini Dan kuwe." Lakhe: "hayi ke undenza umntu onolwimi ngoku." Me: "I tell you stuff. So tell me." Lakhe: "he was struggling.....a bit." Me: "with what?" Lakhe: "bedroom wise." Me: "I'm not following. They have two kids." Lakhe: "yes but he feels he's not satisfactory towards his wife." Me: "that is stupid." Lakhe: "its not. sometimes nam I feel unappreciated and used after sex. Akuncoywa niks. Caba I'm just being average." Me: "don't be sensitive now, this isn't about

you. Uyayazi nje uyi top dog wena. But honestly I don't see why he is insecure about that, I'm sure they fucked before they got married and she still agreed." Lakhe: "because he's rich." Me: "stop trying to turn this about you. Don't fish." Lakhe: "mxim. Anyway, lento ayiyo uDumi, its part of i-doings zika Zingi of making him feel inadequate. Creating a gap for him to go seek validation from another woman." Me: "aka-dom. If akayifumani apha endlin Uthi uzoyifumana phandle? Oh please. That's the most pathetic thing I've ever heard." Lakhe: "oh wow." Me: " can you just try and not defend your friend.." Lakhe: "I would if Zingi wasn't fucking around too. But she getting what he's getting. And I Know. But did I tell? Nope. I'm a nice guy." Me: "you think you are. But no. Had you been, I would've gotten a foot rub and be asleep by now." Lakhe: "uthunywe ngubani eCubana? Maybe if you came home on time you would've gotten some seven star treatment. I would've cooked a nice meal for you, ran you a bath, given a full body massage and some penis that you like ulale. But no, kumnandi eCubana." Me: "ngeske ndahlala pha ne?" Lakhe: "ndik'fake impama ethangeni kwezoz'thuba." Me: "khayeke ke ndilale baby." Lakhe: "ibilapha la tshomi yakho. He's beginning to look like a psycho now. Who jogs at 9pm?" Me: "you sure bengazanga kuwe. Obviously you wouldn't have seen because you pick the most perfect occasions to de-friend people you don't even know." Lakhe: "firstly, de-friend is not even a word. Secondly, I am very friendly and modern and quiet. I have the ability to make a lot of friends." Me: "riggghhtt. Name 5." Lakhe: "this isn't a competition sisi. If anyone, you the one that needs LESS friends. Always have somewhere to go." Me: "oh I'm supposed to wait for you at home like Brittany while you hop to your meetings." Lakhe: "who's Brittany?" Me: "a housewife." Lakhe: "only You can make hop sound like a criminal activity." Me: "you're always finding an attack in simple English. What other language do you understand better?" Lakhe: "oh I have a Masters Degree in sarcasm. Try me." I just smiled. Me: "ubundikhumbula ne?" Lakhe: "not at all. I was hoping you'd come back Ksasa." Me: "why would I do that?" Lakhe: "so that nam ndibene sleep over with Dumi at some hotel." Me: "why would you want to spend a night with Dumi or he's tutoring you on how to

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cheat on your wife and getting caught multiple times in the act. How much does he charge for a lesson?" Lakhe: "says she who spends hours at night with the same woman married to this man and still finds time in her schedule to pool party my brother's bed. You don't have a standing argument." Me: "oh mock all you like." Lakhe: "I'm not mocking. I'm putting facts. Or ndiyaxoka?" Me: "goodnight." Lakhe: "no...don't leave me please?" Me: "I'm right next to you. Play with my boob ulale." Lakhe: "okay but talk to me a bit." he put his

hand on my breast and fumbled with it. Me: "how was your meeting?" Lakhe: "my meeting was boring. I didn't enjoy it at all. I never do but at least the last time your dad occupied me. Speaking of your dad. He called a few days ago. Ebuza if ndiright na if we had a fight or what. Why would he think that?" Me: "I wasn't going to go home and pretend everything was roses and custard after that body incident." Lakhe: "oh....you didn't tell him?" Me: "he would freak out and keep me away from you." Lakhe: "true...did you notice I changed the furniture?" Me: "why?" Lakhe: "andicing kalok ndihlale mna kwi couch bihleli intsula yotata endingamazi noba ebevuzwa fluids or not. I just can't take that risk." Me: "ok I'm gonna pretend what you just said is not that funny and cruel as much as I want to laugh." Lakhe: "ifuna wena naleyo. So I changed my couches and donated the old ones." Me: "so that other people can sit on fluids." Lakhe: "I should've put that as a caption on OLX." I laughed. Me: "at least they were donated wethu. Chill." Lakhe: "yeah. But now I also need to changed the curtains." Me: "why don't you just buy a new house while you're at it?" Lakhe: "I actually like this house a lot. I'm not letting it go. I'm just changing the curtains." Me: "maybe.....also give life to the other section of the house....." I was testing the waters here. Lakhe: "that's not gonna happen. Sandile would not be happy about that. He likes it olahlobo." Me: "its weird." Lakhe: "not weird. Just different." Me: "unusual." Lakhe: "if you're gonna start throwing useless synonyms....at least use something catchy." Me: "abnormal, eminent, its conspicuous, queer, strange, uncommon, inconceivable, atypical-" Lakhe: "OKAY. We heard you clearly at eminent." Me: "ndilindele la Masters yakho." Lakhe: "keep your head above water my love because it isn't coming. Okay?" Me: "if I was a guy that sentence would be so gay." Lakhe: "akhonto uyicingayo kanene. Iyawa ngu Penis." I laughed. Me: "sekutheni igamalakhe likhumshe kangaka?" Lakhe: "ufuna abengubani ke baby? Khamthiye isXhosa." Me: "andizothiya niks mna." Lakhe: "hayke uzoba ngu Penis the postman." I giggled so hard into the pillow. Me: "just let me sleep." Lakhe: "lala ke.."

Sunday morning I woke up early. I was scared of leaving our room now. I charged my phone ecamkwam and received tons of texts. I didn't feel like reading them now so I decided to take another nap. I couldn't sleep still, although the weather was raining outside. Lakhe woke up a little while later. Me: "hey big head...." Lakhe: "hello button nose. Uleli njani?" Me: "surprisingly well. Wena?" Lakhe: "I slept great....ndaphupha kamandi also. Would you like some breakfast?" Me: "no baby, let me make it today." Lakhe: "no love..you did it the last time." Me: "no, you did. Brush your teeth sihambe siyokwenza breakfast." Lakhe: "something hot and unhealthy. I'll light the fire place up in the lounge. Sihlale pha in our pajamas all day." we got up and brushed our

teeth then went to the kitchen. I started on breakfast and he did what he was supposed to gqiba kwakhe waza e-kitchen. Me: "I don't know hey...." Lakhe: "what?" Me: "I think Sandile is here." I whispered. Lakhe: "here where? Kuthen umbona wedwa?" Me: "not like that man.....he's possibly around the house somewhere. Just that, Sands uyak'thanda ukutya, how is he going without food if he's here?" Lakhe: "that's impossible. As if I wouldn't know if ukhona umntu endihlala naye apha. Why would he hide himself?" Me: "maybe he's upset."

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Lakhe: "nah... I'll go check the place out, to prove akhonto." Me: "please don't leave me alone." I pulled him. Lakhe: "but baby, kufuneka siqonde kwenzeka ntoni?" Me: "call someone else to check." the gate rang. We walked to the door together and looked at the small screen of cctv footage. Lakhe: "so your friends." Me: "not today.." I looked at my phone and saw a message again above the many I already have. It was from Zingi. "Weather a bit loomy but still hot. We came to say hi, khanivule. Can we use your inside pool?" I showed Lakhe. Lakhe: "akaqalisanga tu. That is my personal swimming pool. Tell her I said No." I sent her a text: "we flew out at 6am babe sizobuya ngomso Ksasa. In Joburg again. Sorry love." Lakhe: "uwoah..." I carried on with breakfast ndade ndayigqiba. Serving it to my fiance with his tea. I took my own ndazisonga ecamkwakhe after eating. Lakhe: "soo...." Me: "so?" Lakhe: "couch...." Me: "oh they look beautiful baby but....they're white." Lakhe: "classic right?" Me: "nightmare to maintai." Lakhe: "for lazy people. I hired a lady to clean my house on a weekly basis." Me: "concluding you're lazy." Lakhe: "I run an empire plus a string of business. I am allowed a little lazy." he kissed my breast. Lakhe: "I love you. And I bet you R200 you don't feel me." Me: "cela undiphe R200 yam ke bhuti." Lakhe: "I was really throwing you a rope there." Me: "ndiyakwazi kaloku Rev Sarcasm." he smiled. Lakhe: "khathule vha. The movie is starting. Bekela sisi." Me: "andiyi nowhere." he increased the volume. Lakhe: "I sent for guards, so if you see people roaming the yard, chill. Wena ingathi you'd cause a panic the size of a bomb catastrophe at Mall of Africa." Me: "I am very chilled. I'm so chilled I'm on ice." Lakhe: "Shhh...movie." we watched our movie.

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Chapter 40

During the movie we watched I'd fallen asleep twice. On my second wake. Lakhe: "baby, yakhala phone yakho." he came from the bedroom eyiphethe wandnika. Me: "just a message." I unlocked it and checked. Ibisuka kumama.

It read: "Mntanam. Ndifownelwe nguZingisa. Uthi kum wena umke kwayizolo kubo wemnka noLakhe. Ngoku caba nise Joburg. Buthini ubunyani balonto?" I just stared at my phone ndingayazi noba ndithini. Lakhe: "what is it?" he was eating a packet of Lays. Me: "funda." I gave him the phone. He read the text. Lakhe: "ibiyintoni need?" Me: "I don't know ke." I responded to my mother's text nangona ndicaphukile to be truly honest. If she wanted to get me into trouble, ibizobalula gqithi nakum leyo. Me: "Mama. Ndigodukile emveni koba kubethe u10 ebsuku kuhleliwe kuselwa, Kukho namadoda endingawaziyo. I took a cab to Lakhe's house and ndisahleli apha nangoku. Undifownele eme apha phambi kwe gate sesithi ufuna ungena azosebenzisa i-pool. Ndathi mna asikho sise joburg olohlobo. Andiyanga kwandawo." I sent the text. She texted me again. Me: "where did she learn to text so fast." I read her message: "Ndiyakuva ke mntanam. Suzikhathaza bendingena worry xa Uhleli nomnyeni wakho kaloku qha bendikuchazela ulumke." Now I was confused. Me: "what does she mean ndilumke? Ndilumke ukuhlala nomnyeni wam?" Lakhe: "no idiot. Uthi she isn't worried xa Uhleli nomnyeni wakho. The reason why she's telling you all this is that ulumke. Lumkela itshomi leyakho iyothetha indaba zakho kokwenu." Oh. Wow. I was speechless really. Did she really just contact my parents because ndimnkile izolo and now I'm not around to let her my fiancé's house? Lakhe: "uright?" Me: "why would she do that?" Lakhe: "maybe une nerves zoba Uhleli nomntu wakho owakhe eyi mess. Come here baby." I hugged him. Me: "ndilambile ngoku." Lakhe: "after that big breakfast." Me: "kutheni u'judgy nje? Look at you carrying a big packet of chips." Lakhe: "I'm snacking." I went to fetch the big packet of Diddle Daddle ndahlala phantsi nayo. He was focused on something else engathi ucinga kude. Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "hm." Lakhe: "can you hear that?" Me: "no. What is it?" I listened carefully. I couldn't hear anything even with the TV on mute. He stood up. Me: "Lakhe. No." Lakhe: "why do you try and stop me everytime I try to find out kwenzeka ntoni endlinam." Me: "because..." Lakhe: "because what?" Me: "the letter." Lakhe: "what letter." Me: "can you let me finish talking instead of interrupting me?" Lakhe: "nawe kaloku Thetha uyeke ubane drama." Me: "yaz'bona ke." Lakhe: "baby.." Me: "the note that I got that other day ndileli apha. The one that says stop. Its because I was snooping." Lakhe: "snooping where?" Me: "the other side." Lakhe: "so you went to the other side and saw what?" Me: "nothing. Bekumnyama with no lights. It was cold and I thought I heard something but I was probably just hallucinating." Lakhe: "then conveniently you wake up to a warning. Or is that also part of your hallucinations?" Me: "unjalo ke wena. Whatever is happening there, is not for our eyes." Lakhe: "this is my house. I'm going to knock it down and find whatever it is that thinks it has found a nest. Either you come with me or you sit there." he walked into the second passage. I followed him because I was

afraid of being alone. We went into the hall crossed over to the door that led to the other side. He opened it, walayita nge phone yakhe. I also used mine. It was empty here. Just the way it was when I first peeped weeks back. Me: "see there's nothing. Masambe." Lakhe: "not quite yet." I was so scared being in here. Me: "There's no sign of anyone being here. Worse kuyabanda. No human can stay here for long. Its been almost a month." he was quiet and looking thoroughly in the room. Lakhe: "okay. Fine. So not here." Me: "I told you there's nothing here." Lakhe: "its like I'm missing something. I can't put my finger on it." I pulled his arm

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saphuma. We went back to our room ndayovasa mna. He joined me in my bath. Putting on the pulsating jets to make some bubbles. He also brought a bottle of wine with two glasses wagalela handing me mine. Lakhe: "maybe you're right." Me: "about?" Lakhe: "giving some life to the other side of the house. Its untidy, dirty, cold and awkward. A complete opposite of me." Me: "as if you're not cold and awkward. But I get your point baby." Lakhe: "unjalo ke ngondiphoxa. Tomorrow we have a lot of work to do emsebenzini. When we're done funeke siyothenga paint and some tiles." Me: "uzoyenza ntoni ke landawo. Since you already have so much on this side?" Lakhe: "I don't know. I'm just going to make it look nice. Also, I think we're going to need a live-in cleaner. You cannot clean this house and cook alone. Awucingi." Me: "uzobe Uphi wena." Lakhe: "working. I have a job you know." Me: "nyani? Kind of thought you sold drugs." I laughed. Lakhe: "I'm not sure if that's supposed to be funny or....." Me: "haibo baby bendidlala njena." he smiled and chuckled. Lakhe: "the look on your face.." Me: "one of these days....yazi wena.....heh." Lakhe: "nditheni mna?" I drank my wine. Me: "one of these days." he drank the wine then stared at the glass. Me: "I think I have about only two outfits left here." Lakhe: "ubuye nala suitcase yakho ke sisi next time. Le yayizolandwa ngutatakho wandifaka impamakazi." Me: "ncoooh...You've come a long way hey. Worse xasenifownelana ngoku. Nikude shame." Lakhe: "oh please." Me: "don't try and act cool about it." I took another sip. Me: "he even took you to his job." Lakhe: "which was nice." he gloated. Mxim. Me: "awusembi nje." Lakhe: "I know when you say that, you want to lick my face." Me: "okay. So you're getting drunk. I'm going to bed." I got out the tub and walked to the room. He followed me out. I'm sure he had a glass or two before we got into that bath because he was acting really crazy. I took my lotion. Lakhe: "sapha baby. Let me do it." his eyes were drowsy and his handling was a bit weak. He was definitely tipsy. Me: "how much did you drink?" Lakhe: "I took 4 shots before the bath." Me: "okay, why?" Lakhe: "I think ibizi nerves. I might have a ghost in my house." he put some lotion on his hands, rubbed them together

and applied it on my leg. Me: "there is no ghost here." Lakhe: "don't try make me feel better bhabha. I know what's up. I'm not in control." I pulled him by his neck and kissed him. Me: "you are in control. You're my super hero who would go through lengths to protect me. I know that. Okay?" Lakhe: "are there any perks to being....you know....super hero." Me: "please put focus back on your task now." Lakhe: "abuse ke kodwa Le." Me: "you offered." Lakhe: "abuse qha." I was on my back waiting for him to finish undithambisa before I sat up, I could feel his breathing on me. He kissed me in between my thighs with his full lips and my thighs started shaking. His tongue parting my opening, digging in it. Me: "Lakhe-" I whispered. Lakhe: "shhh..." he licked it all the way up to my clitoris and swirled his tongue around it. I pulled on the sheets keeping quiet. That was the one thing that killed me the most. I could feel every sense of my body breathing. Every muscle was throbbing in excitement. I felt a rush that made me breath with an open mouth. He stretched my legs apart and started at the opening again, sticking his tongue in and out. He then flicked his tongue back and forth and in a circular motion. Me: "whoooo." I breathed. My body was vibrating. I could feel the bolts bouncing about inside me trying to find an exit. My heart was in a tumble of clouds. His tongue slithered up again to the clitoris and I felt like screaming my lungs out, banging on the headboard and calling his name. He sucked on it slowly and I began shivering. I needed to let go. Lakhe: "cum in my face baby. Citha mntuwam." I looked down at him, his sexy eyes staring back at me while he sucked gently. Then moved on to flicking with his tongue. Me: "Masilakhheee.." I squirmed. He didn't stop. My legs shook. I was climbing too high. My eyes felt weak while my toes curled into

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knots. Me: "yes..." I moaned softly. Me: "babyyy...." Lakhe: "hmm..." he went faster. My whole body stiffened listening while the electricity exploded in liquid out of me squirting all over his mouth and chin. I couldn't help the pleasure I felt. Like I'd climbed all the way to the moon and slid back on a giant slide. Me: "I want you." he got up and kissed my lips. Lakhe: "you have no idea how much I want you too my sweet.." he kissed me again and I could feel his erect struggle slide through me. He was grabbing on to the pillow, breathing harder. Me: "baby." it was like a weight buried inside me. He slid out and pushed back in. Lakhe: "sthandwasam." he kissed my lips and lay his head on my shoulder. He pulled in and out in a slow pace. Lakhe: "oooh....baby?" Me: "yeeesss." Lakhe: "you.....damn...." Me: "faster..." I moaned. He moved faster. Me: "yes! Lakhe...!" Lakhe: "ahhhh....Spho...." he held himself up on his fists and groveled in. My legs a little wobbly. Lakhe: "Spho wam!!!" I looked up at him. He stared back at me. Our eyes locked and

he carried on fucking. Making love. He moved closer to my face not losing my gaze. Me: "baby.." I whispered. Lakhe: " I can't mntu wam....I...." he breathed. Lakhe: "baby?" Me: "YES..." my pussy was throbbing in his rhythm. Lakhe: "Spoho!! Aahhhh!!!" he smashed into me for the last time and stiffened. Lakhe: "Oooh.....fuck." I held on to him like an oxygen mask and climaxed again. I was sucking him in, my legs wrapped all around him breathing heavily. Lakhe: "that.....was amazing. Yuuh. Kunin ndivinjwa." Me: "you're so dramatic." Lakhe: "awufuni undibona ndi-happy kaloku wena." he pulled himself out and rested his head between my breasts. Me: "nako u-happy ngoku." Lakhe: "awunayo ne idea wena. Ingaske ndijaive ngoku phez'kwe tafile." Me: "Uhambe ke apha uye kwa Ngqoko uyokwenza lo mash potato." he giggled. Lakhe: "kuphi kwa Ngqoko." Me: "oh my goodness." I covered my face. Me: "you know what? Ba awumazi ngoku, let go. Sele umyeka. You'll just get more confused xa sow'pha." Lakhe: "I love you mntuwam vha." Me: "what's happening now." Lakhe: "ndiyozela." ndiyiqondile. Me: "lala kaloku." Lakhe: "yuh awundithandi nyani shame kunzima nondibhanxa Uthi me too. Umfumene uPenis ngoku awufun kwanto inam mandilale ndiyeke ukuk'dika." Me: "precisely." Lakhe: "ba andivukanga uyazi ba ndikhutyekiswe nguwe." Me: "ungqengqe apha ecaleni ke bhuti. Andifun usindwa mna yile tomb stone yentloko yakho." he picked his head up and looked at me. Lakhe: "you are so mean!" Me: "suka qha ok'salayo." he got up and went to the bathroom wabuya ne towel. Lakhe: "pretend'wa apha. Noske ndiye ku Dumi azondisa kwa Ngqoko qha." Me: "uzayintampula nge nyawo ke mfana." Lakhe: "ndizohamba ngala A7 ka Dumi sisi. Phola." I took the towel and wiped myself. Me: "nguwe ke ozolala kwelicala limanzi. Lenziwe nguwe, walicela even beforehand." Lakhe: "totally worth it." he brought a clean towel to place on the bed. Finally, after a lot of fiddling and walking around he came to bed. Lakhe: "cela hug before ndilale ndixole because akaphumi lo 'me too.' So...." Me: "Iza baby wam nale ntlokwana yakho inkulu. Oh bethuna mhinxi ka mama." I hugged and kissed his head. Me: "I love you too sthandwasam. Sleep tight." yuuh. Akancuma... Lakhe: "enkosi."

I woke up on Monday morning. Again before Lakhe. But this time ndivuswa nguye. He was struggling in his sleep. It looked like he was having a nightmare and he was crying. A lot. Me: "baby...vuka. Wake up my angel." he woke up immediately and breathed. Me: "you okay?" he nodded. Lakhe: "I'm fine." he turned his back on me wajonga kwelinye icala. So....it was really a bad dream. What I didn't understand was why I was being pushed away. Me: "its almost time to wake up love. What do you want for breakfast?" Lakhe: "I'm not hungry." Me: "okay, Lakhe, I understand you were having a

bad dream, I was only trying to help. You seemed as though you were crying and unhappy." he didn't respond.

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Instead I heard a snuffle. So he was crying again. I wasn't sure how to feel about it. I moved closer to him and hugged him from behind. Lakhe: "I miss her so much.....I don't know if she knows how much I love her..." wait what...? ndaxhaleka intliziweni. But he was holding my hand tight not wanting to let go. Lakhe: "I want her to be here so bad, so that she can see my accomplishments, so that she can see my wife and just be there for us." I was still confused. Lakhe: "my mother meant the world to me. When she died, I lost that whole world. I shut down and became the cold bastard I'm known to be. Why did she leave me?" aaanndd.....Stella? Me: "its okay baby...I'm sure she is at peace and she is more than proud of her son. Kakhulu. She loves you, she's always with you in spirit baby." Lakhe: "in my dream I was with her sihleli in the lounge. She kept saying that she had to go but I didn't let her leave. I couldn't. I wanted her to spend more time nam because I miss her and haven't seen her in my dreams for months. She kept explaining that there is someone that takes care of me. That this someone was special and I should make more room in my heart. I had to watch her leave me again. It hurts so much Spho." Me: "its going to be okay baby." my heart was really aching for him. I hated seeing him so upset. It broke my heart. Me: "come here big head. Let me give you a hug." he sighed and turned around. I hugged him tight for a while and then let go to look at him. He stared at me blankly. Then smiled. Me: "what?" Lakhe: "nothing baby....thank you. I feel a little better now." Me: "so what do you want for breakfast?" Lakhe: "just buttered toast with jam and tea." Me: "only?" Lakhe: "yeah...I don't feel like eating much. I just want to stay in bed with my lovely wife...is that normal?" Me: "what is?" Lakhe: "umntu afune ubase bhedini all day everyday. Nguwe lo undenza ivila yazi." Me: "ndiyak'shiya mna bhuti." Lakhe: "noooo...." Me: "Iza....phakama." I pulled him out of bed pushing him to the bathroom. Me: "Teeth. Toilet. Shower. I'll make your toast." I brushed my teeth ndagqiba ndimshiya ese toilet. I made his toast and let the water boil for tea. I made my cereal and ate ndibukele iindaba. Once I was done I went to shower. Lakhe was in his closet finding something to wear. I finished showering in 10 minutes. Ndayokhangela into yonxiba. Actually picking from the two outfits. There was the long sleeve soft pink dress that was body fitting, just above the knee. It had a gold zip that ran down my body. I took my nude strap heels and wore them. Also the taking the beige coat. Lakhe was on the bed again only wearing underwear and eating. Me: "baby nxiba kaloku. We're going to be late." Lakhe: "almost done." I went to comb my short hair not sure if I was liking

the no make up look today. Oh well, since I have some time to spare. I applied my make up ndade ndagqiba uLakhe esanxiba. Me: "Masilakhe!!" Lakhe: "I'm not sure which shirt? The one that looks like your dress or the white?" Me: "take the white one. Wear your soft pink tie instead. If you really want to look like me." Lakhe: "jealousy." he wore his navy pants and white shirt. Putting on a soft pink tie. Me: "nope...doesn't look nice. Wear the red tie." Lakhe: "had you not hidden my beige pants, this tie would be amazing kule outfit. Qha unomona." Me: "okay super star. We're going to work not the New York Fashion Week for Vogue. Be quick." Lakhe: "khawuve." I took off the sheets on the bed ndayokhupha ezinye ndazifaka. Made the bed and took the dirty sheets to the washing. Finally Lakhe was done. Oh wait.....shoes. Lakhe: "so....which one is nice today-" Me: "I'm leaving you behind. You're too much today. I don't know what's wrong with you." I took my laptop bag and hand bag walking to the lounge, searching my bag for my laptop charger. Me: "where could it be na Nkosi yam?" I placed the bags on the couch, ndava nje ngoxhaka entliziweni. It was happening again. Tears stung my eyes blurring a shadow by the couch. It was a human shadow. Me: "Lakheeeee!!!!!" I screamed. Lakhe: "I'm comi-" he froze beside me.

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Chapter 41

My heart almost jumped out of my chest. I clutched it from feeling anymore pain and breathed properly. Lakhe: "Sandile." he looked really pissed off. Sands: "I thought you'd be happy to see me this time-" Lakhe: "this time???" After scaring us to death with your stupid psychotic tactics! What the fuck were you thinking!!" he marched to him. I didn't have the energy to stop him but I had to. Me: "Lakhe, please stop." too late. He was strangling his brother. Me: "Lakhe!!" Sands: "listen to your wife." he said calmly ingathi akenziwa niks. Lakhe: "I want you out of this house with your little games and corpses by the time I get home from work. I don't want to see you here again. Uyandiva?" Me: "Lakhe, wait.." Lakhe: "no Spho! Andimfuni apha uSandile!" he let go and walked out to the garage. Me: "kodwa nawe." I took my bags. Me: "don't go....just wait until he calms down.." Sands: "okay." I knew Lakhe was more glad than angry that he was back. As much as he hid it. The drive to work was an extremely quiet and quick one because of the speed. Bendimane ngobambelela ndimincile. He parked the car and got out. Me: "baby-" Lakhe: "now is not the time." I got out with my bags. Me: "but love-" Lakhe: "No Sphosenkosi. Stop defending uSandile. Uyahamba kulandlu, I don't want to see him there." Me: "you didn't even ask or let him explain himself. Don't you want to know why?" Lakhe: "its because uyashota entloko! That's why!" he

went into the building. I followed him in having to sign in and went to my office. I sat down, setting up my laptop trying to understand why Sandile enjeya? I had so many questions. Why did he scare us like that? Why did he kill that man? Why dump the body in our living space? Does that mean he killed him inside the house? "Miss Ngudla?" I looked up. There was a teenager in my office. Why was there a teenager in my office? Me: "hi. Can I help you?" she looked at me with her big eyes. She was nervous. "igama lam ndingu Sive, I applied for an assistant position and was called in for an interview." assistant? Who needed an assistant? Me: "who called you Sive?" Sive: "Bianca." Me: "Oh!! Yes. Sit here. You're supposed to be at Human Resources love. Bianca is our receptionist." Lakhe walked in wamjamela. Lakhe: "hello." Sive: "good morning bhuti." Lakhe: "love, have you received the email from Palate? We're supposed to start with them on Wednesday?" Me: "No. I'll contact them in a minute." Lakhe: "okay, you have a meeting with Michael, 12pm at the Radisson." Me: "I'm not doing that." Lakhe: "why? Your lessons are done mos." Me: "I don't want i-business ka Michael. I told you this." Lakhe: "when you're done here please come to my office." he walked out. I called human resources to come fetch Sive from my office. In the mean time I was still looking for my charger ndayifumana phantsi under my desk. So smart of me. "Spho?" Me: "hi Macy, this is Sive. Bianca's position?" Macy: "oh nice. Come this way Sive." Sive: "enkosi kakhulu Sisi." Me: "okay hun." she walked out my office. She seemed so sweet. I went to Lakhe's office real quick. Me: "I'm here." Lakhe: "babes, I thought we spoke about this?" Me: "we never agreed." Lakhe: "what am I supposed to do now? I can't take anymore work or anymore business on my hands. Baby, I ask this of you please." Me: "I told you to give it to Sandile. I am not interested either!" Lakhe: "I don't want Sandile anywhere near me-" Me: "he's your brother! He is alive and he is safe!! For once in you life be grateful!! Not everyone has the siblings you take for granted!" I stormed out the office. In my own little space, I closed the door and began my work also reading the news. I had four reports to go over. Two documents needed my signature and one person has decided today that I would be the receptionist. Halfway through the day I heard another irritating knock on my door, I wish I could scream. Me: "Yes.." the door opened. Khaya: "heeeey princess!" he came inside the

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room with take aways from kfc. I was sooo hungry, how did he know! Me: "hi tata. How did you get here?" I took the packet from him ndikhangela wings. Me: "thank you." Khaya: "well, Lakhe invited me. He said it was time I saw his working space and here I am.... I must say.....its quite impressive." Me: "hm." I ate quietly. Khaya: "he also says you're ignoring him." Me: "not." Khaya: "but

you're mad at him." Me: "neither." Khaya: "so you didn't yell at him in his office and then storm out?" Me: "I didn't even yell." Khaya: "so basically he's lying?" Me: "he's your friend...suddenly." Khaya: "what happened between you?" Me: "we just had a disagreement. He wants me to take over Michael's shares of the hotel. I don't. I said I choose to be MD here and not working overtime running a hotel. Now today, he books me some meeting saying funeke ndidibane noMichael. Ayihambi njalo kaloku." I took a bite of my double crunch burger. Making sure not to mess on myself. Me: "I tell him to give these shares to his brother and he says no. Then I told him that he should be thankful that he has siblings yet he takes them for granted." he looked at me. Khaya: "you want siblings?" Me: "if you even think about having another child I'll adopt myself tata." he chuckled. Khaya: "this brother. Ebephi ixesha elilonke?" Me: "we don't know. Lakhe doesn't even ask or wait for an explanation. Uyamgxotha qha." I took another bite. Khaya: "well maybe there's stuff. A lot of families have stuff." Me: "then this the time to solve it." I finished my burger. Khaya: "really hungry huh." Me: "I didn't have breakfast tata. Please don't judge me. I'm starting gym tomorrow." Khaya: "I didn't say anything love. I'm just glad to see you doing well and eating." Me: "I'll be back home tonight. I have some errands to run after work." Khaya: "that's okay princess." Me: "Unjani wena nomama?" Khaya: "perfect." he smiled. Khaya: "the time alone in a new beautiful house is just amazing. I didn't know how much I missed her." Me: "oh....so is that a way of kicking me out?" Khaya: "never. Not my baby.....so have you set a date?" it was definitely a way of kicking me out. Me: "no....not yet. He wants an island wedding. Something at the beach." Khaya: "at Robben Island? Hahahaha! Uzay'fumanaphi island apha?" I laughed. Me: "no dad. We're doing it overseas. On an actual island." Khaya: "What? Why?" Me: "I love the idea. We'll fly out with our families and get married pha also spending our honeymoon pha. You'll love it." Khaya: "Wow. Nindixelele ke in advance. How do these beach weddings go? In the water or..." Me: "no tata, just by the shore." Khaya: "so andinonxiba izihlangu? I must roll up my pants?" Me: "yes daddy." I was eating chips and drinking the cooldrink. Khaya: "princess ka tata...." Me: "hm?" Khaya: "this is difficult for me. To ask." Me: "what?" Khaya: "are you sure there isn't a little prince in there?" Me: "where?" he pointed to my stomach. Me: "dad!!" I was so embarrassed. Khaya: "I know mntanam. I'm just making sure." Me: "there isn't tata. There's nothing." Khaya: "okay. Good. Now I have to go back to work okay? I'll see you later. Love you." Me: "goodbye tata. Love you too." he walked out the office. In a few minutes wangena uLakhe. Lakhe: "hey baby." Me: "I'm not going to Michael." Lakhe: "I know. And I respect that." I took off my shoes and threw my take away packets in the bin. I opened the windows. Lakhe: "bhabha wam." Me: "yes Lakhe. I have a lot of work to do." Lakhe: "I know. I

gave it to you. Listen....I made a decision. But you're gonna need to implement it so that it sounds better." I sighed. Lakhe: "I can't stand him right now. Please?" Me: "what is your decision?" Lakhe: "if he takes over those shares. He can stay. If he disappears again or starts acting crazy, I'll kick him out myself." Me: "and if he says no?" Lakhe: "then he can't stay. Or talk to me. Matter of fact I won't forgive him. I still haven't. Probably won't for a while.." Me: "fine." he hugged me. Me: "can you stop please? Yoh." I wiggled out his arms and sat down. Lakhe: "are we back to the hate again?" Me: "I've got a lot of work to do. Please." Lakhe: "mxim." he walked out. I continued with

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my job. In just 2 hours I was done, it was 14:40pm. Suppose kakade siphuma ngo 3. I wore my shoes and packed my belongings. I made the walk to Lakhe's office, to my surprise. It was empty. I tried to call him, it went straight to voice mail. Nobody knew where he was kodwa they all say they saw him leave with his brief case. I went outside to check the car and it was gone. So he'd left me behind. I got myself an Uber, ufika kwayo I went straight to Newton Park and switched my phone off.

Ma: "hi baby." I hugged her. Me: "hello mama. Unjani?" Ma: "just great mntanam. Ndipheka umngqusho. Uyay'bona Le weather ndlela embi ngayo?" Me: "ewe mama. I'm going to bath and change vha." Ma: "okay sweetie." I went to run a bath ndavasa ndanxiba pajamas zam. I took my phone to the living room plus a fleece blanket. Me: "so I hear I'm being kicked out." Ma: "by who!!" Me: "haha, I'm kidding mama. Tata is just so happy that I'm not home. Apparently he's having a great time. I hope you're not going to replace me." Ma: "hahahaha! Uwoah. Awusenamona." I switched on my phone and played a game. No phone calls came in. No texts. Nothing. He just left me there ba mandizibone. Ma: "sweetie...how are the plans going for the wedding?" Me: "we haven't started ma..." I was trying to focus. Ma: "how come." Me: "we haven't really had time. A lot of things pop up." Ma: "don't tell me you have doubts." Me: "then I'm not going to tell you mama." Ma: "love, why do you keep fighting him as if awumthandi?" Me: "what?" Ma: "apparently, you had a little disagreement earlier." Me: "and where did you hear that?" Ma: "it doesn't matter. Stop fighting this man. He loves you. There's nothing you can do about it!" Me: "I know." I sent him a text: "I'm sorry about earlier. Was a bit moody and cranky. I think my period is gonna finally pick up." there was no response. I waited kwade kwafika utatam. Which was around 7 in the evening. I ate umngqusho wam omnandi and kept silent. Mom and dad were on their couch chatting and giggling. I facetimed Lakhe. No reply still. Me: "so I might have offended him again." they both looked at

me. Khaya: "he says you chased him out your office." Me: "hewethu tata, ukuxelela kwanto uLakhe?" Khaya: "well no...he was just looking for advice. He doesn't know what he did wrong. You just keep attacking him." he might as well just marry my dad then. I went to wash the dishes leaving the two love birds on the couch. I was tired now, I could feel all of today on my shoulders, thank goodness I was done with the dishes. Me: "I'm going to bed. I'm really drained and ndihluthi kamandi ngoku. Thank you mama." Ma: "its a pleasure mntanam." Khaya: "goodnight angel." I went to my room. My phone rang. Fez was facetimeing me. I answered. Me: "hey boo." I could see his face half masked with something. Fez: "tshooooomi yaaaam. Uright?" he was still applying face mask. Eqhiye nge towel ke phof. Me: "ndiright my friend. Uphi and what are you doing?" Fez: "ndilapha kwam peto. Sanaaaa." he smacked his lips. Fez: "ndine fillet yakho." Me: "eyam? Ithini?" Fez: "I'm sure mos uyay'qonda ba uMr Maximum Muscles uyak'funa. Awukho dom kaloku wena my friend send'tshuba izicacele." Me: "really? Did he say that?" Fez: "not in so many words. Mos, siye sahamba eCubana around 3. Saya endlin ka Max. Ayisentle my f. Anyway, kwahanjwa kwayolalwa. Andizok'xelela ke umntu ungene kwi bhedi nabani ifuna abanikazi bayo leyo mna ndigodole ndodwa ndacinga wena my friend. But akhonto. Anyway, kwavukwa senzela breakfast ngu Muscle Man safumana ndawo yovasa oku kwama khwapha. Fine. Now, andithi ii-plans bezisithi sizo swimmer? But ke kwabe kunetha. Uyithanda njani uScoobyDoo athi masiye kwakho. Ndibuze ke mna njani? Wathi yena kuba Kukho indoor swimming pool and its heated plus you won't mind mos kuba sizi friends sonke siqhelene. Ndaqondba.....sweeeettttiiiiee. Hayi ke sathatha izinto zethu, kanti uPowerpuff girl u-invite'e idolophu esi besihleli nalo. That being uMuscle Man

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ne-squad. Yeeeyi. Zange ndambona umnyeni wakho guuurll. But, ndinendawana ebane dyudyu xakuthethwa ngaye. Uyoyikeka." Me: "wait, so she invited, ooMax to Lakhe's house. To swim. Without asking me first." Fez: "ewe kaloku tshomi. So mna ke, my advice to you is, bhinqa sisi indodakho kuwe esinqeni. Susa laa Maxico kwa kwi contacts zakho uhoye umzi wakho engeka diliki ngoba uSatana uza eyiyo ne pudding. Uzutye ke wena sdenge." Me: "thanks for telling me tshomi." Fez: "ungalili apho. Faka night cream yakho uphole enqayini sthandwasam. Umhle, uright, uhappy. Akho need yo-entertainer ezinye izinto. Ndiyamthanda uMushroom yi-friend yam but andiyithandanga into ayenzileyo. Plus futhi ndamxelela ukuba she was wrong and ndizok'xelela nawe uyazi. Waske wa a.aza ke kuba ebenxilile and so forth. Akhonto ibitheni wethu. Uphi u-husband. Uzundiphuzele kuye wethu aphe sdleleni uyeva?" Me: "okay Fez babe. Enkosi." Fez: "Sho, ke girlfriend.

Nanko ephuma kwi shower lomfana. Bye peto sophinda sithete." Me: "bye love." I hung up. I received another Facetime almost immediately. From Lakhe's phone but it wasn't him. It was Sandile. I'm not sure he was aware because he was holding the phone on his lap ejonge kwi TV. The other hand had a spoon. Me: "Sandile." he looked around. Heee. Me: "Sandile!" he looked behind him. Sands: "ungubani!" Me: "on your lap!" idiot. He looked down and got a fright. Sands: "heyyyy. How did this happen?" Me: "its you. You dialed me." Sands: "huh. But I'm watching soccer." Me: "where's your brother? Khamnike phone." Sands: "oh he left about 2 hours ago. Something about investment." Me: "what?" Sands: "he's not talking to me. He left his phone by mistake here, ebethetha efownin." Me: "to?" Sands: "not that I was snooping but a Michael Oslo and then Keyan Rodigrue. Before those it was Hendricks Plower and George Tigers. Just before lunch time Johan and Harold, Bruce Langton, Steven Nesser, Andile Simolo, Bulelani Hani and some Neyanda." Me: "you.....memorized his call log?" Sands: "No, I just have a photographic memory. I can't help it." Me: "okay. No wonder he isn't responding." Sands: "So you're good?" he was still staring at the TV. Me: "I'm fine. Sandile?" Sands: "yes?" Me: "ubuphi." Sands: "what is your real question." Me: "why did you kill him?" Sands: "kill who?" Me: "my real father. Why?" Sands: "I didn't kill him. He died himself." Me: "why!" Sands: "he hurt you." all this time he wasn't even looking at the phone. Oko ejonge kula TV ingaske ndiyigib'sele ngento icime. Me: "Sandile. You shouldn't have done that!" Sands: "but I did....I taught him a lesson and like the weak pathetic man he was, he succumbed to his injuries and died. I didn't intend to kill him. It was his decision to die." Me: "and then bringing him to our house? Was that his last request?" Sands: "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to scare you." Me: "Sandile...." Sands: "yes, he died inside the house." now he looked down at me. Sands: "I'm sorry." Me: "I don't want you to ever do something like this ever again. Do you understand me?" Sands: "yes ma'am." Me: "I'm serious Sandile!" Sands: "I know. My apologies." Me: "so this whole time I was right, you were in the house?" Sands: "Not quite. But most of the time." Me: "we thought there was some kind of ghost. How could you do that!!" Sands: "I was just trying to keep you safe." he looked upset now. Me: "talk to your brother. Try not being aggressive this time." Sands: "okay." Me: "he loves you, as much as he doesn't tell you or show you. He was terrified when you disappeared. Completely lost it. Went out to look for you all night. Try and understand where he's coming from Ube patient. Okay?" Sands: "okay Spho. I think I just heard his car in the drive way." Me: "okay don't hang up. Just put me down somewhere." he placed the phone on the other couch. I could hear footsteps. Then taking of the phone wahamba. I couldn't see much then until it was tossed on the bed I presumed. Me: "Baby? Please pick me up? Love?" no answer. Me: "Love I'm

sorry....I didn't mean to hurt your feelings today. Babbyyyy!!!!" movement. I saw his face appear. Me: "hey

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big head." he hid his smile but I could see he wanted to melt so badly by the curve on his mouth. Lakhe: "what is it?" Me: "I'm sorry Papi. I was kinda stressed today....I shouldn't have taken it out on you." Lakhe: "ubuthetha nabani Le 14 minutes 23 seconds?" Me: "Sands..." he rolled his eyes. Lakhe: "neither of you can keep your hands off my phone. Funny enough ndinithengele nobabini the exact same thing." Me: "yours is much more fun. I miss you." Lakhe: "yand'khumbula ngoku? After you told me to fuck off." Me: "xolo kaloku mntuwam njena." Lakhe: "so your little friend made me dinner." Me: "who's my little friend." Lakhe: "lo ugqibo ncokola naye. Andiyazi noba ucimba ukutya kuzondenza ndilibale obubudenge abenzileyo. He has much more explaining to do than cooking." Me: "at least that's step one. Have your dinner. Uthethe naye." Lakhe: "I'm not saying a damn thing to him. He must leave me alone futhi. Ubuya nini?" Me: "probably soon. My parents don't want me anymore. Both of them tried to kick me out. This is the same day." Lakhe: "shame. Iza kwakho kaloku apho ungazo gxothwa khona. But then ndim lo uzomane egxothwa." Me: "never. Not owam.." Lakhe: "I'm gonn have my supper now ndithethe nalentwana. Will call you when I sleep vha?" Me: "okay baby. Mwah." I hung up.

The next morning I was up early and decided to use my gym membership kwa Virgin Active. I washed my face and brushed my teeth, I'd shower when I'm done with my exercise. I took out my Adidas track pants. They held on tight to my skin and absorbed sweat. I put on my waist trainer and Adidas sports bra. Ndanxiba takkie yam and jogged to the gym. It was quite a distance to my house but ke, I had to keep fit. I got in and got myself busy on the stationary bicycle. After the bicycle, I did some sit ups. "Hey stranger." I looked up and saw Max standing above me. Max: "you might want to keep your feet still during that." Me: "hi." Max: "you disappeared on me. I thought something had happened." Me: "as you can see Max. I'm fine." Max: "I'm glad... Need help?" Me: "nope. I'm good." Max: "can I join you?" Me: "Max, you're a nice gent but I'm engaged to be married. Its inappropriate for us to just kick start a friendship. If anything suppose you're my fiancé's friend. Not mine. Sorry..." Max: "no need to apologize. You're right. I'm being inappropriate. I'll stop bugging you. If you never need anything, don't ever hesitate to call okay?" Me: "Bye Max." he went to be busy on others and actually, he helped with exercises kumntu okhoyo. Now I felt quite dumb. But didn't he say he was a computer guy? Anyway, after 45 minutes of a

workout, I left for home ndafika ndavasa. I was tired already. Ndanxiba and waited for utata so that he could drop me off. I was doing well with my driving again. Just didn't own a car and I didn't want eyaka Lakhe. So, I'd make an appointment with the bank and get myself my own. Daddy dropped me off. I got to my office and instantly checked out for nice cars. The new VW beetle was quite sexy but also a Scirocco. I had a crush on big cars also but I wouldn't be able to keep up with its necessities. Payments, petrol, maintenance. I also needed money to spoil myself and save some. I know everyone's next question would be: 'but don't you have a rich husband?' I do, and I can't lie, I do love his money kodwa I don't abuse it. If he wanted to get me a car, he'd buy it for me. Instead, he wants me to be independent, that's why I'm buying it myself. It doesn't make much sense but whatever. I enjoyed car shopping, I suddenly got carried away ndayobuka kwa Jeep and also hopped to Range Rover. This was addictive. Before I knew it, the time was 9am. Lakhe: "knock knock. I didn't get my breakfast hug." I got up and hugged him. Me: "morning my love." Lakhe: "what are you up to?" Me: "car shopping. I need my own. Tata and Uber cannot drive me around forever." Lakhe: "oh...so how's that going?" Me: "good...." Lakhe: "found anything you like?" Me: "yes. The Scirocco is

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nice." Lakhe: "VW? Anything else?" Me: "I'm fine with it. I like it. Nice and small." Lakhe: "you don't like nice and small baby. I see how you are when we take the ML. you get so excited and comfortable. Take a bigger car." Me: "jeep?" Lakhe: "if you can afford it. Why not? Just don't make it pink please." Me: "how did you guess!!" he laughed. Lakhe: "Sarcasm does not suit you. You look gorgeous by the way. And smell so damn good..." he kissed my neck. Me: "so we're in the office." Lakhe: "and you're my wife..." Me: "uthethile noSandile?" Lakhe: "not so much. He said he'd think about it and tell me today." I kissed him. Me: "he loves you. He would do anything to make you happy." Lakhe: "hm..." there was a knock on my door. Me: "come in." she entered. Sive: "Morning Miss Ngudla. Mr Sobukwe sir, excuse me. There's a gentleman at reception with your name. He doesn't have an appointment, he says he has blood instead. I don't think he's lying." she looked so scared. Me: "Sandile is such a mess. He can't even help himself." Lakhe: "vha? Let me fix this. We'll talk later." he kissed my forehead and walked out the office. Lakhe: "So? What's your deci-" he stared at him. Lakhe: "you're wearing a suit?" Sands: "I borrowed it from your closet. Its not so bad." Lakhe: "so you're..." Sands: "I'm saying Yes. I'll take the shares and run the hotel. In that specific term." Lakhe: "Sandile..." Sandile: "not run away with it obviously. Its a building, not a stone. I'm buying the shares, and doing this. I'm going to be a legitimate

businessman now." he smiled. Lakhe: "please stop smiling. It looks a little awkward. People get worried." Sands: "fine. So what's my first task as hotel manager? Getting rid of the garbage? Taking the linen to the laundry?" Lakhe: "kind of just looking through the books, getting to know the team, lay out their shifts, attend meetings and so forth. I hope you stick to this." Sands: "I'm not glue. We'll talk later. Say hi to my sis for me." as he walked out. Sands: "Goodbye Sive." he winked....

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Chapter 42

That afternoon, I was feeling a bit cranky again but this time instead of wanting him out my sight, I wanted him in front of me. So I packed my laptop and everything I needed and went to his office. He looked up from his computer. Lakhe: "are we moving now?" Me: "there we go. It has to be your voice." Lakhe: "I'm confused." Me: "Shhh...I miss you. But you talk a lot." Lakhe: "I'm not sure if I'm happy or upset about that statement." Me: "my lunch hug please." Lakhe: "won't I be too loud?" he got up and hugged me. Me: "thank you baby." Lakhe: "so what's wrong now? Did they officially kick you out?" Me: "not yet. They still scheming about it. Asking me about dates." Lakhe: "cela uze namhlanje? I'll cook you dinner, massage you, love you all night..." Me: "I feel like a traditional meal." Lakhe: "then Sandile will cook for us. Ufuna ntoni baby?" he got on his phone. Me: "you're really abusing him this time aren't you?" Lakhe: "he'll be fine. Hello? Uphi?" Sands: "literally or figuratively? Because technically I'm in a queue at the bank, I'm not sure if the manager is waving or telling me to get off my phone. Anyway, what's up?" Lakhe: "thought you're at home. Wanted you to start up dinner ndizoy'gqibezela ufika kwam." there was a lady talking in the background. Sands: "so now I must get off my phone but you're taking your African time to help your customers. You don't even have wifi. Why should I get off my phone?" the lady explained again. Sands: "how is that my problem if you have trust issues? Don't you have systems in place. I'm not gonna not touch my phone because of you until someone helps me. I've been standing here for too damn long and not even one person has the decency to offer me water. Uthini bhuti?" Lakhe: "Get off your phone. I'll text you." Sands: "they'll have to pay me first. Ufuna ndipheke ntoni?" Me: "hi Sandile, any chance of ulusu?" Sands: "hi cutie pie. I'll have to go to the Butchery first then. But funeke uxovule for dumplings ke because I can't do that." Me: "will do. Thank you Sands." Lakhe: "bye." Sands: "bye." he hung up. Lakhe: "akaxutywanga shame uSandile." Me: "ndifuna uyazi mna where he is figuratively since he's physically at the bank." I laughed sitting on the couch opposite his desk. Lakhe: "I don't

even want to know. You can expect absolutely anything Kuye. But he has changed a little. I hope." Me: "within a day?" Lakhe: "no man. Like, from months ago...this isn't the same him. Phof the anger issues are the same but he's different." Me: "you're really glad he's back ne.." Lakhe: "it still doesn't excuse what he's done." Me: "stop putting this big wall! You have a soft spot for him. Admit it, you're happy he's back." Lakhe: "I might be. Maybe a little. I need to make this phone call." I stayed quiet and lay on the couch on my tummy. It was cramping and uncomfortable. Lakhe: "Yes, the order has been placed. I'll check how far it is.....yes.....its my pleasure Mr Plowers, please contact me should you need anything else. Enjoy the rest of your day." he hung up. Lakhe: "should I fuss or let you be?" Me: "so There's a button you can push for the fussing to go on and off. Nice to know." Lakhe: "ndoyika uxhaywa kaloku. I'll panic from a distance." Me: "my tummy hurts." Lakhe: "have you eaten?" Me: "yes. Twice today." Lakhe: "maybe you should go home baby." Me: "but I want to see you." Lakhe: "if I go home with you I'll have to take all this work. You okay with that?" Me: "hm..." Lakhe: "is that a yes or grunt for disapproval?" Me: "yes." Lakhe: "okay, let's go." I sat up. Me: "baby..." Lakhe: "yes?" Me: "I think I'm having a period." Lakhe: "what?" Me: "I feel funny. Ima go check." Lakhe: "ndik'khaph-" Me: "NO!" Lakhe: "oh there she is." I went to the toilet with my bag and pee'd. There truly were a few drops of blood on my liner. All this over reaction, food habits and moods. I was so relieved. But why these cramps tho. I finished up and went to the office. Lakhe: "so? Is it?" Me: "Yes. I was over reacting. I'm going back to my office

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vha?" Lakhe: "wait...hold on. What do you mean? Besigoduka nje?" Me: "we can't go home just because of some little period pains. Come on now." Lakhe: "you were on my couch groaning like a pregnant whale giving birth. We're going home." Me: "a pregnant whale? Not even a cat ke?" Lakhe: "it was a funny sound baby. I had to quickly end that call. Come masambe. Give me your things." he took his bags and my bags. Me: "you know the blood isn't coming out of my arms so I can carry-" Lakhe: "sisi, march." I shouldn't have told him. He probably thinks I'm gonna collapse and die. I was beginning to think the thought of me around blood scared him a little. It can't be so.....right? I mean this is natural. He drove to Pick n Pay. Lakhe: "so what do we need?" Me: "uhm, I'll buy it. Thanks." I got out the car ndayongena ngaphakathi. He was following behind me. With a trolley ke phofu. Me: "uyisaphi Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "I thought that maybe.....we might need it." I just laughed. Me: "baby, I'm okay. Stop panicking. Okay?" Lakhe: "I can't help it." I kissed him. Me: "you're so adorable. Relax." I picked my products and put them in the trolley. I also picked up a few other stuff and snacks.....plus

desserts. We needed to stock up on the snacks though since Sandile was back full time. Lakhe: "sowuy'fumene offer from the bank?" Me: "I'll check my emails ufika kwam endlini. I made the offer for the Jeep." Lakhe: "color?" Me: "I want it black." Lakhe: "good." we paid for our stuff saphuma. Me: "love?" Lakhe: "hm?" Me: "can I drive us home?" Lakhe: "let me check if my.....insurance policy is up to date. There's an app here-" Me: "Okay Smarty pants. I'm not that bad of a driver." Lakhe: "okay, you can drive." I got in the driver's seat after he packed the plastics and returned the trolley wangena kwi passenger. Lakhe: "now, this is an automatic-" Me: "I know exactly how it works." it was quite weird actually. I was so familiar. Me: "did you teach me on this car before?" Lakhe: "no....why?" Me: "something comfortable about being in this seat. This view." Lakhe: "then drive Mrs Sobz." I started the car and drove out the parking onto the road. Lakhe: "nice....now....my love.....holder of my heart, if you could just tone down a little on your speed." Me: "what? Why? You fall asleep while Sandile drives ngo 240 km per hour. I'm still on 120 and you're shaking?" Lakhe: "this isn't a freeway angel. Plus I see a traffic cop. Yep. There's a cop." I knew he was lying. He was afraid I'd crash again, I understood though. When we arrived at home, Sandile was there ebilisa ulusu. Actually he was on the couch as usual, ibila imbiza ekitchen. Me: "iphi flour guys? Mandixovule ngoku ibenoba right by the time we need it in the pot." Sands: "no need for that, I bought dough." Me: "I still need to kneed it. Iphi?" Sands: "its already done did. Calm down." Lakhe: "I ran you a bath baby. Go soak yourself. I'll bring you a glass of wine vha." Me: "what's happening in that kitchen? Why am I being bribed?" Sands: "what do you mean?" Lakhe: "nothing babe." Me: "you're trying to keep me out of there." Sands: "we're not trying to keep you OUT!" he said loudly. Me: "Sandile Robbie Sobukwe. Masilakhe Sobukwe. What is happening in that kitchen?" Sands: "why didn't you call his second name?" Lakhe: "she doesn't know my second nam-" Sands: "Alright Kilian." I went to the bathroom and left them arguing in the lounge. I would've gone to the kitchen but honestly? Wasn't in the mood. The bath my love had suggested was the only thing lingering in my mind. Uqqiba kwam uvasa ndafaka izinto zakhona and got dressed in pajamas. Lakhe: "sow'gqibile baby?" Me: "yes. Awunazo pain killers?" Lakhe: "I'll check in the cabinet. The food is almost ready vha." Me: "it cannot possibly be ready." Lakhe: "you're probably right. U-aunty is helping us actually." Me: "what!" Lakhe: "see? I knew you'd over react because you love being in control of the household and cooking and cleaning. You don't want anyone else to do it so we had to lie." Me: "so my food is being prepared by someone I haven't even greeted? I don't even know? What is wrong with you two!!" I got up from bed. Lakhe: "are you angry

baby?" Me: "all this time nenzantoni? Watching soccer?" Lakhe: "no actually I'm working, Sandile is the one watching soccer. So you not mad?" Me: "why would I be? All you had to do is tell me the truth. Ndibenokuya e-kitchen ndibulise. She must think I'm some rude spoiled brat of a madam diva." Lakhe: "really? All in one?" I walked to the kitchen. Sands: "heyyy....where -" Me: "Save it Sandile." Sands: "I don't have enough memor...." I looked at him. He sunk back into his couch. Me: "hi sisi." the lady smiled. "hello sisi. Ndingu Luleka igama." she was old. Not too old, just around 50 or so... I thought. Me: "ndingu Spho mna. Khangе ndixelelwe ukuba ukhona. Sorry ngongazi earlier." Lulu: "akhongxaki sisi." my mother would hang me on a washing line to dry while its raining if she ever heard I let a grown woman call me sisi. Me: "please sisi, cela undibize Spho." Lulu: "okay Spho." I went back to my room.

It was around 6pm that evening when Lakhe received a call on his phone. We were watching TV together. Lakhe and me cuddled in one couch. Sandile on his couch as usual. He was like a tree with that space. Same position every time sometimes all day. Lakhe: "yeah ndikhona.....okay." he hung up. Me: "friend?" Lakhe: "he wishes on a shooting star." Sands: "definite friend. He always denies people for some reason. For at least 3 years he once told people I was a Gardner ekhaya mind you." I giggled. Lakhe: "I never said that. They assumed it because you're always topless and in the garden like a rattle snake waiting to snap!" Sands: "it was never their first guess. And how convenient that the garden is adjacent to the pool so who was the bad photographer? You should be filming talking colors." Lakhe: "so you're on mute for a week." Sands: "you can still hear me though." Lakhe: "baby tell Sandile I'll tape his mouth shut along with his hands if I have to." Me: "he can hear you." Lakhe: "so you're also on mute." Me: "can still hear you." Lulu: "Spho, ndingaphaka sisi?" Me: "ewe ma. Please. Let me help you." anything to get away from dumb and dumber. I went to help her in the kitchen. In a short while I heard voices. Apart from my dumb little family. We had visitors? I went out to check. And the Jolobe's were here. Yay. Can you tell I'm excited? Zingi: "hey boo." Me: "hi..." Dumisani: "Spho..." Me: "Dumisani." Sands: "okay, so this is fun. Spho mntase. Do you need help? I've got an extra pair of hands and they're itchy for something to handle." Me: "Iza mkhuluwa." we went to the kitchen. Sands: "bazothini aba apha." Me: "your girlfriend?" Sands: "she was never my girlfriend, we were just fucking. Bazothini apha?" I covered his foul mouth. Me: "I don't know." Sands: "abazophakelwa ndim ke. In fact, mabakhutshelwe skhaffini bayibethe. This is a family din-din." Zingi came into the kitchen. I was really irritated now. More irritated than I usually am with Lakhe. Actually, with him it feels a lot more like love now. Zingi: "you guys

need help-" Sands: "Nope. You can wait in the lounge like the other guest."
Me: "Sandile." Zingi: "Sands....what's the problem now? I thought we were chilled." Sands: "you can be chilled in the lounge or somewhere near the drive way. Like a Guest." Zingi: "oookay, why are you acting so immature now?" Sands: "immature?" he smiled. Sands: "girl....don't test me." Zingi: "hayi childish lento uyenzayo shame." Sandile kept quiet. I feared for her. The minute that chatterbox is quiet, something sinister is happening in his head. Zingi: "Spho...you okay?" Me: "yep." Zingi: "oh...for a second there I thought you were avoiding me." Me: "I was." Zingi: "but why..." Me: "that's a very good question you should be asking yourself. Yintoni endikwenze yona? Ndikukhubekisile? Did I ever turn you down when you needed help? Was I bad friend in the past? Tell me." Zingi: "uthetha ngantoni Sphosenkosi? None of that has ever happened, you're a good friend." Me: "so reporting to my mother that ndihambile ndanishiya ndaya kuLakhe.....what was that

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about?" Zingi: "I thought she needed to know since ubuzolandwa sithi kokwenu. Ibizoba funny xa ungabuyi." Me: "firstly, Lakhe ngumnyeni wam. Secondly funny how? Since besesixelile asibuyi?" Zingi: "I was just trying to make sure everything is okay ngawe. What if something had happened?" Me: "okay Zingi. Then what made you come to my house unannounced? Bringing friends and people we don't know?" Zingi: "heeee hayi Spho. What is this? Why are you attacking me ingathi ndenze into erongo?" Me: "Zingisa, you know wenze into erongo. I never come to your house unannounced and demand you to open for me. Not once. If it was an emergency, it would've been understandable but just for nje? Still you bring people we barely even know? Without clearing it with the owner of the house?" Zingi: "hayi uxolo ke Spho ngokwenza kanjalo. I see that wena noFez have been planning behind my back. Its fine though. Nangona I've been there for you since day one and helped you through all this. Namhlanje uthetha oluhlobo nam. Its okay...I'll leave. Ndiyabona ukuba andisafuneki." Sands: "ungabisa buya." Me: "Zingi, I'm not ambushing you. Kodwa what you did was wrong. Xa ndingay'thandi andizoyinyamezela ndiyiginye kodwa andiva kamandi. Nawe if you were in the same shoes you'd feel the same. Ndabuzwa ke mna ngowakho umama kwenzeka ntoni ngawe zange tu ndithethe izinto zakho kuye because I respected you as my friend. Suyijika uyenze ingathi we were in the wrong." Zingi: "its fine Sphosenkosi." she walked out the kitchen. I went out to the lounge nam. I'd have to set the table since they looked like they were staying for dinner. Kodwa uLakhe naye. It would be an uncomfortable one. Me: "baby oko bendikucele pain killers yazi." Lakhe: "and I gave you one. Its not working?" I hugged him. Me: "another one." Lakhe: "no love. Not another one.

Let's sit." we went to the table. Sandile: "and the next time you call me immature, I'll fuck you with your husband on the couch watching, so he can see clearly who you call daddy all night. Ewe ndithetha nawe Zingisa." I held my breath.....

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Chapter 43

My brother in law indeed has no filter. Akaxutywanga. Akuvuthwanga. He is just raw and salty qha. Andiyazi noba he was dropped a few times as a baby okanye his head was deliberately banged on the wall. Something was done though. Akanoze aveske abenje. Never. Lakhe had mysteriously disappeared. I was scared to sit down. Sandile had sat down and waited for us to. Dum: "what is that supposed to mean?" wabuza omnye umntana. Well, I kinda felt a bit sorry for him now. Its stupid I know. But lomntu has insecurities kakade, now udibana noK wakhe. A younger, hotter and clearly dangerous version of what he never was. Ngendikhala shame mna. Instead I wanted to crawl under the table. Zingi: "Dum-" Dum: "Sandile, what do you mean by that." Sands: "if I were you I'd keep my ducks in a row. Buza kumfazi lo wakho wenzeni. Utshate naye not nam." where was Lakhe! Dum: "are you sleeping with him?" Oh yhini bawo. Ndingaze ndiyive lo sentence. Zingi: "bab-" Dum: "Answer me!!!" he snapped. Sands: "oh-oh." he was leaning back on the chair with his arms folded. Dum: "Sphosenkosi." Me: "I know nothing." I couldn't even look at him. Dum: "so all this time, lying and pretending to be upset. You knew you were getting Fucked!! By the brother of the same man, you had a crush on?" Me: "excuse me?" Zingi: "Dum-" Dum: "you are disgusting. Blaming me for my absence, saying I have no time for you, uzoya ku Spho kanti uyazazi ba uzotywa apha. Nangoku usandenza isbhanxa, mna mandize apha ndijongane nomntu olala naye!!" Sandile: "so can we eat now?" Me: "eat!" I needed to find Lakhe to fix this. I started at the kitchen, not there. I went back to the lounge to walk to the bedroom. Dum: "I'm done Zingisa." Zingi: "Dum, no! You starte-" Dum: "No, no, no my angel. Mna? Uthetha ukunya kengoku. You think I don't know what you do in my house xandingekho? You think just because I'm quiet, I don't know right? I stayed for the sake of the kids. Namhlanje undenzela enye, ude uzolala ne-brother ye-friend yam?" Sands: "so You've escalated to friends now." Me: "guys, maybe if you took some Tim-" Dum: "and I trusted you Spho. You of all I trusted because ndiyakwazi awuyifuni into ephuma ecaleni." Me: "like I said, I know nothing in regards to You or Your wife. Sukundifaka emtshatweni wakho." Zingi was just quiet. And crying. Dum: "I can't do this anymore. I won't be keeping face." Zingi: "Dum wait..." Dum: "for what? You to tell me that umithi?"

With who's baby?" Sands: "wait.....what!!!" he stopped eating. Oh shit. Zingi: "its yours bab-" Dumi: "don't lie to me!!" Zingi: "I swear Dumisani, ngowakho lomntana." I could see Dumi's face soften. He was no longer angry anymore. Dumi: "uqiniseke kangakanani?" Zingi: "we can do the test if you want.... This is you." he looked at the ground. I thought he didn't want another baby! kodwa he seems like the only one who wants it to survive at this point. I could feel Sandile's burning from across the room. He wanted to scratch something's face across a gravel road. Dumi: "I have to go.." he walked out sadly. Zingi ran after him. Sands: "is it mine?" he looked at me. For the first time in my life, I was scared of him. He didn't look happy at all. Me: "no...its already far along." he breathed and smiled. Sands: "thank God. I thought I'd have to perform another exorcism again." WHAT DID HE JUST SAY!!! Me: "Lakhe!" I ran to the bedroom. Sands: "not on you!" he laughed. Lakhe was in his office, a separate room. Me: "baby!" Lakhe: "yes love." Me: "why did you disappear?" Lakhe: "you did not see Sandile ephuma pha ekitchen? You really ought to differentiate his facial expressions as your friendship gets stronger. I knew he was up to something. I'm never around when that happens." Me: "he destroyed that marriage." Lakhe: "it was already destroyed." Me: "he says, oh my God, I can't believe I'm saying this." Lakhe: "what did he say?" Me: "Zingi is pregnant right? He says if it was his

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baby, he'd have to perform Another exorcism." Lakhe: "o-Kay. And that is....." Me: "ANOTHER. EXORCISM. These are the two words that should be popping out to any sane person!" Lakhe: "I'm still not catching this." Me: "God, Lakhe, go on Google and research Exorcism." Lakhe: "I know what an exorcism is- Oh...now I....oh damn. What does he mean another? Does that mean tha-Sandile!!!!!!!" he went to him. Lakhe: "explain! You casting out demons in my house?" Sands: "nooo...." Lakhe: "then?" Sands: "then nothing. It was a joke. I thought we'd be laughing about it." Lakhe: "you're sick." Sands: "supper is ready. There's some extra insides in the pot. If you want." he smiled. Sands: "you did a remarkable job sisi. Come sit." Sis Luleka asked to take her plate home since seku late. So I quickly dished up for her and Sandile took her home. The dinner was amazing. After we finished, Lakhe helped me pack the dishwasher. Lakhe: "so.....we have the whole house to ourselves for a while." Me: "babe....red carpet remember." Lakhe: "uurgg. For how long does it last?" Me: "about a week." he rolled his eyes. Me: "Sandile should be back any minute now." Lakhe: "with that driving? He should've been back 30 minutes ago. Maybe uyobona umntu. So can I at least get a neck rub?" Me: "sure my love." ndafaka tablet yalo machine, and switched it on. Me: "after I finish cleaning this kitc-" Lakhe: "NO! Sis Luleka cleaned this kitchen. You need to

relax and trust her." he pulled me to the lounge. Lakhe: "and then?" Me: "you're not going to sit between my legs." Lakhe: "ngoba?" Me: "hehake Lakhe. As if ndizovula amathanga kusetyenzwa pha." Lakhe: "Whatev's." he sat next to me, I put a pillow on my lap and he placed his head on it. Me: "There's my baby." Lakhe: "hmm...." Me: "bahambe kakuhle utatakho and your uncle?" Lakhe: "yeah. He called. Days ago." Me: "you never told me that your uncle was Zulu." Lakhe: "that didn't come up? Well then.." Me: "and how is your dad xhosa.....and you and Sandile.....but the uncle ngumzulu?" Lakhe: "my dad uyasthanda isixhosa, had to learn it for me and Sands and Nosi." Me: "that's all?" Lakhe: "yes." Me: "that's not all. What else?" Lakhe: "why would you think There's anything else?" Me: "he's never spoken a word of Zulu not even nge mistake. Something he grew up with, his culture, and he changed it in a heartbeat? Why didn't he just teach ya'll isiZulu instead?" Lakhe: "you think something happened?" Me: "hey, I'm not saying that. I'm just saying its rather suspicious." Lakhe: "it is....I always thought it was just a sacrifice for us. He's not really in touch with his family or any other family except me.....and Sandile.....plus our sister." he seemed to be deep in thought. Lakhe: "we've never gone to ezilalini zakokwabo. I've never seen his dad and I know he's alive. This Uncle is the only one we know from my dad's family." Me: "and your mom?" Lakhe: "my mom only has her mom, who lives in London." Me: "so...baby, you're adopted?" Lakhe: "Yes." Me: "Sandile?" Lakhe: "yep. Except Nosi." Me: "she's Stella's child?" Lakhe: "ya. Look, I don't know about before I arrived. But utata was the one to fetch me. He'd been doing his charity rounds and came to the foster care I was in, there were seven of us boys there. He kicked the ball with them all day engadinwa. I was never part of the kicking, the other boys didn't really want me around them so I stayed away and watched from a distance. I wanted to play too. Only God knows how badly I wanted to run around with a ball and laugh like them. So I stopped going outside and hid in the room instead. Our foster mom came to look for me wandifumana and gave me the hiding of my life esithi ndinoo hili." he chuckled. I had a lump in my throat and I was trying my hardest not to cry. Lakhe: "the next time famous Rob came, I was in my usual corner next to the stoep. Aunty Alsie made sure to wash us clean every morning and night. Ksasa ke xasidlala sinxibe nje but when Rob came we had to look nice. I had these pair of old faded jeans, a red golf shirt and blue knitted jersey. I had takkies on my feet. My hair was combed and such. I remember

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him walking to me. I thought ebezongena ngaphakathi for a glass of water or something but he stopped and said: 'why Uhleli wedwa?' His xhosa accent was a bit whack then. I didn't know what to say so I shrugged thinking he'd

disappear back to his playing. He just had to sit down instead. The whole playground was staring at me. I knew bendingasoze ndilale obuhlayo namhlanje because I'd be poked and punched for keeping them away from him. He asked me what my name was, I wouldn't answer him. He asked almost every possible question and I just sat there quietly. Then he left wayoncokola noAunty Alsie. I don't know what he said to her but after that day I was an egg to her. Her new favorite. She got me nice clothes, of course nabanye bethengelwa but she made it feel extra special for me. She let me choose a day where I could ask for any meal I wanted. I was scared, I didn't know why she did this. Also, the other boys got worse ngondithuka. Then one day, I was called to the office. Aunty Alsie dressed me in my new brown corduroy pants. A white polo neck and brown boots. She put a beanie over my head wathi masambe siye kwa gqirha. The doctor tried all he could to get me to speak. I think it took me about 8 months of therapy for me to open my mouth. The doctor never rushed me, he just gave me paper and coloring pencils. When I started talking to the doctor, Rob was back again. Once a week but not to play with the boys. He was always in the lounge, handling papers and stuff. Then one day in December. I was told that I had to go. I can still feel the depth which my heart sank. I remember thinking if ndiyahamba apha, ndizoyaphi? What did it mean? Then Rob appeared. He had a small teddy bear in his hand and a smile on his face. Then said: 'My son, we're going home...' Man..." I'm such a wimp. I was wiping the tears from my cheeks already. Lakhe: "he took me home with him that day. I met Stella. She became my new mom. I had a fami-" he suddenly stopped. Lakhe: "a week later I met my uncle." Me: "that's a sweet story baby." Lakhe: "No its not..." he sat up. Lakhe: "my father never told my uncle I'm adopted." Me: "yes he did. For sure he did, but you know why your uncle or dad never mentioned it to you? Its because you are part of them. You are their family, they was no need to dwell on how you came about." Lakhe: "you're right.." he put his head back on the pillow. Lakhe: "about a year later. Rob- My dad came to my room, he asked if I wanted a little brother. I didn't have any friends at school, or anywhere. All I did was play with him. He said now he wouldn't be playing much anymore because he had to go to work for me but he wanted me to have someone to play with. I agreed instantly on condition that my brother doesn't come from my previous foster care. 5 months later, Sandile came home. He was 5 years old. At first bendicimba this would be a disaster, kodwa ufika kwakhe....." he smiled. Lakhe: "I'm getting a little emotional now." Me: "its okay love. Its hard not to be, kunin ndisula iinyembezi." I kissed his head. Me: "ufika kwakhe kwanjani." Lakhe: "it was the best day of my life. I remember he followed me everywhere I went. Xasiphuma phandle he would hold my hand." Me: "okay stop...." Lakhe: "don't

be weak." I tried to regulate myself. Stop crying! Damn. Lakhe: "he had this tiny voice when he called my name, it sounded like a puppy slipping on butter." I laughed. Lakhe: "ebendibiza Laki. Till today he still forgets andibize Laki. Most people think he means Lucky. I know what it means. Its that same little potato head that relied on his big brother to tie up his shoelaces." potato head was standing at the door. Lakhe: "this is why I get overly upset when he gets lost or disappears. I lose my Laki charm. That boy is half my life baby, and you of course. I just don't think I'd be able to handle it if I were to lose him." I swallowed the emotional lump in my throat. I think Sandile was scared to come in because he was emotional too. Oko emile pha and then the door closed. Sands: "evening fam. What movie are we watching? My back is killing me." he sat on the couch. Really? You

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will pretend you didn't hear anything? Lakhe: "whatever you want. I'm taking a nap. Baby? Khenze kaloku lento buyenza on my head. Its nice." I gently drew patterns on his head with my finger tips. Sandile found a suitable movie and settled the remote down. I gave him the look. You're really going to pretend you didn't hear anything? You're really a potato head shame. Lakhe was asleep within minutes. Sands: "I remember ndise pre school, ndiphuma early kunaye. I used to wait for him to come out and eat my lunch. Mama packed food as if we were going camping everyday. Now there was this bully that harassed me qho. One time ubhuti came out early and saw me ndityhalwa ngulomjita. He dropped his bag and fought him on the spot. The other boy landed in hospital for days. Bhuti got suspended. Wabuya though after everything was told. It was the first person he'd ever fought in his life, all those years he never protected himself, but when it came to me.....stones would bleed. I still depend on him, as old as I am. I'm still the little boy who follows everywhere he goes..." Me: "awww Sands....that is so sweet." Lakhe: "you're a faggot." Sands: "arg fuck it! I thought you were sleeping." Me: "you guys....." Lakhe: "you can stop crying baby....the story is over now." Me: "you will have to repeat this story for our kids." Lakhe: "Sandile doesn't want kids. I'm not sure if it would be safe to have any around him. Since he's a big baby himself." Me: "okay, don't be mean. Sandile loves kids." Sands: "no I don't." Me: "everyone loves kids." Sands: "how can I love something I don't have? Or want?" Me: "they're cute." Sands: "so are puppies....but you know the nice thing about dogs? They don't scream all night. I'd rather a dog than a baby." Lakhe: "YAASS!!" Me: "excuse me?" Lakhe: "I mean no! How dare you? You know what? I'm so offended I'm going to bed." Sands: "Deuces." Lakhe went to the bedroom. Me: "goodnight Sandile." Sands: "nifane naqumba shame. Bye." Me: "who does not like kids!!" Sands: "ME. How can I like something if I've

never had." Me: "I get you. So if i-" Sands: "No. I'm not doing it. I don't like kids. I might like my nephew and niece but that's as far as it goes. No babies for me." Me: "Might?" Sands: "its an obvious give. I will like your kids. I just don't want my own. Why is it such a shock? As if I'm the best father figure on the planet?" Me: "you're not." Sands: "Exactly. Suppose you're celebrating." Me: "goodnight!" I went to the bedroom. Lakhe was smiling at his Macbook. Me: "what are you doing?" Lakhe: "Sandile's birthday coming up, I didn't know what to get him....but now." Me: "get him a nice watch." Lakhe: "he doesn't like watches. Dictated time. Schedules. Alarms. Dates." Me: "of course not. A suit? Since he's starting work." Lakhe: "unfortunately no...he can do that himself." Me: "a new car?" Lakhe: "I already gave him my brand new I8." Me: "what does he like?" Lakhe: "watching TV and eating." Me: "he doesn't like stuff?" Lakhe: "have you seen Sandile TRY and do anything else?" Me: "get him a Smart TV. Sort of like a Smart ph-" Lakhe: "its already in his bedroom. Which he does not touch. Ufuna leya ise lounge." Me: "okay I'm out of ideas." Lakhe: "I'll get him a puppy." Me: "a puppy? For Sandile? Cela sibuye umva kancinci. The unstable, fueled by gas angry psychopath of a brother." Lakhe: "you heard him! He said he'd rather have a dog than a baby. If he can take care of the ducks, he can take care of his puppy. How about this one?" it was so adorable, this couldn't be the puppy that would belong to Sands. I was so afraid he would do something kuyo. Lakhe: "just relax.... Nobody hurts puppies." Me: "please don't make me think about it. Cela umthengele something else." Lakhe: "would a snake be a better fit? A thick brown python?" Me: "no!! I meant something not animal. Just throw him a party." Lakhe: "NO." Me: "why?" Lakhe: "because I said No. We don't do parties. I'm gonn call Dumi to make sure he's fine." he dialed his phone and walked to the dresser. I stayed on the bed ndabuka pictures of more puppies. Puppies that had grey fur and white patches also. Then the brown pitbull. Yes! This one is

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the one. He's so handsome. he had eyes that could make you melt. If I Sandile didn't like the puppy, I'll gladly take it. He was a cutie and deserved to be loved and pampered. Lakhe: "baby." he just got off the phone. He had a troubled look on his face. Me: "what's wrong?" Lakhe: "a paramedic answered his phone....." I sat up waiting for him to tell me this was a joke. Lakhe: "they were in an accident."

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Chapter 44

He looked at me. Lakhe: "did you hear what I said?" Me: "yes. I did." I looked through other pictures on his laptop. Lakhe: "Spho. Your friend is in an accident!" Me: "which friend? The one that likes you or the one that Wants you? Unclear." Lakhe: "what!" Me: "she wants you. Dumi said it. He knows and I don't." Lakhe: "you're being crazy. A lot of people want you but zange ndingabancedi just because of that. She never acted on it. Can you just get up and get dressed. When you were in an accident she spent her days helping me sort out your life back together. don't be like this." I got dressed. Lakhe: "why are you even worried? You of all people should know me. Ndimkhathelele nganton lamntana mna? Hayi nawe Spho. Tshini." Me: "mxim." Lakhe: "unomona because someone thinks I'm cute? You never even tell me I'm handsome now unomona-" Me: "okay, so I realize I've built a little ego. You're not that cute. In fact, I think Sandile is cuter." he laughed. Lakhe: "then why aren't you marrying him?" I breathed. Lakhe: "I know you think I'm sexy. Don't try and burst the bubble." Me: "whatever. I'm driving." I could feel his breath hitch for a second. Lakhe: "no baby, its fine-" Me: "what.....you scared?" he walked out to the lounge. Lakhe: "help me." Sands: "no thanks. I'm fine." Lakhe: "You're a piece of shit, you know that? Spho, wants to drive, I can't let her drive." Sands: "but she can drive." Lakhe: "like a maniac." Sands: "There's nothing wrong with that." Lakhe: "Sandile. Talk to her." I walked into the lounge. Me: "talk to who?" Sands: "so siyaphi?" he got up. Lakhe: "we're going to the hospital. Dumi was in an accident." Sands: "let me drive you. I could do with the exercise." Me: "all this trouble because awufuni ndiqhube Lakhe?" Lakhe: "not at all baby. You're a great driver." Me: "then why can't I drive us now?" Lakhe: "because Sandile is offering. It would be rude to let him down. Come." Sandile had already started the car, sangena and he drove us to Greenacres hospital. Sands: "so, what happened?" Lakhe: "we don't know. I called his phone and was told he's in an accident." Sands: "is he alive?" Lakhe: "we don't know." Sands: "Maybe if he stayed and ate insides with us, his insides would stay inside his body." Lakhe: "too soon Sandile." Sands: "maybe next week? I have to write it down for the next time I see him." Lakhe: "you're not doing that. This is serious, asiyazi noba kwenzekke ntoni." Sands: "you mean if he's dead?" Lakhe: "shut up. He's not dead." we arrived at the hospital sayongena. Lakhe asked for them and was told they're awaiting surgery. Lakhe: "what are you waiting for? They're not minors." Nurse: "you are a relative?" Lakhe: "no they're my friends. I'm not sure about their family." Nurse: "the surgery will be very complicated sir, there could be-" Lakhe: "do whatever you can. Okay?" she nodded. Nurse: "this is our doctor. Dr Ruossouw. He's general surgeon and will be assisting Dr St Andrews, the hospital chief of surgery." Lakhe: "nice to meet you." they shook hands. StAndrew: "I'll send for updates every hour. We'll be using two different

operating rooms for the both of them. This might take all night. Do you wish to wait?" Lakhe looked at me. I nodded. This was serious. If the nurse was this nervous this couldn't be child's play. It just reminded me of my own accident and I was slowly going into panic mode. Lakhe: "Yes. We'll wait." the doctors rushed off. Lakhe was given papers by the nurse and we all sat down. Sands: "so how about ndibuyele endlini to go fetch a blanket. Its cold here." Lakhe: "this is no time for your jokes Sandile." Sands: "Spho, awugodoli?" we did go out in a rush, and it was a bit chilly but I could see the look in his eyes wasn't of honesty. He looked at me as if I was holding his leash and he needed to catch a ball. He wanted to do something. It wasn't good. Lakhe: "just go Sandile. We'll call you when we need you." Me: "wait..." they both looked at me. Lakhe with the question of 'you really don't care about your friend' on his

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face. And Sandile with a 'you cannot be fucking serious' on his. Me: "I can do with some fresh air, I'll walk you out." Sandile: "no its okay. Stay her-" Me: "I'm walking you out." he sucked on his teeth and walked. I followed him. We walked in silence. Sands: "why are you staying. You don't wanna be here." Me: "I was in the same situation a few months ago. I could've died." Sands: "but you survived." Me: "why are you angry?" Sands: "I'm not angry." Me: "you're irritated. Why." Sands: "you're seeing things." Me: "I know I'm not. Tell me truth." Sands: "the truth is, hospitals depress me. I just wanna go home." Me: "you don't look depressed." he gave me a side look. Me: "you look pissed off. Angry. Frustrated. You know why?" he stood by the car and stared at me. Me: "because you didn't accomplish the goal you were aiming for. They're not dead. They have a chance of surviving, when you heard that, you looked for a gap.....to finish them off." Sands: "you are my gap Spho. You know you want her gone. This is your one chance to finish her off. I have a friend here with access to a nurses uniform and all sorts. Also, a lethal injection, all you do is inject it in her drip and she fades away slowly in her sleep. It doesn't work for hours but once it hits the heart, it freezes it." Me: "you're fucking crazy! Who hurt you!! Why unje Sandile!?" Sands: "you're the one that came up with crazy theories. I thought we were playing a game like CSI or some shit." Me: "Sandile, this is life. Real life. Its not a game. Did you cause this accident?" Sands: "I was at the bar with my friend Brian. Halfway across town. How could I have been in two places at once?" Me: "then why are you so eager to get out of here?" Sands: "Sweet stuff, If I wanted to kill Dumisani and Zingisa. I'd have visited him just after he leaves his office on a Tuesday evening, just before he goes to Salt with his friend Kaige. He'd be dead and cold lying in a mortuary by now because of a hijacking gone wrong. I'd also have visited Zingisa a week after the burial and a fake will is read where it would seem she

had fabricated it since she's deep within the borders of Dumi's lawyer friends. I'd wait until she takes her children to school, goes to the gym and comes home to change. Her gardener Lesley would leave the sliding door open while he goes out to buy supplies and come back to find her wrists slit in her bath. But then again He wouldn't go into the bathroom though....which means it gives me at least 9 hours for someone to find her dead body. Now tell me why would I go and create a lousy car accident?" Me: "because you don't kill people. They succumb to their injuries and die." Sands: "you....." he smiled. Sands: "Lord Father God, have mercy. You really do know me, don't you." Me: "what. are. you." Sands: "How have you not figured it out by now." Me: "how..." I swallowed. Me: "how did you know all...this information..." was I safe around him? How much did he know about me? Sands: "they have revised routines. Unchanged and unbothered." Me: "but how do YOU know." Sands: "I get bored. I need something to entertain myself.....I'm like you, we're the same mna nawe. Always curious to know more, searching, looking..." I wasn't like that. This is crazy and psychotic. Me: "Sandile." Sands: "Siphosenkosi." he looked deadly serious now. Not dead serious, but DEADLY. No further questions Your Honor. Lakhe: "interesting conversation I was never invited to?" he was walking to us. Sands: "I was just catching up with my best friend." Lakhe: "best friend? Since?" Sands: "are you jealous?" Lakhe: "no actually I'm concerned. Baby, uright? Did he say anything?" Sands: "she thinks I killed your friends." Lakhe: "but they're not de-.....Sandile, wenzeni?" Sands: "what! Nawe? Come on. You of all people." Lakhe: "well you do have a point. Accidents are poor. You just enjoy draining blood from bodies, drying them up like biltong and burning them to ashes. So.." I could feel the urine rippling in my bladder. Yeeeyi. Sands: "thank you!" I should've known phof, this was the man that brought evidence into my lounge...wait.....did he drain his blood? Son of Mary and Joseph, I needed to throw up. Lakhe: "we're just playing

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baby. Don't be alarmed. Look, its sad what happened to Dumi and Zingi. And they're not dead-" Sands: "Yet." Lakhe: "vala umlomo wena. They're going to be fine love. Sum.'mamela uSandile. He's a loose bullet nje. A dangerous weapon to use but really just not harmful when he's not loaded on a gun. Don't let him scare you." Me: "I'm not scared. Of him or his award winning acts. Sandile is what he is. I was just making sure he wasn't responsible for this." Sands: "ok. That's a bit spicy." Lakhe: "yoh." Me: "I'm going back inside." I was scared actually. Of our conversation before Lakhe. That was a mad man. And he was loose as fuck. As bullet as he is. He was still dangerous. I went inside the hospital. The following morning, the doctor came to us with

news. Doc: "your friends are recovering. Dumisani Jolobe is still in a coma as of now. He suffered a lot of internal injuries and fractured bones. Zingisa Jolobe is just out of intensive care and is recovering as well." Me: "can we see them?" Doc: "unfortunately, you can only see her. Dumisani's section is out of bounds for any visitors at the moment except his direct family." Me: "okay." Lakhe: "you go in baby. I'll find abantu bakokwabo." Me: "sure." I went in to see Zingi. She was still plugged in on machines and sleeping. Me: "hey....." I didn't know what to say to her, but I felt really sorry that she was in this position. Me: "I'm sorry you're in this position hun....but I'm glad you survived it. I hope you can hear me. Soon you'll get better and come out of here. You're doing well." Zingi: "is he....." she was trying to talk. Me: "you need a nurse?" I got up. Zingi: "no..." I looked at her. Me: "you're awake! Welcome back tshomi..." Zingi: "is.... he.... dead...." Me: "who? Dumi? No he's fine too." Zingi: "No.....dead." Me: "Zingi, listen, Dumi is okay. Don't freak out. I promise he's fine." Zingi: "No.....want....." the machines were going crazy, beeping loudly like I stepped on her oxygen or something. The nurse ran inside and one pushed me out. Zingi: "dead.." she whispered....

A few days later, it was a Friday and I was at the office. I'd been at the hospital earlier, Zingi's mom and Dumi's mom were there. Dumi finally out of his coma. Zingi doing better. She had her memory, Thank Goodness. all up to the last minute of the accident. Then kucime izibane. Apparently. I don't know why I feel like that is a bit of a lie. I was called to the office and left olohlobo. Lakhe wanted me ndimkhaphe siyobuka puppy ka Sandile. The birthday was tomorrow and umntu wayo could not be bothered. So was his brother. Me: "I still don't think a puppy would be a good thing to buy him." Lakhe: "if you can do better. Be my guest." Me: "really?" Lakhe: "ewe. I don't know why you're so against the puppy. I get him my gift. You get him yours." Me: "perfect!" Lakhe: "you don't even know what he likes." Me: "that's what you think." we went home after the puppy hunt and Lakhe was set on this one cute brown fella. Ebefuna uhamba nayo namhlanje. This wouldn't just be Sandile's pet I'm afraid. I hope bazokwazi ke uqoqosha emveni kwayo. Me: "Sands." I went to the lounge after changing. Sands: "hm?" Me: "what are you watch- oh my goodness!" Sands: "that." he was watching some snake show on Animal planet. Me: "what are you doing tomorrow?" Sands: "I'll be sitting here from 8am till 5. Then I'm going to have drinks with Brian." Me: "who's this Brian I've never met." he looked at me. Sands: "my friend." Me: "secret friend?" Sands: "kind of." Me: "why?" he shrugged. Sands: "just. You done?" there was no Brian. He didn't exist. Brian was an excuse for Sandile to get away from the world he knew. I went to the kitchen. Lakhe: "told you. All he needs is a puppy." Me: "I'm taking him to the Snake park for the 45 minute show. Then

you set up here, call his friends, I'll braai the meat and make salads." Lakhe: "we're not throwing Sandile a party Spho." Me: "this isn't a party. Anyway, do you know where I can get a dart board in the

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form of a face. Then the little darts could be shaped as knives? I'll make a few calls." I looked at my phone. Me: "also, I have to get him to do something outside if I want to bake him cupcakes, with red icing, make it look like its dripping blood. Or better yet, a cake." all Lakhe did was stare at me. Me: "maybe the cake could be in the form of an open chest, sliced open with a knife still on it. Organs popping out. Maybe There's a bakery that can do it." Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi!!" he hissed. Me: "yes?" Lakhe: "You are as sick as he is....." I smiled. Lakhe: "what is wrong with you? And dead things?" Me: "a haunted house? While we're at the snake park. You need to decorate it." Lakhe: "I'm doing no such thing." Me: "not to mention Blood plastics." Lakhe: "what the fuck is that?" Me: "pouring red wine into see through plastics and serve them as beverage. It would look like blood. Let's recreate a vampire scene!" Lakhe: "baby. This is a bad idea." Me: "do you have anything better?" Lakhe: "he's not afraid of anything....he does not possess a fear or panic mode. Do this.....if you succeed, I'll get you something nice and pretty." Sands: "I also want something nice and pretty. What are we doing?" he opened the fridge. Lakhe: "planning our errands for tomorrow. I need to meet up with George for a meeting." Me: "and I'm the errand girl for the day. Nice to know." Lakhe: "please do this for me baby." Sands: "I'll help if you want." Me: "that would be great Sands. Thank you." I winked at Lakhe. He looked at his brother. Lakhe: "isn't it your birthday tomorrow?" Sands: "already? It can't be. What date is it?" he looked at his phone. Sands: "oh well. What time do you need me Spho? I've got a drinks date at 5." Me: "at 10:15am." Sands: "perfect. See you then." he walked out. Lakhe: "so you're really taking him to this Snake Park thing?" Me: "he likes reptiles. I saw him watching maybe a young visit to the park would do him good." Lakhe: "and you? You also like snakes?" Me: "no...shit! I can't go visit snakes!" Lakhe: "relax. The minute he enters the place you'll be invisible so you can sneak out." Me: "let me go make the plans for the darts and cake." Lakhe: "baby?" Me: "hm?" Lakhe: "thank you." Me: "for what?" Lakhe: "your effort. I mean this is a little too much but, you put your comfort zone aside to make us smile." Me: "you liked my ideas?" Lakhe: "eyonanto ibindothusa yeyoba uze nazo on your own. That on its own is scary. Also.....can we share the present?" Me: "unonjana?" Lakhe: "No. We both know Sandile akazoyihoya lonja the minute he sees all this." Me: "awww baby." I hugged him. Me: "I loved the puppy idea. It will be his last gift after a rollercoaster of a birthday filled with gory and murder. He'll love it baby."

Lakhe: "that dart board idea is flippen insane. Can I get that on my birthday too?" Me: "and this..." I kissed him. Lakhe: "a lot of this..." he kissed me back. Me: "I love you so much with your stubbornness." Lakhe: "it goes well with your persistence." his phone rang. I let go of him and left the kitchen. I had a calls to make. I needed more ideas. The open chest cake is a do, the face dartboard a yes, the trip to his favorite animals a definite. Lakhe just needed to get his friends here so we could do a little braai. Me: "Sandile..." Sands: "ndenzentoni this time?" Me: "There's something that's been on and off on my mind. Lakhe akazobona nto ke yena." Sands: "Mr Goody ballons, the Mayor of Vanilla Town? Please. What's up?" Me: "at the hospital-" Sands: "this again? I'm getting offended now." Me: "khawuphole tu." I sat down. Me: "ndingenile kwi room ka Zingi mos and was having a chat. Actually, to myself because ebengathethi. She asked me a question." he moved closer. Sands: "uk'buze ntoni?" Me: "if he was dead." I whispered. Sands: "you be her. I be you. So I'm chatting, heee hayi peto. Its such a tragedy, I shouldve asked you to stay and have supper ke yazi, qha mos ubuyi ndutsu so....anyway uxolo wethu girl Ube right vha." Me: "eyona ndutsu nguwe vha." I chuckled. Sands: "don't be a chicken. What happened next." Me: "she asked if her husband was dead. I said no, I didn't mention that he's in a coma though." Sands: "he got

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out the coma yesterday." Me: "ndiyayaz lonto Sandile. Then, when she asked, I thought ebesoyika.....but then she said something I might've misinterpreted." Sands: "tell me." Me: "after I'd comforted her telling her he's going to be okay, she said, 'No.....want...' then the nurses came in. I was being led out when I heard her finish esithi 'Dead'." he gasped. Me: "what do you think?" Sands: "its obvious Spho hun." he relaxed back into his couch with the remote. Sands: "she was trying to kill him." ndomelwa ngumqala.....

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Chapter 45

After the talk with Sandile I felt very uneasy. I don't know but bendisoyika. Ndoyikisela uDumisani umntanabantu ongazi niks. Maybe we're mistaken man. There's no such thing. Maybe I heard wrong or misinterpreted it. I just carried on with the arrangements of the party. A guy called Ronnie said he would attempt the face dartboard but it could only be ready tomorrow evening. I had a lot of persuading to do and Lakhe's black card izokhapha apho kulo persuading. Lakhe: "baby wam? Is everything okay?" Me: "I don't know. I have a headache. Will you be able to fetch Sandile's cake Ksasa when we go to the park?" Lakhe: "yeah.." he held my arms. Lakhe: "you look

troubled. Talk to me." Me: "just stuff...." Lakhe: "what stuff?" he sat down and pulled me to sit on top of him. I started telling him about the incident in Zingi's hospital room. Lakhe: "so you think she did this on purpose?" I nodded. Lakhe: "its not far fetched baby...but why would she wanna kill her own husband? Utata wabantwana bakhe? Before you decide to do anything. Talk to her, find out how she is and how she feels. If you still feel something doesn't add up, we'll figure something out." I hugged him. Me: "I thought you'd think I'm crazy." Lakhe: "akholonto baby.. You just have a very wild imagination at times and sometimes it runs off with you ndishiyeke mna ndimile. Its cute. What else needs to be prepared for ngomso kanene?" Me: "braai. You have to buy meat, and invite his friends." Lakhe: "I'll fly them in ksasa. So my task is, flights, the cake, should we still do the haunted house theme?" Me: "nah...I was throwing ideas around." Lakhe: "everything is going to be okay love. Don't worry." Me: "I know. Thanks to you.. You're amazing." Lakhe: "and?" Me: "and handsome." Lakhe: "yavela inyani." Me: "let me take a nap baby ne." Lakhe: "okay. I'll cook you dinner so long." he kissed me full on the lips then pecked my nose. Me: "enkosi sthandwasam." I got into bed. He covered me with a blanket and I started dozing off but it felt like I was dreaming ndothuka. I relaxed again closing my eyes and there it was. I was in a different house to the one I lived in. Smaller also. A quick rush of emotions flooded me, it was familiar and felt like a home. A man I've met recently walked in the door, looked at me and smiled. Me: "Simphiwe." I now sat up from my bed. Slowly my memory was coming back. There was so much heaviness in my heart for the smile I saw. And that was it. I saw nothing after. It felt I was thwarted by my own brain. I slid back into bed and closed my eyes.

Evening came. Lakhe was next to me when I woke up doing something on his iPad. Lakhe: "hey." Me: "hi." Lakhe: "restless sleep?" Me: "yes...I couldn't properly sleep." Lakhe: "why?" Me: "I regained another piece of my past." Lakhe: "wanna talk about it?" Me: "actually I want to ask about it." Lakhe: "shoot away Mrs." Me: "I remember Simphiwe." he looked at me blankly. I couldn't read his expression. Lakhe: "what about him?" Me: "just him. Being in a house with him. I'll need something more to support this memory. Or unlock it somehow." Lakhe: "but what will it help? Its in the past." Me: "I need to get over it. I need to move on, my heart was heavy when I thought about it. Like something unfinished." Lakhe: "okay...uhm... So ufuna umbona?" Me: "No. I want You to tell me." Lakhe: "why me?" Me: "don't you know him? Or have I never mentioned him when we met?" he sighed. Lakhe: "ndizok'xelela inyani." I sat up and looked at him. Lakhe: "I met you uyi girlfriend ka Simphiwe. He was a friend of mine, actually not really. Me and him met in East London

once and kept in contact over the years as iitshomi. Weren't really close but cool enough to hang, kuncokolwe njee. I sometimes gave him business advice and so forth. All this time, I never knew about you. At all. A couple of months back, I move to PE for my CEO appointing and he offers me accommodation. This was the first day I met you." he smiled.

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Lakhe: "I lost my mind when I saw you, I promise. Bendingaziva ncam noba ndithini. I remember ukungena kwam, use kitchen cooking. Simphiwe introduced us and our eyes locked. You got shaky and wandered off pretending to do something. Ndayohlala phantsi noSimphiwe. I barely remember nalo conversation yakhe because I kept staring at you. The funny thing is, ewe ubumhle, but I wanted to know more about you. Yoh...wandigqiba lomjita xa esithi masambe siyosela. Jesus I wanted to die! I stopped myself ndisezombuza umshiya njani umntu onje to go drink? What the hell is wrong with you! Qha ndazibamba because it would seem weird. We came back that night or early morning enxile ke yena, bendingaselanga kangako mna. How stupid would that be sinxile sobabini kodwa funeke kuqhutyiwe. Safika endlini, you opened for us unxibe gown e-cute and short. You'd just woken. Heeee, I felt like God was gonna punish me that night vha?" I laughed. Lakhe: "ndizibuza umhlabathi uSimphiwe ulele ingqondo okanye uthakathiwe? Yuuh Spho. But you thought I was a freak. Undoyika..long story short, uyandazi mna ndingayitsala kubeksasa. Phof I love telling this story about how I met you. Its funny and sweet. So, basically, you caught him cheating on you nomama womntanakhe, lonto wasilahla sonke. You literally disappeared off the face of the earth. Kungekho namntu ukwaziyo ba uphi. I got a hold of you and asked you to help me decorate my new house. Which is this one by the way." Me: "so you two aren't friends anymore?" Lakhe: "we haven't spoken to each other since the day I left his house. Apart from the encounter yakwa Woolworths." Me: "I see." I smiled. Lakhe: "was that helpful?" Me: "a little. I can imagine it happening...its slowly coming to me." he nodded. Me: "thank you sthandwasam." Lakhe: "let me get your food." Me: "mandisele ndiphakama wethu." he put his iPad down. Me: "love?" Lakhe: "yes baby?" Me: "didn't I have one of those?" Lakhe: "I'm not sure ke sthandwasam. But you probably did." Me: "andithi I had a flat right?" Lakhe: "yes, you'd just moved in kuyo about 2 weeks before the accident." Me: "can we go there?" Lakhe: "now?" Me: "yes. Bungekayithengisi right?" Lakhe: "I haven't even gone there recently. I forgot ngoku ubuthe mandiy'thengise. So I guess singaya." I got dressed and we went to have dinner. Me: "Uphi uSandile?" Lakhe: "probably hibernating. Andimazi." I ate the dinner my fiance had prepared for me and we left. Ufika kwethu he

unlocked the flat and we walked in. It was dusty and the furniture was still unpacked. Me: "you didn't come here after the accident?" Lakhe: "I did, to collect some of your stuff qha zange ndigqibe..." I tried switching on the lights but it wasn't working. He checked the electricity box. Lakhe: "waphelayo umbane. Probably the geyser. Its still on." I switched on my phone torch and went to the bedroom, I sat on the bed closing my eyes. Something was coming. Familiarity of being here. Lakhe in the kitchen. What had he been doing there. Lakhe: "baby?" he peeped in the room. Me: "I remember this place. Also still unclear. This is so frustrating!" Lakhe: "don't worry my love. Its coming...it just might take more time. Ayisoze kaloku iveske ibuye yonke ngexesha elinye." Me: "I know." I looked through my drawers. Me: "here it is." Lakhe: "what?" Me: "my iPad." I smiled uncontrollably. Me: "I found it!" I was near tears actually. Finding something that was a mere idea about an hour ago." Lakhe: "that's great love...masisele sikhangelana ezinye izinto." we collected some of my belongings. Lakhe: "sizoyithini Le furniture?" Me: "when we decorate the other side of our house sinoyifaka pha." Lakhe: "okay. Masambe ke." we left for home.

Saturday morning I was up early. Around 7 actually. Lakhe had his meeting at 9 so ebehleli naye about get ready soon. I took my iPad off the charger and switched it on. Me: "shit." Lakhe: "what?" Me: "password." Lakhe: "try your birth year." I tried it, and it bounced.

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Lakhe: "name?" wrong. Lakhe: "think of something that could've been important to you." I gave it a little thought. Little? Something little. Kid. Buhle. When was his birth year? I tried 2010. It bounced. He looked as old as Lulonke. So maybe 2009. Me: "I'm in!" Lakhe: "it was your name?" Me: "no, birth year ka Buhle." Lakhe: "hm." he looked back at his own. Me: "I have over 1000 pictures here." I was jubilant and equally excited. Lakhe: "you okay?" he wasn't even looking at me but he could hear the squeaks of excitement. Me: "Yes. I'm fine." Lakhe: "Sandile is still not home." Me: "what!!" so that's why you're moody. Me: "but the surprise birthday?" Lakhe: "that's Sandile for you." he locked his iPad and went to the bathroom. Unjani bethuna uSandile! Why can't he just sit still? I went through such effort to make him happy yet he doesn't even pitch? Mxim! I put down my iPad ndathatha phone ka Lakhe. He had really nice games on his phone which I was addicted to at times. Why don't I install the games on my own phone, because Andifuni. 30 minutes into playing Lakhe came out the bathroom egqibo vasa. He got dressed casually. Tight Dark blue jeans and a plain black shirt. He had red Louboutin sneakers on and a black cap. I got up to make the bed. Lakhe:

"ndiyahamba kengoku vha." he put on his watch and cologne. Me: "okay baby. Ina." I gave him back his phone. He looked so damn fiiiiine! Lakhe: "maybe we could take a drive to St Francis when I'm back. Siyohlala pha for the rest of the weekend." Me: "what if he comes back baby? Maybe he was out drinking with his friends." Lakhe: "the only friends he has are those that are coming namhlanje from Durban. I don't know who he keeps disappearing to here. I'll give you a call when I'm done with my meeting." he kissed me and walked out. I went to brush my teeth, running the shower. After rinsing my mouth I went to wash ndaphuma in 10 minutes. I took out ripped skinny jeans and wore them. I stood in front of the mirror ndazibuka. The skinny jeans I mean. I remembered wearing them in the room. In a hurry. I was looking for keys. Lakhe came in the door wama khona. And that was it. Blocked again. I had an olive green loose vest, first wore my black bra ndanxiba vest yam. I looked through for shoes, I had two options of sneakers that didn't win. Instead I found my Balmain stilleto ndanxiba zona. I just wanted walk around the house feeling fine as hell. The short hair I originally had thanks to that accident had grown. If Sandile was not here by 1:30pm I would go do my hair. I went to the kitchen to prepare something to eat. Ungena kwam kwelo khitshi I almost choked on my own breath. Why didn't I expect this? Me: "one of these days I'm going to have a heart attack because of you. Where have you been?" he was eating. As usual. Sands: "out. With Brian." Me: "when are we meeting this Brian." Sands: "why do you wanna meet Brian?" Me: "well, its rather odd that we don't know all your friends. Why not invite him over today for drinks. I'll make you your favorite cupcake." he smiled. Sands: "No." Me: "why not?" Sands: "because andifuni Spho. Uzoxelela uLakhe wena. You two are always whispering about me." Me: "I swear asoze ndimxelele." Sands: "we can fetch Brian xasiyokwenza errands zakho. Where are we starting?" Me: "at the bank. Then we have to pay a few bills. Collect some stuff from Westbourne road." Sands: "cool. I'll get dressed." Me: "ubuvasile phof." he chuckled. Sands: "at Brian's house." he walked away. Who is this Brian! I shook my head ndazenzela sandwich and poured Mango juice ndasela. Sandile came back dressed when I finished eating. I texted Lakhe. Me: "we still on. He's here. Spent the night with this Brian again. He responded: "who is this Brian? Kunin ehlala naye? I'm worried baby. Is Sandile gay?" I laughed. Sands: "I'm ready." and again, he was dressed in all black. Me: "you are a special case yazi." Sands: "I am?" he looked at himself. Me: "come. We're going to be late." we went to the car. Sands: "Lakhe says you drive like a maniac. Let's see. We're taking the i8." ndiphathwa lidyudyu. Me: "that is suicidal machine." Sands: "then I guess we're getting on

the highway to heaven. I hope God can see our headlights." he unlocked the car wangena kwi passenger seat. I said a short silent prayer ndangena kwi driver's. Sands: "oh wait. We can't take this car." I breathed a sigh of relief. I serve a living God! Sands: "we're fetching Brian so we gotta take the other car." i8 was only two seats luckily for me. Lakhe had taken his RS7. There was the ML left. Sayongena kuyo. I drove the car calmly because ndiyiqhelile and ibindenza happy gqithi. He directed me to Brian's place which was in Lovemore heights thank God ngoba the snake park was around there nayo. As we parked at this lovely house, he got out the car wayobetha bell. What a special friend Brian was ade ayolandwa at the door. After a few seconds the door opened but my phone beeped and I read the message. Ibisuka ku Lakhe. It read: "I'm going to fetch the cake now. Baby, is he gay?" I laughed again. Me: "ugqibile meeting yakho phof?" Lakhe: "yes I'm done. You talk to him right? He tells you his secrets. So....? Is he?" Me: "it doesn't matter if he's gay baby. As long as he's happy. I think we should be happy for him." Lakhe: "Oh My God." Me: "you're so dramatic bro. Calm down." Lakhe: "so Brian is his boyfriend? That's why he doesn't want kids mos. It explains a lot. Will the puppy be too much? Reveal the secret? That I discovered?" Me: "no. It won't be. Calm down, okay? I gotta go." I put down my phone and saw Sandile coming from the corner of my eye. He opened the gate for Brian....

****shocked**** Brian was a woman. My heart was overwhelmed with warmth and joy. I couldn't hide the smile on my face. She was gorgeous! And black, with light smooth skin. Her natural hair was tied up in a bun engafakanga make up. She was just beautiful! Sandile opened the front seat. Sands: "ngena kaloku." She: "hayi Sandile. Usister wakho." Sands: "she doesn't bite." he helped her climb in. Me: "hello." I smiled. She: "hi." she was shy. Wavala icango Sandile wayongena in the backseat. She put on her seatbelt. Me: "I'm Spho. Sandile's sister in law." She: "ndingu Khanya mna." Me: "Unjani Khanya?" Khanya: "I'm good thanks Unjani wena?" Me: "I'm fine babe. Just relax." I looked at the rear view mirror and saw Sandile taking a picture encumeeeee ke phof. He had a girlfriend! :) I drove to my destination. Bobabini didn't know where I was going nam ndathula ke, phof chatting to Khanya a little. Sandile ebejonge in his phone unbothered as to where we're going or sifika nini. I finally arrived and parked the car. Me: "let's go guys." I got out the car. Both of them got out. Ndayitixa. Sands: "Spho..." Me: "yes." Sands: "is this what I think it is?" Me: "if you can read, probably." he smiled and covered his mouth. Me: "Happy Birthday!!" Sands: "My Gosh Spho!!" we hugged. Sands: "this is amazing!! A snake park in real life? Let's go in!" Me: "have fun." Khanya and I stuck our heels with glue on the ground. Sandile was bouncing about like a little toddler. Sands: "what do you mean?" he stopped. Me: "I mean we'll fetch you when you're done." Sands: "anicingi. Anisoze nindenze lonto mna."

he pulled our hands in. Me: "Sands, I'm afraid of snakes!" Khanya: "me too! Baby. This your hobby." Sands: "don't worry. They're the sweetest creatures ever. They won't hurt you." Khanya and I clung onto him kodwa asikangeni kwakule ndawo zikuyo. Sands: "this is the best present ever. Can we touch them." Me: "no!!" I swear bendizozichamela right that second when the tour started. He held both our hands waphola inqayi umfana. Sands: "maybe I should get one as a pet." Me: "in your own house. That I will never visit." Khanya: "xasesohlukene." we giggled. Sands: "reptiles are emotional creatures. You're hurting their feelings." Khanya: "they don't have feelings!" Sands: "ni-negative yazi. Ooohh, look at that one." Me: "Sandile!!" Khanya: "its like watching Generations The Legacy all over again, only this time uMamlambo uze ne relatives zakhe." I chuckled. Me: "nguban uMamlambo?" Khanya: "some witchcraft snake. They use it to get rich." Me: "that's just disgusting." Khanya: "worse kubekho nomntana kulendlu Kukho lento isnaaks. That keeps disappearing

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ke phof and reappearing whenever it liked." I fell a ringing sound in both my ears ingathi ndibhethwe ngento entloko. Sandile keeps disappearing. He loves snakes to death. He is close to Lakhe. Everytime he disappears Lakhe becomes frustrated. Oh my goodness what am I thinking? Could Sandile Sands: "you okay?" I nodded. After the tour, I could not wait a second longer to get the fuck outa theeerrr! Now I'm stuck with this image forever. Sands: "Thank you so much Spho. I loved the surprise. I really didn't expect this from you." Me: "its a pleasure." we got in the car and I texted Lakhe. Me: "done with the snakes. Regretting it. Got the cake?" Lakhe: "got it. On the way home. The friends are on their way too. Take your time to come." I started the car and drove. Sands: "can I get some McDonald's for home?" Me: "most definitely. Khanya, we're having drinks at home just now, would you like to come?" Khanya: "I'd love to Spho. Its just that my parents just got home from Germany, they were still sleeping ndifuna bavuke ndikhona." Me: "okay that's fine love. Next time." I was disappointed actually because I didn't want to be the only girl at the braai. I'd have to call Zintle noFez for company. Zingi would be discharged on Monday. I would be fetching her with umamakhe and taking her home. I did want a few minutes alone naye to understand what she meant about what she said. Sands: "let's get Spur take aways instead Spho. So we could get a take away for uKhanya and her parents xabevuka." awww that is so sweet. Khanya: "no its okay guys, I'll cook." Me: "no way. We're getting Spur. That way You'll have more time with the 'rents." Khanya: "okay." we went to get Spur take aways sazilinda. Thank goodness they were taking time. I needed to get word from Lakhe that we can come

through. After a long while, Sandile paid sahamba. I drove to Khanya's home ndamisa in front of her house. Khanya: "thank you so much guys for today. I had fun although bendimincile the whole time kulandawo." I laughed. Me: "you and I both." Khanya: "at least big boy enjoyed himself. Happy birthday baby." he smiled. Sands: "for the 7th time today? Really?" Khanya: "kanene uyapholelwa wena. Bye ke." Sands: "yima." he leaned forward and gave her a kiss. Sands: "call me when you're free." Khanya: "I will." she got out the car. Khanya: "it was lovely meeting you Spho." Me: "same here angel. Take care." Khanya: "bye." I drove off. On our way home Sandile was staring dead at the rear view mirror leaning on the seat. Everytime I looked at the traffic behind me nditshiswa ngamehlo akhe. Me: "what?" Sands: "so?" Me: "so ntoni?" Sands: "heeee." Me: "oh you mean Khanya? Why did you call her Brian? She's so pretty and sweet. Heee. Awusatsho ba unomntu." Sands: "because you're going to make a big deal out of it." Me: "it is a big deal. I like her." Sands: "good for you." he went back to his phone. Sands: "hope you'll keep your promise." he mumbled. Was that a threat? I didn't respond. We got home and I parked the car outside. No cars in the driveway. After a 50 minute stalling process? Baphi abantu. We got out the car. Sandile looked around and down on the ground. Me: "what is it?" Sands: "There's someone here." Me: "doesn't look-" Sands: "Shh." he pulled me behind him. Sands: "I smell a switched off engine." you cannot be fucking serious? He smells engine smoke? Hamba sathana. I followed him to the house wavula umnyango. "Happy Birthday!" the dudes cheered. Lakhe stood by the door. Sands: "the fuck is this?" he snapped. kwecwaka. Oh-oh. Even I didn't know what now. Lakhe: "your friends. Cake. Some braai. What it look like? Its your birthday fondin." Only his brother could sort him out. Sands: "you planned this?" a slow smile crept on his face. Lakhe: "she did." Sandile looked at me and chuckled. Sands: "bhuti wam. Khade utshate lomntu bra.... Look at my cake!!!!!!!!!!" he literally lost his mind. Sibulele: "that's a sick cake." Hunter: "flippen rad bra!" I sighed relief. Its like walking on egg shells when you try and figure out Sandile. He's a real life rollercoaster. He switches up emotions in split seconds ushiyeke ujinga ecingweni ke wena. Lakhe: "sisi,

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ulindwe yi braai." he kissed my forehead. Me: "I know hey. I'm gonna call my friends first." Lakhe: "ambobalanda. Me and the guys will sort this out. You did great sthandwasam. Look at him, he's so happy. Just because of a cake." Me: "and venomous snakes." Lakhe: "he's special shame." Me: "nditshilo ke kuye ksasa. I'll fetch his present on my way back." Lakhe: "the face dartboard? He's gonna lose his mind. Just watch." he chuckled. Lakhe: "I made the blood sacks they're with the ice." Me: "I think ezo zizoselwa zii-girls.

The guys want their beers and Hennessy." Lakhe: "abayiseli i-beer ababantu. You'll have to bring at least another 8 bottles xa ubuya." Me: "so this is becoming a party." Lakhe: "by the looks of things....you were right babes. Even if he is gay, I'll be happy that wonwabile yena qha. I'm just glad he's smiling for once." Me: "he's not gay." I kissed his cheek and walked out. On my way to the car just before I got in. Sands: "Spho?" I looked at him. Sands: "instead of 8 can we make that 15? Its about to be turnt." Me: "sure thing." Sands: "ndiyabulela mntasekhaya." I got in the car. He went back into the house. Lakhe was standing by the door smiling. Lakhe: "I love you." I blushed. Me: "I love you too." I blew him a kiss. He caught it and placed it on his mouth. I started the car ndiphuma kwi gate ngemoto. My phone beeped so I stopped and read the text. Lakhe: "Sandile says, go to Brian's house. Andiyazi ke for ntoni, he says you'll know. Now I'm supposed to meet his boyfriend? Hayi baby ningandenzi lonto namhlanje please." did you not hear me ? Me: "kodwa ungu tamkhulu yazi." I drove out and away. I had feeling....tonight was gonna be turnt AF. Ndine worry ka tamkhulu lo ungaseliyo ba uzokwenza njani. I called Fez first. Me: "peto." I put it on loud speaker. Fez: "hi tshom. Uright?" Me: "ndiyaphila mtshana. Ndine get together aphe ndlini. Ndizok'landa? Its Lakhe's brother's birthday." Fez: "iyuuh yuh yuhh! Tshomi. Ndiyanxiba kungoku! Andimazi ulllovo lo Uhlel k'la room uzaw'thin. Phof makazibone. The mirrors are here. Is it like up class my f? Ndifake i-heel?" I tried to stop laughing. Me: "firstly ngubani ulllovo?" Fez: "ngu Craig kalok tshom. Uyawa kho nala swekile yakhe. Nankuya eyi braai pack kula bed. Ndizothi ndisayotheng isonka." I wiped my tears. Me: "peto. Just be sexy wena qha. Sana, xa uyothenga isonka ubuye nin?" Fez: "uyatipa xa egqibo kutya. Ndiyamphakela ngoku. Subanaxhala wena tshomi. I'll text you my address. Sharp." Me: "Sho peto." I called Zintle. Me: "brother." Zintle: "Sho malum." Me: "Uphi?" Zintle: "ndilapha kum. Ngoba?" Me: "ndine get together phe ndlin. Brother ka Lakhe uyazalwa today. So ndizok'landa nxiba." Zintle: "oh sweetie. Ingathi undiva emphefumleni oko ndinesyali. Mandinxibe mtshana. Akhonto bithen mos. Yimpolo?" Me: "yiba sexy qha wena tshomi. Uphole ikhwapha. Ndisindleleni ezayo, text me your address." Zintle: "Sho skeem." I hung up. I missed Zingi to be truly honest. Ewe besixabene iyilo sourness between us but I did miss her company. She hasn't shown me visibly to my face colors of jealousy, probably indirectly kodwa still. I stopped at the robots ndajonga phone yam. It lit up. Message from Lakhe: "DRIVE!" huh? I replied: "I am driving." before I sent it kwangena enye: "Siphosenkosi, DRIVE!!!" but the robots are red. I looked around starting to panic. There was a big car racing toward me from behind with absolutely no intentions of slowing down. All I saw was RED. I crushed that accelerator instantly.

Chapter 46

The car flew into the road ndibambelele kwi steering. I didn't even know where I was going kodwa bendisiya phambili qha. I took a quick turn to the right ndabona Cape Road soon enough. But the robots turned red, the other traffic started moving. I would never make it, I hit the brakes and stopped. Kanti the big car was already here next to my right side. They rolled down their window and looked at me. I was going to piss my pants I swear, but he looked confused. I stared at him, he stared back at me. Then started his car and drove off without doing anything. My phone started going off. The robots had turned green again. I drove and checked my phone, all this time Kukho SMS's now it was ringing. I answered: "Yes?" Lakhe: "Spho! Baby? Are you okay? Uphi?" Me: "calm down. I'm okay." Lakhe: "what happened?" Me: "I should be asking you that. Sizoyithetha ufika kwam endlini." I hung up and continued driving ndimincile ndinjalo. I started at Fez's place then went to fetch Zintle. In the car oko bencokola and I was just quiet, blank and a little distracted. Why was I being followed and why did they not do anything? I probably wasn't who they were looking for. My phone rang again. It was Sands. I picked up. Me: "yes?" Sands: "ndicela umise kulo Spar ulandelayo. Ndilapha." Me: "ok." I was going to anyway, I needed uTops. I drove into the parking lot and I saw the i8 waiting. Me: "cela nindilinde ndiyeza." I got out the car, Sandile got out the car too. Me: "what was that about?" Sands: "uzakuchazela uLakhe. Okwangoku I wanted to check if you're okay." Me: "I'm fine." Sands: "you lost the car?" Me: "no! It caught up with me kwi robots and then he just looked at me then left." Sands: "what did he look like? Colored with a mohawk beard or clean shaven ?" Me: "clean shaven." Sands: "uhamba yedwa?" Me: "yes." Sands: "what else can you tell me about them?" Me: "that's kind of it. Khange athethe nothing. Usuke wemnka qha." Sands: "okay." Me: "Sandile...if my life is in danger, I need you to tell me now." Sands: "if your life was in danger you'd be dead already. Get going. Ulindiwe endlin." he got in the can and it sped off out of sight. I went back to my car ndiyolanda i-wallet. Fez: "peto.....ngumnyeni wakho lowa?" Me: "no." Fez: "Nguye man tshomi lo. Kuthen umfihla omnye? Kuthen u-funny?" Me: "hehe. Fez ndizabhidwa ngumntuwam ngoku? This is his brother. bezodlulisa nje umyalezo. Masingeneni kwa Tops." we went inside Tops and took bottles kunye nee carrypack zabo. I went to the till and paid. Zintle: "peto zide zibeyi 15 ii-botile? Bangaphi Dan abantu pha?" Me: "well ngu Sands and his 3 friends. Then Lakhe, me, you and Fez qha." Fez: "yoh! Safa sana. Lonto tshomi, u-sexy la brother vha. Yohh." Zintle: "jonga wena Fez, umbonile hlobo ame ngalo? Yuuh. Mhle umntu wabantu." Me: "and unomntu ke shame. Ndiya

kuye ngoku before I fetch his present." besendimlibele shame. Zintle: "uright kaloku tshomi abenomntu. Andingeni ndawo mna kuleyo." Fez: "hayi Zintle subasisfebe." Zintle: "oh? Ndisisfebe xakutheni?" Me: "guys asinobiza elinye gama instead of elo lijongisayo?" Fez: "suba ngu February tshomi." I laughed. Zintle: "uyoy'gqiba kdala eyaka Hullets." Fez: "ungandikhumbuzi ngalowo. uzawndikhubekisa isibeleko Sam. Ndiyakucela mntase." I carried some of the stock out ndibashiya pha begezela. I was still panicky and looking around me. It couldn't be explained why this person was adamant to knock my car over but when he stopped next to me wasuka wandiyeka? Hayi sana. Ayiyo. We drove to Khanya's home since ndingenayo number yakhe, I'd have to go and knock. I went to her front door and rang the bell. Wavula utata walapha. I smiled and greeted. Me: "molo tata." he smiled too. Tata: "hello." Me: "uyaphila tata?" Tata: "ewe ndikhona Unjani wena?" Me: "ndiphilile Ta. Ndicela uKhanya?" Tata: "ungubani wena?" all this time encume eyi cake yakwa Pick n Pay. Me: "ndingu Sphosenkosi tata." Tata: "uSphosenkosi waphi?" Are you fucking serious?

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Me: "ndihlala eKragga Kamma tata, kodwa ekhaya kuse Newton park." Tata: "is it? Nazelana phi noKhanya?" utheth'ba I'm in an interview? Me: "sidibene evenkileni tata." I had no other lie in me because I was not a student or even looked like one. Plus I was driving the huge car parked in front of his gate. Tata: "oh....so wena ufunda eNMMU okanye?" I'll be damned. Me: "ewe tata ndise NMMU." Tata: "so ufunda nt-" Khanya: "Dad!" Tata: "Khanya." he looked at her innocently. Khanya: "why ungatsho kukho umntu emnyango?" Tata: "siyancokola. Niyaphi?" Khanya: "I'm going to Spho's place tata. I'll be back later." Tata: "oh...ufuna ndizok'landa?" Khanya: "NO. I'll be fine tata." Tata: "okay. Its was nice to meet you Spho." Me: "you too tata." I walked with Khanya to the car. Khanya: "sorry about that. My dad is just inquisitive and uyathanda uncokola nabantu angabaziyo just for entertainment. I don't know why he does that." Me: "its okay." I drove to Ronnie and went in to look at the masterpiece. Me: "Ronnie. This is perfect!!" Ronnie: "I'm glad you love it. It was my first time attempting this. Its quite cool." Me: "where do I pay?" Ronnie: "here." he wrote me a receipt and I paid my balance taking the custom made dart board to the car. It was in a box and unable to be seen ukuba yintoni. I finally drove home. I was already tired and ndisaya kwii ngxoxo kulandlu. Fez: "tshomi? I feel like There's something bothering you." Zintle: "I know what it is. She's worried about Zingi." thank goodness Zintle. Me: "yeah. She's being discharged on Monday." Fez: "yoh. Mk." Me: "what?" Fez: "hayi akhonto tshomi." he filed his nails. Zintle: "khathethe wethu." Fez: "hayi peto." Me: "Feziwe. Theta." Fez: "I just find it funny wethu tshomi mna umntu

aveske arole nemoto aphole ikhwapha angabinayo ne tontsi le worry yomntu wakhe.." Zintle: "she's in shock Fez. She almost died." Fez: "butsho tshomi. Awuna chappies peto?" he looked at Khanya. She dug in her bag and found gum for him. Fez: "enkosi tshom." Zintle: "what is your problem? You think she deliberately tried to kill them both?" Fez: "andiyazi mntase mna. Wena Spho what do you think?" Me: "I think we should support Zingi in this difficult time. As her friend she needs us, not this gossiping." Fez: "uxolo ngoba concerned friend, andiphinde ndibuze." Me: "I'm not saying that. I just don't know what happened. Zingi is the only person that can explain." Zintle: "well did she?" Me: "mxim." I stopped in front of the gate. It opened and I drove in. Fez: "YOH! Sonini nanini! This is a bloody castle. Yazi from the gate ayicaci ncam ukuba ingaka, yoh tshomi kukwa ndofaya apha." Me: "don't be dramatic. Its not that big." I got out the car and took the present. Fez: "heeee uphambene lo Zintle. Uyamva ba ukhwazwa eDonkin? Wow." Zintle laughed. They carried the alcohol inside. Lakhe ebendilinde ngase mnyango as usual but this time he looked a bit nervous. Me: "ina." I gave him the box. Lakhe: "baby." I walked out to the braai area ndafika ii-boys zilungisa umlilo. Me: "guys, I bought more bottles zise kitchen. Is there anything you need?" Sibu: "no. Siright Spho. Enkosi." I looked at him. So familiar still. Me: "how are you?" Sibu: "I'm okay. Wena Unjani?" Me: "I'm okay too..." he looked at the floor. I know Lakhe was now staring at him. Me: "Sibu, I hope I'm not the only one that feels this vibe." he swallowed. Sibu: "I don't want to get into trouble with ubhuti." Me: "talk to me...you won't get into trouble." he was breathing in short breaths esoyika nyani. Sibu: "I feel it. I thought it was.....a little crush, but it isn't....its like.....ndiyoyika man Spho. I'm so sorry." Me: "so you feel this vibe. I'm not just being crazy." he nodded. Sibu: "I trust you. I feel comfortable here. Not with ubhuti looking at me like that though." Me: "okay. This is weird man Sibu." Sibu: "I know right." Me: "ungowase Durban?" Sibu: "well no, I'm from apha ebhayi. I moved to Durban ndisemncinci." Me: "oh..." Lakhe: "Spho?" he was standing with us now. Me: "Lakhe." Lakhe: "ndicela uthetha nawe mntuwam?" he was testing the waters. Me: "okay love, I just want to finish this conversation with Sibu. Do you

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mind waiting?" I know what game you're playing. Lakhe: "okay." he stood still and waited. Sibu: "I never came back after I moved. Nawe you're from here?" Me: "yeah. Last time you were here ebesithi uSandile you're allergic to icing?" Sibu: "yes I am. Kodwa don't be worried ngam, I'll have meat." Me: "oh, okay. That's fine then. Naziya iitshomi zam, feel free to introduce yourselves vha." Sibu: "enkosi sisi." I turned to Lakhe. Me: "ndim lo." Lakhe: "can we go to a private place?" I led the way to our bedroom. Lakhe: "nizi friends

ngoku noSibulele." Me: "are you jealous." Lakhe: "he's the last thing on earth I'm worried about." Me: "worse ba ubize umntana womntu a thing." Lakhe: "baby." Me: "Lakhe what happened out there? Did you know it was going to happen? Ngubani lowa and why were they trying to run me down?" Lakhe: "love." Me: "Lakhe, I'm gonna need the truth from you right now." Lakhe: "that....was Loco's brother." Me: "what does Loco's brother want? Loco yena uyintoni kuwe." Lakhe: "baby...please forgive me." Me: "Masilakhe. You are going to start making me very angry. I'm trying to be calm all I need is the truth." Lakhe: "you're going to leave me!! I can't risk that!" Me: "eyonanto izondenza ndifune ukushiya is the lies and secrets!" Lakhe: "baby please don't. Ndiyakucenga Spho...just give me some time." Me: "Lakhe, I've been in this house. All this time kusenzeka izinto ezi strange apha. You never not even once explained anything to me. There's that crazy dark space on the other side of the house that I'm not allowed to go to. Kukho ooLoco pointing guns at you. Shooting each other. Huh? There's a whole lot more. Now I'm being chased, what if I was killed out there? Again, I don't deserve to know?" he held his head turning to look at the window. Lakhe: "please don't leave me Spho. I beg you." Me: "tell me kwenzeka ntoni?" Lakhe: "you have to promise me you won't go. Promise me you'll stay by my side." Me: "I promise I won't go...tell me Lakhe. What is happening here." Lakhe: "Good God..." he whispered. Lakhe: "I needed help... After studying and graduating I needed a steady income. I never wanted to work for utatam. He's into Finance I'm into Architectural things and technology. Sandile robbed banks and so forth, always wanted something thrilling and exciting. I traveled to Mexico for a holiday once ndadibana noLoco. We started talking and had drinks later. I had a little too much and lost a bet to him. He said I'd have to do something for him. He wanted me to sell his stuff." Me: "what stuff?" Lakhe: "drugs. I came back here and set up a garage. Ndaxelela uSandile, he organized some boys to sell and I started the business. Once I made the first million, I couldn't stop. I started my own on this side and ran them both. Kwangena uFernando esithi mandim'hoyele his firearms because uvile that I was trustworthy and reliable. Now I had to start storing money in warehouses and couldn't really do anything because bizojumpisa. I decided to start a legitimate business. My laundromat. Washit Clean. I started operating and had to start something else. No laundromat can make over 500k in two weeks. I asked my dad to help. I invested in his company and started buying shares kengoku kwezi hotels zam. Its been years I've been trying to get out of that life. I couldn't. This is why I had to move and couldn't really be on the media about my position. I quit on Loco and Fernando. Only Fernando understood, he said he was fine with it kuba naye semdala ngoku and needed to take care of his family. Loco came to South Africa to try and talk me into reconsidering when that

plan failed he sent people to kill me. Sandile, got them first. When he realized this, he came himself and I killed him.....well thanks to you. We buried him and destroyed all evidence. Unfortunately, Loco's brother knew about Loco's plans, and once he couldn't find his brother anywhere he knew what it meant. He wants me. The only problem is.....akafumaneki. He just disappears and reappears ungamcingelanga." I was so shocked. This whole time I was staring at him. Lakhe: "baby, I've left tha-" Me: "don't lie to

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me. You haven't. Have you?" Lakhe: "Spho..." Me: "that laundromat is still active. The garage operations. Everything. You're just covering your ass being CEO....." Lakhe: "baby..." Me: "you're.....a liar. A murderer. Sies Masilakhe. You made Sandile look like the crazy one but uyafana naye! I don't know what's worse." Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi, I know you're seeing me in a different light now. I'm not a bad person-" Me: "you're a killer that pretends to do good for the community. I reprimanded my dad for calling you a criminal.....kanti he was right. All this time!!" Lakhe: "I am sorry Sphosenkosi." Me: "no you're not!" Lakhe: "I never thought it would come to this mos nam!! I was short sighted and all I had in mind was making money without help! I became addicted to that life! The drugs, guns, the missions. Transporting over borders. I couldn't stop! I never thought it would come to a day that I'd meet someone who made me a better version of myself. I hate what I've done to all those lives. Those families. I hate it. I left ndizame all I could, to make things right. Damn, baby I can't be anymore sorry. Oko ndidibene nawe, I wished and prayed you'd never hear or find this out about me. I am nowhere near perfect, kodwa I'm willing to do anything, ndicela qha ungandishiyi Spho." he kneeled down before me. Lakhe: "you make me better my love. I'm not the monster I used to be. I swear, andiphinde ndibuyele kobabomi." Me: "stop making promises you can't keep Lakhe. If you wanted to stop, you'd have shut everything down by now. Instead usayiyekile iqhube. And what for? Your addiction? Kids are dying out there, besebenzisa iziyobisi zakho and wena you're sitting there in your CEO office relaxed and calm. You expect me to be okay with that? You expect me to accept the fact that you sent boys out there oonyana babanye oomama to go sell your drugs, ubhanjwa kwabo bayobola etrongweni. I must just be okay with all that?" Lakhe: "no.." Me: "if you want me to stay. You're going to have to shut that shit down. YONKE. I'm not getting married to a criminal and drug lord. Busy ruining other people's lives sihlale thina sonwabe apha kwindlu enkulu? No Masilakhe." Lakhe: "I understand baby." Me: "don't just understand. Do." Lakhe: "Spho ndiyakthanda." Me: "but...." he just stared at me searching my eyes. Me: "My God. You can't do it?" Lakhe: "I will do it." there was a knock on the door.

Lakhe: "ngena." he stood up. Sandile walked in. Lakhe: "no?" Sands shook his head. Me: "I need to get back to the kitchen." I got out and closed the door behind me walking to the kitchen.

Lakhe: "you need to find and kill him." he was pacing up and down the room. Sands: "he's in the base right now. You gonna take care of it?" Lakhe: "Good. Ewe. I will." Sands: "you told her?" Lakhe: "how dumb do you think I am? Queen can never find out about our shit." Sands: "kodwa G I warned you. Kwakudala. I told you this girl is gonna dig!" Lakhe: "if you'd let me kill this bastard kwangokuya this never would have happened. And we need to stop bringing these bodies home. Spho is stupid mad." Sands: "utheni kuye?" Lakhe: "I told her the cover story." Sands: "good." Lakhe: "now I just need to take care of this boy before he spills our shit. He didn't do anything to her embona, he could be up to something." Sands: "gqabuza inyongo. Undibiza xa ubasayo. I need to get back to the others kudala ndimnkile." Lakhe: "just keep everyone away from our station. Especially uSpho. Make sure you keep a rigid eye on her. If uyandibuza ndiphi, Uthi ndimnkile ndiyabuya." Sands: "but all the cars are here." Lakhe: "just do as I say I'll take care of everything else." Sands: "okay." Lakhe took off his sneakers, wearing black Timbalands instead. Sands: "I can't believe I'm missing this." Lakhe: "unfortunately one of us has to go twerk for the guests. And the other has a chopping spree." Sandile laughed. Lakhe: "ubabeke phi oo-pipe?" Sands: "bottom left corner." Lakhe: "mak'vele kunyiwe." Sands: "Sho Gazi."

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Chapter 47

Everyone was outside near the braai area and swimming pool kuncokolwa. Hunter was the one doing the meat. I helped Fez with the salads because he is a great cook. Fez: "tshomi. Ingathi ndino 200 likes pha ku Paul." Me: "what do you mean?" Fez: "peto, he'sandiyazi man. Khamjonge. He's sweet and actually he was the one to welcome me. Usually xa kune gay amadoda akhoyo start acting funny. Abanye bageze. He's been so accommodating. Although ke engekho Picasso painting cute but I think I have a crush on him." Me: "heee. Hayi Fez." Fez: "yes. Cela undithethele naye." Me: "you are the one person who is able to start a conversation nje. Talk to him." Fez: "I can't peto, ndinamaphela esuswini." I laughed. Me: "you mean butterflies." Fez: "lonto iyiyo peto. Please?" Me: "I don't even know Hunter that well." Fez: "Paul tshomi!" Me: "oh yes. Paul." Where the hell was Lakhe? Its been hours since Sandile said he left. Kanti uyephi? Me: "nanko. Thetha sisi. Here's your chance." I took the salad bowl and left the kitchen. Paul walked in eyofuna amanzi. Outside the house, I set the patio table. I was getting worried now.

Zintle was with Sibuy bencokola by the pool. Sands with Khanya. Hunter by the braai. Fez with Paul in the kitchen. I was trying to find an escape that wouldn't look suspicious but ndaske ndadibana namehlo ka Sandile. Sands: "izapha." I walked to him. Me: "Sandile." Sands: "baby, can you give us a moment please?" Khanya: "sure thing love." she left. Sands: "what's the problem?" Me: "There's loop holes in the story Lakhe has given me. Now he's gone and nobody knows uyephi." Sands: "you need to stop panicking love. Lakhe is fine. He'll be back soon. He said something about 'nice and pretty' so maybe....." Me: "you're trying to distract me." Sands: "why would I do that? You're free to run around and drive yourself crazy, mna I'm just reassuring you qha. Have some fun, uyeke ubayi buzz kill. Everyone is having fun except for you. Kodwa you organized this whole thing for us." Me: "I know. I'm just a bit paranoid." Sands: "it'll wear down soon enough. Have a shot of cognac and relax." Me: "that's what I'm not doing." Sands: "like hell you aren't. Ina. Down it quick." Me: "isn't this for men?" he opened my mouth and poured a shot in. I swallowed and felt the burn down my throat and chest. Sands: "there we go. And another one for the road." Me: "I'm not going anywhere." Sands: "I want you to get loose and dance. Khamisa." I drank another one and cringed. Sands: "there we go. Now sizok'dash'ela. Uphole. Ungatipi qha." Me: "argg Sandile." he mixed the cognac with redbull. Me: "no...uzama ukundibulala ngoku?" Sands: "its nice...sela. The next one izobane Appletiser. Say ahh." Me: "why are trying so hard to get me drunk Sandile Robbie Sobukwe?" Sands: "why don't you trust me Mrs Siphosenkosi Sobukwe? I want you to relax and forget." Me: "I'm not going to forget. I remelar. Yoh...I mean...rumem....no. Sandile undenzi." he smiled. Sands: "perfect. Now you can go dance. Nantsi drink yakho." I got up holding my glass ndamshiya. I went to Zintle and Sibuy. Zintle: "you okay?" Me: "yeah. I'm oki." I giggled. Zintle: "huh?" Sibuy: "she's tipsy." Zintle: "usele nini?" Me: "Sandile gave me shots. Uthi.....he say, they for the reroad." Sibuy: "hehake uSandile. Why would he do that?" Sands: "she'll be fine! She needs the tickles. Kunini equmbile." I giggled. Me: "khandiqumbe mna." Sibuy: "I'll get you some water." he went to the kitchen. Me: "so..." Zintle: "you sneaky bitch. You faked it to get him away?" Me: "undithatha njani? What did you find out about him?" Zintle: "well so far. He's an accountant. Lives alone. Usandophuma kwi relationship-" Me: "I don't care about all that, his parents zisahlala eDurban?" Zintle: "is there something I'm missing here?" Me: "I feel strongly ngakuye." Zintle: "you're inlove with him?" Me: "no! Its like I'm missing a piece man. Something doesn't feel right." Zintle: "ask your parents." Me: "I'll try." Zintle: "here he

comes. Do the slur...its too damn funny." Me: "heeeeyy." Sibuy: "hey yourself. Sela nanga amanzi. It will drain the alcohol out your body quick." Me: "hihi...lorrll." Zintle laughed out loud. Sibuy chuckled. Sibuy: "mxim. Sela amanzi wethu." from the corner of my eye I saw Lakhe standing by the sliding door. I looked his direction endijonge ntsho. I just melted. In fact, I dissolved into bubbling liquid. He looked so sexy without even trying. Ndabalekisa amehlo trying to avoid him. Within a minute wabe semile ecamkwam. Lakhe: "nkosikazi. Ndicela ukubona.....I have a surprise for you." I stood up and followed him to the house. We entered one of the spare rooms. Lakhe: "Boogy?" he whistled. I heard purring and a little bark. Then a brown little puppy appeared from under the bed. Me: "ooohh you're so cute!" I sat down and he jumped on my lap licking my hands. Me: "hey pumpkin. How are you?" I just wanted to hug and snuggle pumpkin. He bit my thumb rubbing his teeth on it. Me: "he's like a baby! He's teething." Lakhe: "do you think Sandile uzomthanda?" Me: "huh?" Lakhe: "Sandile baby. Do you think he's gonna like him?" Me: "uhm....yeah." I thought this one was for me. Well I knew Sandile was getting a puppy but I kind of thought that maybe he changed his mind. Fine though. Lakhe: "what's wrong?" Me: "what if he runs him over? Or forgets to feed him? What if he gets sick?" Lakhe: "that's not going to happen. We're here. We'll make sure to keep him in the back yard." Me: "he's gonna drown in the swimming pool!" Lakhe: "baby relax! He's going to be fine. I'll show him the puppy later. We must start with the dartboard." Me: "we're leaving him alone here?" Lakhe: "he's not alone. I got him a teddy and a mini biscuit. I'll feed him alale nantsiya bhedi yakhe." Me: "okay." Lakhe: "my love?" Me: "yes." Lakhe: "I'm sorry baby...for everything. For the secrets. The lies. I just wanted to protect you." Me: "okay Lakhe." Lakhe: "baby ndicela ungabinje torho." Me: "I'm not just gonna be jolly because you apologized Masilakhe. I need time." Lakhe: "I understand babe. Its just that I'm worried." Me: "about what?" Lakhe: "about everything. Andifuni undishiye Sphosenkosi." Me: "let me check on the others. Ndicela usele usiza ne present ka Sandile." I was starting to get drunk now because I could feel my heart warming. I left the room ndisiya out to the braai area. Sands: "Spho. Why is your glass empty?" Lakhe: "Sandile." he warned. Me: "we have something for you." Sands: "aww you guys. You didn't have to. This party is enough." Lakhe: "just open it." he gave him the box. Sands: "is it a gun?" he opened it excitedly. Lakhe: "no.." Sands: "then....what is it." he finally got it open. Sands: "a dartboard. Who's this?" Lakhe took the board and covered his face with it holding it up. I took one of the knife shaped darts and threw it straight, it landed safely on an eye. Sands: "I love it!!!" he screamed. Sands: "this is so cool guys. Yoh. Ndizoyixhoma ngoku. Thank you Spho." he hugged me. Me: "its a pleasure Sandile. Also thank Lakhe. He did the paying." Sands: "enkosi bhuti. You're not getting a hug

though." Lakhe: "never wanted one." Sands: "oh please." he walked to his room with his present. Lakhe: "so that's that...thank you Mrs Sobz. For a day well organized. Everyone is happy.." Me: "yeah...everyone is happy. I need to take a nap vha...I'm feeling a bit light headed." Lakhe: "you okay?" I nodded. Me: "too many shots to the head." Lakhe: "ndizom'faki mpama uSandile bonanje." Me: "let him be." I went to Zintle and Sibu. Me: "guys, I'm gonna take a quick nap. Nizobaright?" Zintle: "ewe peto. Don't worry about us. Bond with umnyeni wakho." it felt like she wanted me to go away. Code for 'you're disturbing us'. Me: "okay, umxelele noFez. If you guys need me I'll be-" Zintle: "relax... Go rest." Sibu: "she's right. You've been running around all day." Me: "Uphi uKhanya?" Zintle: "she's with Sands. Ebemncedisa with the thing you bought him." Me: "okay. Hunter are you doing fine there?" Hunter: "perfectly fine." so they don't need me? All of them? Me: "love, did you feed the new baby?" Lakhe: "ewe love. He's sleeping." Me: "can I have him with me

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for a few minutes?" Lakhe: "okay. Ndizoyomlanda. Got get yourself comfortable." I went to the bedroom, took off my heels and jean Ndangena under the blanket. Lakhe brought the dog emombathise nge towel. Lakhe: "here he is. Boogie say hi...hello mama." Me: "boogie? That's the best you could come up with?" Lakhe: "I can't name dogs. He responded to Boogie." Me: "he's getting used to voices he would respond even if you called him Fork." I took him in my arms. He was still sleepy. I brushed his tummy with the tips of my fingers engasayobi. Lol. He looked so adorable. Lakhe: "uyagodola?" me: "not really.." Lakhe: "good because....." he took out my foot and massaged it. Lakhe: "I haven't done this in a while. You worked really hard today." Me: "I'm still not impressed Lakhe. Andonwabanga tu yilento yakho. So we need it fixed sibenokwazi uqhubekeka." Lakhe: "I agree baby." I looked down at Boogie. His little feet, little belly, little mouth and teeth. Me: "you can't give him to Sandile." Lakhe: "why not?" Me: "because he's mine." Lakhe: "baby...we spoke about this." Me: "look at him." Lakhe: "lonto akasehluthi. No wonder he's fast asleep. Love, its best simnike uSandile. We work all the time and ixesha esilifumanayo thina lelethu sobabini." Me: "but I like him." Lakhe: "you don't want my baby but you want a dog? Ndibhlungu shame." Me: "babies are a process. Then There's these new developments kengoku." Lakhe: "that are being shut down." Me: "you're the one that didn't want a kid Lakhe, usithi ufuna sitshate kuqala. And enjoy life." Lakhe: "I wanted you to get better....you're better now." Me: "you're trying to trap me." Lakhe: "well, maybe I'm a bit jealous ujonge uBoogie olohlobo. You're cuddling him like a real baby." Me: "he is a baby. Plus he's sleeping and wena uyangxola. Shhh." Lakhe: "I'm not keeping quiet in my bedroom. Boogie

makalale pha phantsi futhi. He has his own pillow." Me: "khayeke umntana Lakhe. Please." the foot rub was really nice. Ibindozelisa even more. Lakhe: "niyandozelisa kengoku nam." Me: "tell me something, is Paul gay?" Lakhe: "andizoyazi ke baby. He's just friendly and uzinyabele wethu. Why?" Me: "Fez likes him. I'm just worried ingathi kanti Paul isn't in the feels." Lakhe: "babe. Badala ababantu. Bow'bona ba mabathini.." Me: "do you have friends?" Lakhe: "yes. Nguwe noSandile." Me: "I mean other people." Lakhe: "is that a trick question?" Me: "no." Lakhe: "I have plenty of friends." Me: "I've never seen even one." Lakhe: "ba-busy." Me: "when we get married. Who will be your groomsmen?" Lakhe: "uhm...Sandile obviously." Me: "and?" Lakhe: "I haven't thought that far." Me: "what about uDumi?" Lakhe: "Dumi akayiyo tshomi yam." Me: "right." Lakhe: "I do have friends." Me: "good." Lakhe: "awundi believe?" Me: "I do." Lakhe: "no you don't. You're making the face." Me: "what face?" Lakhe: "you have the face on. The 'I don't believe you' face." Me: "There's no such thing. If you say you have plenty of friends then you probably do." Lakhe: "awulambanga khona?" Me: "no I'm fine. Let me nap." Lakhe: "lala sthandwasam."

Sunday morning I was woken up by my phone ringing. Last night was a heavy night. Oko kuselwa kuhlekwa kumnandi. We'd chilled outside till nightfall sangena endlini afterwards. Now I was faced with this ringing head and phone. I checked my caller I.D. Ngu mama. Me: "mom." Mama: "hi my love. Unjani?" Me: "I'm fine thank you mama. Unjani wena?" Mama: "I'm perfect. I hope you're joining us for church." Me: "not today mama. Ndidiniwe. Izolo ibiyi birthday ka Sandile so we organized something for him." Mama: "ngubani uSandile mntanam?" for the 17th time. Me: "ngu brother ka Lakhe mama." Mama: "oh ndiyakuva ke sweetie. We'll talk later." Me: "okay mama." I hung up and returned to my sleep. Lakhe: "baby..." Me: "no baby....don't yell." Lakhe: "I'm barely audible." so the both of us besiphethwe yibhabhalaza. I'd never seen Lakhe get so drunk. The more alcohol in his

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system, the colder he became. Wathula umfo akahleka nehlekisayo. He wasn't mad. He had to keep explaining that. Lakhe: "my head." he moaned. Me: "mine too." my eyes were hardly open, bekutshisa qha. So I covered myself ngengubo. Lakhe: "funeke siyothenga into yokutya babes. I don't think kukhona ukutya kwelakitshi the way wena noSandile have a competition." Me: "uhamba wedwa for lonto." Lakhe: "not even my guests. So I could not be bothered noba bayalamba okanye bayahlutha." Me: "mxim." he looked at me under the blankets. Me: "ambovasa." Lakhe: "wish I could bring la shower apha ebhedini." I giggled. Me: "go.." Lakhe: "last night was

amazing....yoh." I swallowed in embarrassment. Lakhe: "I should get you drunk more often mos....yeeyi, there was a time you were deep throating, and I almost fainted and my heart stopped beating. Your mouth feels like a vacuum with cotton candy at the end. Imnandi into ondenza yona." he moved closer to me. Lakhe: "I was thinking that maybe..." his hand was on my thigh. Me: "I need to shower quick." I got out of bed. Lakhe: "can I join you baby?" Me: "please feed Boogie. Uqale umkhuphe phandle to do his business though." Lakhe: "uBoogie ukutatake and I'm sure he will do that." Sandile liked the puppy, my problem was that, he is too occupied for a puppy. I got in the shower ndavasa. I needed to be quick. Sooner or later Lakhe uzongena apha and think we cool. Kanti we're not. Just because I indulged in him a little izolo doesn't mean I'm cool. I'm nowhere near being cool. When I was almost done ndava kuvuleka umnyango. Me: "ufike late ke sendiphuma mna." Lakhe: "why do I have a feeling that uyandibaleka?" Me: "ndingade ndibaleke wena." Lakhe: "then why undi avoid'er?" Me: "I'm not." Lakhe: "can I at least get a kiss?" Me: "I need to brush my tee-" he pulled me in and kissed my lips. Lakhe: "sekhe ndafuna uyovasa amazinyo xandizok'phuza?" Me: "no..." Lakhe: "what's going on?" Me: "I'm not over yesterday." Lakhe: "what's yesterday?" Me: "the story you told me. I can't relax. Just the thought of it makes me cringe. I'm not comfortable Lakhe. Sorry." he just stared at me. Lakhe: "ok. So what must I do to make things right?" Me: "you know exactly what to do." Lakhe: "kuzofuneka ndiye Durban to shut things down." Me: "then iya kaloku." Lakhe: "its not that easy Spho. I'll have to organize a meeting first, and it will take a while." Me: "I suppose ndinguwe ngendiqalise kwangoku." Lakhe: "I hear you." he continued showering. I got out the shower ndayokhangela into yonxiba. Everytime I looked through my clothes bendidibana ne vest. I think I have more vests than I do clothes, all shapes and sizes and colors. I took my soft pink high waist leggings and the matching short turtle neck long sleeve crop top. I took out my beige strap heels ndazibeka ecaleni then made the bed. After making the bed nicely I took the heels back to the closet realizing I'm always in heels maybe if I tried sneakers. I fitted on the white all stars and decided on them. Lakhe came into the closet ezokhangela into yonxiba naye. He was always naked in the bedroom, uphuma net kwakhe kwi shower, he'll never bother himself nge towel. He air dried all the time. He took out his denim shorts. A white plain t shirt also. If I thought I had a lot of vests, it can never amount to Lakhe's plain t shirts. Zonke t shirt zakhe ezi casual were blank. Either black or white. He wore his black Tubular sneaker and then the watch. Wafaka cologne yakhe. No underwear. I promise. Lakhe: "ndiready." he said, as he walked out. So he was upset I suppose. I took my phone and bag ndaphuma. It seemed as though everyone was still sleeping. He took the Audi out and drove to the gate.

Wamisa searching himself. He reversed back and got out the car eyongena endlin. Hewethu was I wrong? Nini? Phi? He came back into the car and drove to the gate again wayivula saphuma. There was a big truck parked in the street next door that was blocking our view. A guy appeared phambi kwethu esi directer ukuba singaphuma the road was clear. Who was he? He waved wamisa uLakhe. Lakhe: "hi." Guy: "molweni." Lakhe: "what's happening

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here? Is Mrs Jordan okay?" Guy: "yes she's fine. She just sold the house to me and my wife a month ago. We're moving in today." Me: "oh nice. Welcome to the neighborhood." Guy: "thank you. By the way ndingu Babalo. My wife, Hlumi, is inside the house." Lakhe: "nice to meet you Babalo. Is that a Hublot Classic Fusion Zirconium." Babalo: "indeed it is. Good eye." Lakhe: "I collect Hublot watches. Think I have at least 6 in my collection now." Babalo: "no shit. That's a Classic Pink gold and diamonds range." Lakhe: "The one and only." Babalo: "do you play golf? We should go for a game some time. If you're keen then drinks afterwards." Lakhe: "that'd be cool. Take my number." Babalo dialed the number on his phone. Babalo: "I'll text you. Izofumana eyam. Alright then. It is a pleasure meeting you guys." Lakhe: "Sho." he drove off. I was proud. He made a new friend! I was really excited for him. Ndimane ngom'ba. He kept checking his 'Hublot' watch ke phof. Still mad at me, I assume. Lakhe: "why do I feel funny about Babalo." Me: "oh, so we're back to talking." Lakhe: "we never didn't talk. All you ever do is use me for sex then you expect me to smile about it kodwa uyazazi undiqumbele kwakqala. Now I have to keep guessing what I did wrong xanditshintshelwe. Its not fair." Me: "I was wrong. Uxolo." as if you didn't enjoy it. Me: "the next time I'm mad at you, I'm staying away from Postman as well." Lakhe: "uzobe uxabene naye Dan?" Me: "you just said I use you." Lakhe: "I didn't say it was an issue, my problem is ukutshintshelwa." I rolled my eyes. Lakhe: "nantsoke. More attitude. I just don't know undifunani. Mxim." Me: "hayi, hayi, hayi. Ungak'linge u-acte apha. Ngenxa une friend entsha ngoku uzogeza." Lakhe: "he's not even my friend. I was being nice. Even that is a problem?" Me: "it was nice of you. Very nice." Lakhe: "Sandile won't be too happy." Me: "Sandile ungenaphi ke yena? He has his own friends." Lakhe: "his friends aren't a problem." Me: "so you can't have friends but he can?" Lakhe: "kanene uzova le ikunyumbaza idolo. Le ndiyithethayo ndiyayisuza caba." Me: "andizoyazi uthetha ngantoni mna." Lakhe: "just wait and see...I'm not sure I like how I feel about him..." I wonder wenzentoni umntana bantu...

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Chapter 48

When we got back from the shops I started on breakfast. Bhut bae ate an apple eme pha e-kitchen watching me. Me: "new friend hasn't texted?" Lakhe: "has." Me: "then why ujonga phone yakho every two minutes?" Lakhe: "emails keep flooding in. Andiyazi bandifuna ntoni on a Sunday." Me: "right." a big bowl of scrambled egg was ready, pork sausages in their own big bowl. I was busy with the patties and bacon. Then I'd finish with mushrooms umntu azenzele itoast buyathanda there were also ham burger rolls. Me: "please bring Boogie inside babe. Oko ephandle since we came in. Check on him." Lakhe: "khayeke umntana adlale wethu." Me: "just check please." Lakhe: "I'm gonna teach him how to swim." Me: "Lakhe, check on him." Lakhe: "fine." he went out the sliding door in the dining area. Lakhe: "nanku." Boogie paddled inside the house epholile. Me: "hey baby boo." I bent down. He ran to me almost tripping on his little feet but still lost his balance and slid on the tile. Me: "ncoooh, baby mani." Lakhe: "heee." Me: "did he eat?" Lakhe: "yoh. For the umpteenth time, he ate. Don't pick him up usenza ukutya kwethu please." Me: "he needs his kiss. Umbonile ngoku ebesiwa." Lakhe: "hayi hey!!" Me: "make sure he's okay." he picked the puppy up. Me: "he loves tummy rubs." Lakhe: "ndicela ungayitshisi patty yam torhwana." Me: "how many you want?" Lakhe: "I want 1." Me: "how come ungayityi eyakwa McDonald's kodwa le uzoyitya." Lakhe: "yenzwe ngumntu wam kaloku le." he kissed my cheek. I cut open the roll, spreading a bit of butter on it. Lakhe: "and can I please have fried egg? I don't really like scrambled. Its messy." Me: "of course." I should've known. I fried his eggs ndacima stove. Lakhe: "its first the burger then the eggs." Me: "Masilakhe Killian Sobukwe, do you want to make your own food?" Lakhe: "No ma'am." I continued with making his burger ndayivala. Me: "anything else?" Lakhe: "my Italian salad please." bendingazothetha bonanje. A burger and a salad? Lol. Me: "Mango or orange juice." Lakhe: "water with a slice of lemon please." Oh? Would you like some caviar with that sir? :v I giggled. Lakhe: "what?" Me: "nothing my love. You're so cute with Boogie." Lakhe: "I am forced. Otherwise he'll be out here kissing my wife, funeke ndim'qokelele ke." Me: "umona kodwa. Here's your breakfast. Ambovasa izandla." our guests woke up. Sandile walked out his room with only boxers on wayongena in the swimming pool. Lakhe: "so someone is upset this morning. Your call sisi." Me: "andicingi. I spent the whole of yesterday making him happy, its your turn today. Tell him to teach Boogie how to swim. Don't drown my baby please?" Lakhe: "I'm not gonna drown baby-" Me: "the puppy. Don't drown the puppy." Lakhe: "ouch." he held his chest. Lakhe: "ayizo pains seyizi ulcer shame." he walked out. Fez and Zintle came out together from the bedroom. Fez: "tshesa gurrll! Ungumfazi nyani sana. Ude uvuke ngentseni ne bhabhalaza for uzopheka. Ndiyak'vuma mna shame." Zintle: "yambona sana. Lonto u-fresh. What's so jolly about this morning?" me: "nothing. Ni-suspicious

gqithi. So tell me Fez...how did it go..." Fez: "uthetha ngantoni ke upower puff girl? Andisayithandi outfit yakho toto." Me: "Paul sbhanxa." Zintle: "heee tshomi bengese cozy!!" Me: "ndibabonile." Fez: "guys ndiyi girl ene morals mna, I don't do first nights." Zintle: "awulo menemene." Fez: "Inoba impundu uzivule zathi ntaaa. Benjani uSibu." I laughed. Zintle: "mxim." Me: "you fucked Sibu?" Zintle: "I wish. Andiyazi kutheni endiqhoshela labhuti bethuna. He literally tucked me in. Worse kengoku, his cologne made my insides cry. Ndingasam'baweli." Me: "uzoyeka uhula nawe." Zintle: "mxim. Ndiright wethu. Makayigcine ncanca yakhe. Ndine prospects." Fez: "eziphi tshomi? Ezase Dubai?" Zintle: "ungam'libali uBraai pack lo umshiye eyefuzela yedwa kulandlu yakho." Fez: "tshomi suba low. Thula." Me: "here's breakfast guys phakani." the guys came in the kitchen. Phof

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Paul and Sibu. Hunter ebezithulele yena ethanda uhlala yedwa aphole, Lakhe ke ebevana naye. Bathule bodwa pha. Paul: "good morning ladies." Me: "hi Paul. Breakfast?" Paul: "please Mrs Sobz." I gave him a plate. Lakhe's food was ready for him ndikubeke ecaleni. Sibu: "molweni ma'lady...hey babe." he hugged Zintle. Uthini na apha kum. Mr Tuck-in. Zintle: "hey." Sibu: "cela undiphakele vha." Bekufuneka ndiphakele uSandile also worse ngoku equmbile. Speaking of Sandile, Uphi uKhanya? After making Sandile's burgers I went outside to check on him. Me: "guys." Lakhe was laying on one of the chairs. Me: "Uphi uKhanya?" Lakhe: "don't know. He's not talking." Me: "Sands..." I put my hand in the water. He came out wandijamela. Okaaay, so he was really pissed off. Me: "good morning nakuwe." Sands: "the fuck's so good about it?" ouch. Me: "what happened." Sands: "can I have a moment alone please?" Me: "No, your food is ready, funeke utye. Uphi uKhanya? Is she still sleeping?" Sands: "she's gone." and he disappeared back into the water. Lakhe: "good for you. At least you got a whole dialogue. I barely got a peep." Me: "maybe they had a fight?" Lakhe: "well, let's let Aqua-man do his thing. I'm starving mna." he got up wazongena endlini with Boogie. We washed our hands and ate with our friends. Lakhe: "baby." he checked his phone after eating." Me: "yes?" Lakhe: "Babalo says he's watching the game at his club later on. Can I go?" he looked semi excited. Me: "Babalo? Oh your new friend?" Lakhe: "well.....not yet. I mean, we're into the same things. So." Me: "And he has a club." Lakhe: "hm.hm." Me: "its a strip club." Lakhe: "you're being crazy kengoku. Who watches soccer at a strip club?" Me: "You. Clearly. Baby, you don't even like soccer. The look you had on your face ujonge kwi phone yakho. Was not an invite to soccer." Lakhe: "do you keep these scenarios in your head okanye you just go with it when time allows? Babe, I don't like soccer, I don't like beer. Maybe that's why, I don't have social

friends. All friends I make are business reports and financials." Me: "I thought you had plenty of friends. Did they suddenly die of heart attacks because you claimed them as friends." I took a fork full of egg and burger in my mouth. Lakhe: "baby. Ndiyak'thanda ne. As much as ungandithandi wena, always teasing me. Kusezolunga nangenye imini. So can I go?" Me: "do you, boo boo." Lakhe: "unjalo ke wena. Maybe I should book you into a spa. Wenziwe massage and stuff." Me: "uyandi briber ngoku?" Lakhe: "no baby. Not at all....it would be nice though....a thank you...." Me: "this is definitely a bribe." Lakhe: "ungcolile yazi." Me: "khazondincedisa upakisha izitya wethu. Babalo can bond with his wife nawe ubonde nowakho umfazi. Doesn't he know I'm your best friend. Mxelele ke sana so he doesn't get the roles twisted." I collected the plates wandilandela to the kitchen. Lakhe: "but baby. You're my bestest friend njena." Me: "let him know." I packed the dish washer. Lakhe: "I will." Me: "you can go only because ndifuna uyokwenza intloko yam." Lakhe: "uzokwenza nton kulentloko intle?" Me: "a long straight Peruvian weave." Lakhe: "yoooh. Hayi ke bawo. Ndizophandlwa ngoku xandilala? Hayi Khawuyeke Spho please." Me: "awubawel ucheba inqayi?" Lakhe: "why would I do that?" Me: "I love that question. Ude wamxelela uSandile?" Lakhe: "ndizothetha naye njani enjeya? Uske andibhide mna ndimyeke ke." I inserted the tablet and closed the machine switching it on. Me: "cela ungabuyi late Kakhulu ke vha." I kissed his cheek. Lakhe: "okay. Am I fine like this?" Me: "weather iyatshintsha. Maybe wear pants and take your jacket with you for in case." Lakhe: "okay mama." he kissed me back. Me: "sizoyithini household yeguests zethu?" Lakhe: "Hunter bayahamba namhlanje. Quite soon actually. Noba bazohamba gqiba kwabo ukutya. Andiyazi ke nge friends zakho." Me: "sizoshiya Sandile yedwa apha? With Boogie?" Lakhe: "Sandile will never hurt Boogie. Myeke." Me: "fine. Go change." our friends started leaving. Phof mine. Fez ebeleqa uCraig and Zintle wanted to be out of sight ka Sibu for whatever reason. Me: "let me drop you

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guys off kaloku. Wait for me." I went to fetch my coat and bag. Me: "have a safe flight guys." Hunter: "thank you Spho." Sibu: "I'll be staying a few more days." Me: "oh? Business?" Sibu: "no...some personal things need sorting out." Me: "okay. Its a good thing ukhona. Please look out for Boogie vha." Sibu: "will do." I got in the car ndahamba with the girls.

Monday morning I was up and ready for action. Okay, not really because bendigodola. Anyway, I showered ndayonxiba. Lakhe woke up. He came back around 11pm last night edinwe edikwe. I had to fetch Zingi from hospital today so yilento ndihamba kuqala. Lakhe: "baby...uyaphi?" Me: "ku

Zingi. You know this. Morning my heart." I kissed him. Lakhe: "I'm still tired yazi." Me: "hayi kaloku bezikhipha for wena kule weekend." Lakhe: "awusemhle mntuwam with your new hair. You look like Beyonce." I laughed. Me: "thank you Jay Z." Lakhe: "yuuuh. Ingathi ndiyazibona." he went to shower and I made the bed. Ndaphuma ndayomenzela ukutya. Sandile ebengekathethi namntu oko kwayizolo and akhange sim'hoye nathi ke. Sibu on the other hand was in the room most of the time. Actually the whole time. I think he was avoiding me. Sandile was in the kitchen making breakfast already. Me: "hello." Sands: "hi." he said coldly. Ndayibamba apho sana. Andicingi ndiziphoxise ngalo. I took yogurt and fruit salad ndatya. It was time for me to go, ndathatha okwam, went to say goodbye to my love ndayoba imoto yakhe. The big one. I drove to the hospital, parked the car ndayongena phakathi. In her room Zingi had just finished breakfast evasa. I helped her dress. Me: "so, have you heard anything about Dumi? Is he well?" Zingi: "he's okay. Tshomi can you please sign these papers and get me out of here. This place depresses me." Me: "ok. I'll look for your doctor." I went out to look for the doc ndadlula kwi room ka Dumi. He was also awake. I was tempted to go in and say hi. I wonder if he got lonely here. Oh what the hell. Me: "hey.." I knocked on the door. He just stared at me waphinda wajonga phantsi. Me: "how are you feeling?" I walked in. He didn't respond. Me: "look, Dumi, I know its not nice to be in a hospital and having people take care of yo-" Dumi: "I can't walk." yangathi Kukho umntu ondihlabe ngento entliziyweni. Waking up without a recollection of your life sucks, but waking up with everything you know present but ungakwazi uhamba? I couldn't even imagine the pain. Me: "I'm sorry Dumi." Dumi: "I don't know if I'm sorry. She should've just killed me Spho. What life am I to have xandinje?? How the fuck am I suppose to work!!!! Why couldn't they just let me die!" Me: "Dumisani you have kids. They need you to be alive and as your friends we don't want you dead. Suthetha olohlobo because thina we were worried when we heard about this accident." Dumi: "I don't know what to do with myself. Where do I begin? Am I being punished for cheating on my wife? Did I deserve this? So many questions and all I hear is a devilish laugh in my head. Flashbacks of that night. I really wish they'd let me die. I can't live like this." Me: "Dumi you're stronger than this. That's why you made it. You can't let it pull you down. You survived for a reason." Dumi: "nah Spho." Me: "please stay strong. Ndiyak'cela Dumz. For Zimi and Lulonke's sake. Those kids love you. Don't do this to them." Dumi: "I just need to be alone." Me: "okay. Will you need anything? That we can bring later?" Dumi: "please contact my firm and tell William to come see me. Andiphathele my office iPad." Me: "okay. I'll do so. Goodbye Dumi." Dumi: "bye Spho." I walked out of the door. After discharging Zingi, I took her home sending Lakhe Dumi's message for William. Zingi's mother had cleaned and made the house more

welcoming. Ungena kwethu, I let her sit ndayokwenza i-tea. We all sat in the lounge ndancokola nomama ka Zingi. Just general stuff wethu like work and TV shows qha. Her mom left us alone for a while. Me: "peto..." Zingi: "yeah?" Me: "I know you just got out of hospital but you look like hell. You okay?" she

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shook her head. Me: "what's wrong?" Zingi: "I regret it so much Spho...everything I've done to hurt him." Me: "Dumi? I'm sure he's also sorry for the things he's done." Zingi: "he doesn't even want to see me." she cried. Zingi: "Spho ndiyazicapkela so much. I wish I could turn back the hands of time. I love Dumi. I don't know what I was thinking." I wonder if the baby in her belly made it. I didn't want to ask now because she was already emotional ndizoyika umkhubekisa. I hugged her wiping her tears. Me: "its all going to work out soon enough friend. Just give him some time." what else was I to say? I knew this whole cheat on cheat shit would backfire but I was never prepared for this. Nobody was. Zingi: "please talk to him Spho...ndiyak'cela my friend..." uhh....no. Do you even know the shit he's faced with at the moment? Me: "Zingi..." Zingi: "yeah?" Me: "was your intention to kill Dumi? By causing an accident?"

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Chapter 49

She looked at me then looked at her hands. Me: "its okay...you can tell me." Zingi: "we were in the car...fighting physically. Then I took the steering wheel from him swaying the car. That's when it happened." Sowhat does that mean? Me: "so you wanted to just end the both your lives? Zingi what about the kids?" Zingi: "It was stupid of me. I know. Now I made everything more than worse. He wants nothing to do with me." Me: "just give him time peto. He almost lost his life." we sat and chatted for about another hour then I had to go to my meeting. I drove to the workplace ndayongena in my office to prepare for my meeting. Lakhe came in immediately. Me: "hey babe." Lakhe: "hey. You look tired." Me: "I am. Was at the hospital ndabona uDumi. Its so painful." Lakhe: "what's so painful?" Me: "umntanabantu can't walk Masilakhe." Lakhe: "njani fondin? As in disabled?" Me: "ndiqale nini uba ngu fondin ke mhlawmbi?" Lakhe: "argg just something I picked up on kuBabalo. Sorry baby. But are you serious? Its that bad?" Me: "yeah. Its that bad. So wena while you're on a happy tip with your new friend, lo beyitshomakho is in hospital. With no one by his side and cannot walk." Lakhe: "so, I feel as though I'm being attacked." Me: "whatever Lakhe. I need to get to my meeting." Lakhe: "babe." Me: "uyenzile lento bendikucele uyenze?" Lakhe: "uhm...what

did you ask babe?" Me: "I sent you a text asking you to call Dumi's off- mxim. You know what? Yeka. I'll do that myself." I took my phone and google number yale firm ka Dumi, got William and gave him the message. Just in that 2 minute walk from the office to the car. Lakhe: "hun." he followed after me. Lakhe: "I'm sorry...I was distracted. Ndizoya ku Dumi right now and see what I can do for him-" Me: "WITH. He doesn't need pity. He needs a friend. You know Dumi likes and respects you, if you're there he might stop thinking of suicide." Lakhe: "okay, I seriously feel like this an attack kum ngoku. What's wrong baby?" he held my arm. Lakhe: "ugqibile mos umensa. What's the problem?" Me: "she tried to kill him Lakhe." I breathed. Me: "she tried to kill her own husband and downplays it like it was an accident and she's sorry. Lakhe, I personally don't think Dumi is safe." Lakhe: "what could she possibly do to him now?" Me: "hello!!!!!!" Lakhe: "babes. Just get to your meeting. I'll sort everything out." Me: "why are you being nice? Ufuna ntoni?" Lakhe: "nothing baby." Me: "don't lie to me please." Lakhe: "I know you're gonna say no." Me: "Thetha Lakhe." Lakhe: "Babalalo and his friends are going on a fishing tri-" Me: "No. Babalalo can Wait. Dumi needs you. And we're not having this conversation again Masilakhe. This Babalalo is sliding in very easily ebomini bakho. Stay woke!" I got in the car. Lakhe: "stay woke? Don't you mean awake? Anyway, I understand babe. Its fine." Me: "I'll see you at home." he kissed me when I opened my window. Lakhe: "I love you my heart." Me: "I love you too baby wam." I drove away ndaya kwi meeting yam.

I got home late and quite tired from this day. Mentally I was drained. I took off my clothes eroomin ndanxiba tracksuit and went to the kitchen to start on supper. Sandile was there. In the kitchen epehaka. Not surprised at all. Me: "need help?" he shook his head. You cannot be fucking serious. Usaqumbile? Yoooooh. Me: "Sandile. What's wrong-" Sands: "your husband! He's what's wrong!" okay? Me: "wenzenton?" Sands: "yiyeke wethu Sphosenkosi." heeee. Ndamyeka ke wachuba veg yakhe dramatically. I went to do the laundry, ndizivalele kula laundry room. Up until I put the clothes in the dryer ndaphuma ke ndisiyokhangela into yokwenza. Lakhe's car was driving in. Sandile was almost done cooking ecima phof i-stove and putting plates on the counter. Sands: "akandimameli mna uLakhe. I'm the one that has to stand on my head but noooo, akandiva mna." Me: "akakuva

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xa utheni?" Sands: "ndiyeke man Spho." Me: "ungak'linge ke mna undigezele. Andizonyamezelana nawe apha sibe sikucenga ingathi ungumntana omncinci. If you have a problem, you open your mouth and talk! If not, yeka uphoxana nabantu abangakwenzanga nto. Tshin thiza. Caba funeke simane

sichwechwa around you. Suk'sa Sandile." ndatsho ndiphuma ndiyokhangela uBoogie phandle. He was basking in the sun epholile umntanam sana. Engese hluthi isusu sithe pop out ingathi unxibe crop top. Lakhe: "hun?" Me: "yes ?" Lakhe: "please come help me." I went inside the house Kukho umfazi olikula standing in my lounge. A bit older though, enxibe uniform. Me: "what's wrong." Lakhe: "so....this is Rebecca." Me: "hi Rebecca. I'm Spho." Lakhe: "yes, this is my fiance. My brother, Sandile is in the kitchen. Our puppy is outside tanning, his name is Boogie. This is our house." Me: "kwenzeka nton Lakhe." Lakhe: "oh. Wait here." he ran out excitedly. Me: "so...what do you do Rebecca?" Becca: "I'm a private nurse ma'am." Me: "please call me Spho." Lakhe was faced me with his back pulling something in. It looked like a wheelchair. It was a wheelchair! He turned around with it. Lakhe: "and we're home!" Dumi. He brought Dumi to our house from the hospital. Hebethuna? I'm pretty sure my boyfriend is on cocaine now. Umzisa njani umnyeni wesdala sika Sandile apha! Without even talking to me! Me: "hey Dumi. Uright?" Dumi: "I'm okay Spho. Enkosi." Me: "my love? A word?" I pulled him to the kitchen. Lakhe: "before you say anything-" Me: "you didn't speak to me about this! We didn't discuss this!" Lakhe: "I'm sorry baby. It was a split second decision. When I saw him there looking hopeless, I just couldn't leave him there alone." Me: "when did you become soft?" Lakhe: "when did you become so mean?" Sands: "when did you think you were gonna tell me to move out?" Lakhe: "awuyi ndawo Sandile. Dumi isn't here for you and I swear if you even try-" Sands: "then he must stay the fuck out my way." Lakhe: "this isn't permanent guys. Just until he gains enough confidence." Me: "You like him. Don't you?" Lakhe: "I'm just being nice." Me: "no...you care! Its so sweet of you. But uzolala phi, ahoywe njani?" Lakhe: "that is Rebecca's job, uzolala in one of our other rooms." Me: "we should've spoken about this kodwa Masilakhe. I don't have a problem with him being here at all though." Sands: "I hope I don't have to be friendly. Or share my TV." Me: "your TV is in your bedroom njena. Cela ukhuphe enye plate ndiphake." Lakhe: "enkosi mntuwam." he kissed my forehead. Me: "Uphi uSibu?" Sands: "I don't know. Oko emnkile esithi he's going to find something out- oh there he is. Hi Sibz...uright?" yoh uyi rollercoaster uSandile bethunana. Sibu: "I'm fine. Just need water." he took a glass and poured water wasela wagqiba. Sibu: "cela ningandiphakeli mna. I'm not hungry." Me: "everyone under this roof is going to sit at that table and eat. I don't care if we do that through crying and screaming." Sibu: "just dealing with some personal shit right now. I can't be around people. I'm sorry Spho." he went to his room. Me: "and then?" Sands: "maybe he didn't like what he found. He left here so excitedly ksasa.. I wonder utheni. Oh well. Where's the boy. Its time for his bath." he whistled for the dog. Me: "again?" Sands: "yes. He needs to bath like the rest of us." I was

a bit jealous kuba I wasn't the one washing him. Even nayizolo. So maybe I'm a little attached to Boogie, was that so bad? Kodwa Sandile ebenomona ngaye shame. I took the plates to the table. Lakhe was showing Dumi and Rebecca around. I didn't mind that he brought him home, but I was a bit worried. Lakhe being nice? What was that Babalo feeding him? Ohh wait! Lakhe was not being nice at all. Ufuna uhamba nala Babalo! That is why ezenza uSuperman apha. Mxim. Lakhe: "so that's the rest of the house." Dumi: "its very nice. And wheelchair friendly at that. Thank you so much Lakhe. You didn't have to do this." Lakhe: "uyitshomam fondin. What else was I supposed to do?" that word again. Me: "supper is served guys." I removed one chair from the table and rolled Dumi's

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wheelchair in its place. Rebecca sat down and Lakhe. Sandile ebeyovasa uBoogie. I took Sibuh's food to the bedroom kuye. I know he said akafuni ukutya but if the food was near him he'd eventually eat it without going out the room amane ngobuzwa ngabantu ba utheni. I knocked on the door. Sibuh: "come in." I walked in and he sat up. Sibuh: "Spho, you didn't have to." Me: "I'll just put it here in case you get hungry during the night. Are you okay?" Sibuh: "I will be." Me: "you want to talk about it?" Sibuh: "my mom had kidney failure a couple of months ago. So I offered to donate one of mine to her. She didn't want me to. Saying she doesn't want to hurt me. Oko ndizama ukumcela. It hurt to see her go through all that pain. Ndacela ugqirha ecaleni if I could test without her knowing and I did. Kanti I was not a match. So much so that even our blood types were no where near mother and son. The doctor said it happened sometimes, umntu abeneyakhe blood type and only extract from one or the other parent. I didn't believe that, so I told umama. She couldn't explain it to me either. After I searched and searched I finally found out that I'm adopted." Me: "woah....that is intense." Sibuh: "it is." Me: "so is that why you decided to stay? Ungabuyelanga eDurban?" Sibuh: "yes. My biological parents are here in PE." Me: "did you find them?" Sibuh: "yes. My father has disappeared off the face of the earth phof akhomntu umaziyo uyephi. My mom on the other hand is just..... I don't know hey. I just don't know." Me: "I'm sorry Sibuh." Sibuh: "its cool..." Me: "did you talk to her?" Sibuh: "I tried. She just kept asking me Uphi uNodoli. I don't know who that is. Mxim." Me: "are you going to go back again?" Sibuh: "to her? I don't know what I should do. I want to know her, find out if I maybe have siblings somewhere. Find my dad also. I just don't know. Maybe if I stayed with her for a few days, get her to sober up?" Me: "that would be a good idea. I'm sure she'd appreciate your presence and get to know you better." Sibuh: "thanks Spho. Ndizoya kuye ngomso." I heard a bit of arguing from a distance. I then heard

yelling. I stood up then rushing out the room. Then a loud bang. Lakhe:
"SANDILE!!!!!"

We stood in the lounge. Lakhe. Me. Sibu. Rebecca. Dumi in his chair. Sandile had stormed out. Me: "kwenzeka ntoni? Can someone say something?" Lakhe: "just a minor misunderstanding." Me: "I heard screaming. And a bang." Lakhe: "its nothing Spho." Me: "Dumi? You okay?" he nodded. Me: "where's Boogie?" Lakhe: "I think eroomin yakhe. Napping. Uhm, you guys can carry on with dinner. I'll prepare us dessert so long." he went to the kitchen. I followed him. Me: "Lakhe. What was that?" Lakhe: "Sandile is being melodramatic as usual." Me: "about what?" Lakhe: "our things Spho. He doesn't like the idea of inviting other people in our life. He throws temper tantrums all the time. You know this." he looked upset but wasn't showing any interest. Lakhe: "please enjoy dinner with our guests. Bonke abazani phaya and akekho nomnye umntu walapha endlini at the table." Me: "okay." I went to the dining table. Everyone was sitting at their place. Sibu was sitting too. Dumi: "Spho?" Me: "yes?" Dumi: "can I have a glass of wine?" Me: "aren't you still on meds?" Dumi: "well yeah..." Becca: "as long as its not too much." Me: "just one glass. Okay? I don't want you to slow down your progress." Dumi: "thank you." I poured him a glass. Becca: "and we'll have to work it off with exercises and healthy eating." Dumi: "I don't want to exercise." Becca: "its for your well being Dumisani." Dumi: "you heard the doctor. He said the possibility for me to ever walk again are very slim. What good is exercising going to do other than make me look ridiculously delusional?" Becca: "Dumisani, you're not going to look ridiculous. What the doctor says can be proven wrong. It has been, multiple times. By people who don't want to give up. Slim is just what it looks like now.....a few months from now, you could be looking at 50%. If you don't start, how will

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you know?" Dumi rolled his eyes. Dumi: "fine. I'll do it." he picked at his food. Me: "have you seen the kids yet?" Dumi: "they visited at the hospital. Lulonke was worried thinking he was going to lose me. He has a game this Saturday and all those times I never went because of work, now I'm sitting like this." Me: "we're all going to the game. You included. We can come back here afterwards and have a little braai, so you can spend time with them." Becca: "that's a great idea Spho." Dumi: "she's going to be there. I don't wanna see her." Me: "you can't avoid her forever." Dumi: "I know so I'm trying my best to, for my remaining couple of years. At least that I still have." I sighed. Me: "she's gonna have to know uhlala apha. Dumi, we're all friends. I can't just take sides. I care about the both of you." not. Okay I was being a bitch now. Of

course I cared. Although I did not approve of what Zingi did, I still cared about them both. Naye uDumi uzenzile ii-faults. They weren't perfect. Dumi: "Still." he took his ipad and clicked on it. Lakhe finally came with the dessert. He sat down and we ate quietly. Something was definitely up with him and frankly, I was not in the mood for it tu. Andizokwazi ucenga umntu omngakaya. Next I know ndizophoxwa ndikhubeke apha. Yuuh. Me: "so tomorrow I'm going back home. My parents must miss me." Lakhe: "why?" Me: "why what?" Lakhe: "Spho, we live together." Me: "we discussed this." he stared at me. Lakhe: "can I have a word with you?" he walked to our room. Me: "excuse me." I followed him. Lakhe: "kutheni Spho, uzondijongisa ngabantu? Was it really necessary for you to mention that at the table." Me: "was it a secret?" Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi. We live together. I paid iLobola njena. Your parents don't mind you being here with me. Plus, I have extra guests in OUR house. I can't do all that alone. We're in it together." Me: "no we aint brother. YOU on your own decided to bring Dumi here. With a private nurse." Lakhe: "oh? And Sibuh? Was that me too?" Me: "Sibuh is going to his mom's tomorrow. Uzohlala pha until he goes home." Lakhe: "so you want to run away from the responsibility of taking care of your friend? Just because I made a decision that I thought was best and you would like. I always listen to you. I do as you say. You wanted me to be more helping and accommodating of others ebomini bam but today ndirongo. How could I have left Dumi there Spho? Umbonile nawe ebenjani, he wasn't in the right state of mind. Its fine though. Goduka. If you want to go, then go." he opened the door and walked back out to the dining area. Me: "Lakhe." he ignored me completely. Now I felt bad. Not entirely. Kodwa I was being mean again and being selfish. I went to the dining table ndahlala phantsi. They had their conversation and giggles alone ndisitya dessert yam quietly. I took the dishes to the kitchen ndazifaka ku machine wazo. I was wrong. That I knew very well and I had to tell him. He walked in the kitchen with his bowl wayibeka on the counter. Me: "I'm sorry. I was wrong. I should be supporting you and actually thanking you for being a wonderful person. I don't know who I'm becoming. I'm losing pieces of myself everyday. Ndicela uxolo Masilakhe. I want to help you. I want to be here for you and with you. Ndiyakuthanda babe." he just stared at me. Lakhe: "k cool." he turned and walked away. I felt my heart break in half ingathi yi Marie biscuit. After getting into my feels like that? Lakhe: "you know what the problem is?" he stood by the door. Lakhe: "you're not sorry. I know this because I can see the look in your eyes. How I recognize the look? Because I once had it nam. You've changed into what I used to be. Iqale kancinci with sarcasm and mood swings now You've turned full on beastly. And cold. Towards me too. I had to change that personality instantly when I met you because I loved you.

I wanted to be with you normally and not make you uncomfortable. Now I just don't know what's going on kuwe. You want control over everything, and I freely give it to you. Ndiyakuva ucela uxolo Sphosenkosi, but you don't mean it. Do you?" Me: "I do." Lakhe:

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"Sphosenkosi. I'm not stupid. I know this behavior. Not wanting to be around other people, shutting others out, getting easily angered ngezinto ezincinci. And so much more. The only remaining problem is that I'm not willing to marry that version of you. I'm not going to marry my previous self nangeyiphi na imini.. So if you don't change this attitude, or deal with it. I don't know if we can go ahead."

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Chapter 50

A few days after 'the talk'. Friday to be precise. I came home from work ndafika Kukho Dumi and Rebecca exercising. Sibu was with his mom oko wayemke Tuesday. Sandile was in and out as quietly as possible endlini. Lakhe was still not talking to me regardless of what I did. I just got head nods and 'okays'. It was worse at work, because he acted as though everything was fine. Me: "molweni fam. How is it going?" Becca: "great. He's improving." Dumi: "not that much." Me: "let's see." I sat down. Dumi: "now?" Me: "ewe." Becca helped him up from the chair and held him to the bars. Dumi: "but I can't even feel my legs. I'm gonna fall." Sands: "just try and imagine being a hungry beast chasing you. He'll rip your limbs apart one by one." Me: "Sandile!" Sands: "sorry." Me: "relax Dumi. There's no hungry beast." Dumi: "nah...let him talk. I'm gonna walk over there and beat him qha." Sands: "come. I have a few years of not giving a shit." Me: "sum'hoya Dumi, you're doing great." Dumi: "okay...tired now." Becca: "okay. Let's sit." she brought the wheel chair closer to him and sat him down. Me: "let me make you guys some dinner. Is there something you want?" Dumi: "lasagna." Sands: "spaghetti bolognese." Me: "Sandile." he smiled. I went to the bedroom to change. Ndanxiba a baby blue boob tube maxi dress. It held my breasts only and was free from there down. I tied up my weave ndayovasa izandla. Slipped on sandals kwangena uLakhe. He threw his bag on the bed and undressed very quickly. Me: "hey baby." Lakhe: "hello." he went into the closet. Me: "so, tonight we're having lasagna. I was thinking maybe you could invite Babalo and Hlumi to come over for dinner, we could have game night." Lakhe: "I can't. Babalo and I are going out for drinks. His friend Carlo has a yacht and he's waiting for us at the Harbour." when was he going to tell

me that? If I hadn't spoken? He wore his jeans and t shirt and sneakers. Me: "its cold at the Harbour. You should take your warm jacket." Lakhe: "thank you." he took it off the hanger. Me: "uzobuya namhlanje?" Lakhe: "I'm not really sure." Me: "Masilakhe. Can we talk?" he looked at me. Me: "I'm really sorry for Monday. I've been trying this whole week to show you that. Why are you ignoring me?" Lakhe: "I'm not ignoring you Spho. I'm always here andithi?" Me: "I know you're punishing me. I don't know till when kodwa Lakhe this isn't healthy." he kissed my lips. Lakhe: "I'll see you when I'm back. I'm not punishing you at all. I have to go vha." I stepped out of his way and he dashed out. I went to the kitchen ndaqalisa upheka. Kuyo yonke lonto I held back tears ndingafuni tu uba weak. Dumi: "hey." Me: "hi." Dumi: "you okay?" Me: "yeah...onions." Dumi: "oh yeah. Awufuni ndikuncedise?" Me: "no its okay Dumi. I got this. Go watch some TV." Dumi: "Sandile keeps changing the channels athi ngu Boogie that's stepping on the Remote." Me: "I'll speak to Sandile. He's a big baby yena." Dumi: "okay." he wheeled out the kitchen then back in again. Dumi: "Spho. I've known you for years." Me: "I know." Dumi: "if you need to talk I'm here." Me: "okay." I was ready to explode at this point. I went to the sink and washed my hands. Dumi left me alone, ndapheka ndincediswa ngu Rebecca. She chatted to me about her hometown and made me forget my own problems for a second. While we waited for the lasagna to be ready. Zintle facetimed ndancokola naye kancinci then Fez joined our conference call. Fez: "akasemhle umakoti. Khawuze ndibone ilokhwe mfazi." Me: "hayi man Fez..." Zintle: "une glow sana. Inoba umithi. Have you chosen a date yet?" Me: "we're still discussing that." in my imagination. Zintle: "alright my hun." Dumi: "Spho. Uyambona ke uSandile???" I put my phone on the counter. Me: "Sandile wenzeni!!" Sands: "nothing!!" he yelled from the couch. Dumi: "he's trying to jack my wheels. Undincamathisela nge super glue on the tiles!" Me: "Sandile, Khawuyeke torho!" Sands: "I did nothing." Me: "iza

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uzoyohlala phe camkwakhe on the couch." Dumi: "he will kill me." Me: "akacingi." I took him back to the living room helping him sit on the couch. Me: "Sandile if I hear your name one more time." Sands: "sorry." I folded the wheelchair ndayibeka ecaleni. Going back to the kitchen. Fez: "peto. Was that Dumi?" Me: "yes. Lakhe brought him home on Monday." and has left him as my sole responsibility for the weekend as well. Zintle: "ncooh. Uthini uZingi?" Me: "she doesn't know yet.. Guys I have to go..before those two hurt each other. They're like 5 year olds, oko ndinqanda iveki yonke." Fez: "okay love. Good bye." I hung up. I closed the sink ndagalela amanzi and a bit of dishwasher. I started washing the dishes and bowls I used to prepare the

lasagna. Not too many and I felt like doing something with my hands. Sands: "wenzantoni?" Me: "washing dishes. You scared me. Ungene nini?" he leaned on the sink. Sands: "you also see what's happening." Me: "what is?" Sands: "Spho....come on..." Me: "Uphi uKhanya?" Sands: "Uphi uLakhe." Me: "he's at the Harbour with his friends." Sands: "she's at home with her parents. The only problem is that she's not ignoring me." Me: "neither is he. So where you getting at?" hands started shaking. Sands: "its the friend. He's a bad influence on him....Babalalo isn't what he seems to be." Me: "well...try telling that to his beloved friend." Sands: "he won't listen. Spho, Babalo uyayibona hold onayo ku Lakhe. He doesn't want that, he wants to destroy it. He wants Lakhe to be like him. Problem ka Lakhe is that he's never had friends, he's never been accepted by anyone....what Babalo is giving him is a life he has never experienced." Me: "Sandile, uyixelela umntu orongo lento." Sands: "ilula yonke lento Spho. If you want me to help....just say the word....I know how to make things vanish." Me: "No, I don't want you to kill Babalo. I don't want you to kill anyone. Ever!" Sands: "who said anything about killing?" Me: "don't hurt him neither!" Sands: "who said anything about violence?" Me: "just...no. I know you." Sands: "I'm here Spho. If you need me....use me. I can make all your problems go away mntase." he walked out the kitchen. He is so psychotic. My heart was bleeding also. I wanted Lakhe back in this house like he used to be. So how could that be done? Andinthembi uSandile ingathi uzoyenza kabhlungu yonke lento. Maybe I should just let Lakhe enjoy this friendship. He hasn't had friends like this before, he deserves someone to let him loose. When dinner was ready I took it to the dining table. Me: "dinner is ready." Sands: "so are my plans." he whispered as he passed me. Becca and I helped Dumi onto his chair sayohlala at the table. Dumi: "can I say grace?" Sands: "yoh. In this house? U-sure?" Me: "ignore him. Yes Dumi. Go ahead." Dumi: "can we close our eyes please?" we closed our eyes. Dumi: "Lord, we thank you for the wonderful food we have on our plates, we ask that You bless the hands that prepare it as well as the mouths that feed on it. Please guide us carefully and shower us further with more blessings at each waking day. Amen." Me: "amen." Becca: "amen.." we looked at Sandile. His eyes were still closed. Sands: "amen." watshintsha kengoku. There we go again. We ate our dinner. Dumi: "the game starts at 10 tomorrow Spho. I called the school earlier." Me: "perfect. Sizoyomlanda ku makhulu wakhe and drive him there. Sandile, will you be able to come?" Sands: "unfortunately not. I have stuff I need to do. Plus a meeting with Michael for the hotel." Me: "okay." after dinner, I put the dishes into the machine. My mind was at home. Kumama notata wam. I missed them so much. I wanted to go to them but andinoshiya Dumi noSandile apha. Becca would never be able to handle them. Not that she's incapable but Sandile akeva. Plus tomorrow I had to do this for Dumi

and his kids. He was doing much better elapha engasayihoyi ncam indaba ye-wheel chair. He was happier. I closed the machine and stood next to it. "hey." I looked up. Sibú. Me: "hey you. Awusenqabe." Sibú: "ndikhona.... And you? Why do you look so down?" Me: "I'm not...I'm just thinking

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about work. Unjani umamakho?" Sibú: "she's okay. Ndimfake kwi rehab centre." Me: "still can't find your dad?" he shook his head. Sibú: "nobody knows where he went to. The last time he was seen ebesuka kwi tshomi yakhe. Tshomi leyo yakhe doesn't even know where he is because ebethe kuyo ugoduka straight. So I don't know.....I think he might be dead." Me: "hayi Sibú! Suthetha njalo." Sibú: "I've called all the hospitals in the bay. He's not there. The next thing now is to call the mortuaries." Me: "I'm so sorry Sibú..." Sibú: "its okay. I'd be happy just to find his body and put him to rest qha. Peacefully." Me: "can I dish up for you?" Dumí: "Spho!" Me: "God Sandile wenzeni ngoku!!" Sands: "I'm right here!" he stood by the door. Me: "what's up Dumí?" Dumí: "maybe we could play some games." Sands: "you're not using my darts." Me: "okay, we'll find something." I dished up for Sibú. Sandile and Dumí had disappeared by the time I finished and I started panicking. I looked for them everywhere ndayobafumana at the game room. I breathed in relief. They'd discovered Fifa. Me: "Sandile." Sands: "Ma." Me: "try not to hurt omnye umntana. Are you comfortable Dumz?" Dumí: "yes." he was focusing on the screen. At least they found some common ground. Sibú joined them. Becca was in her room. I decided to take this time to relax and go through my work.

Saturday morning. I'd driven Dumí and Becca to fetch the kids and go to the game. Sandile ebeshiyeke noSibú. When we arrived at the field, Becca was pushing Dumí's wheelchair ndihamba ecamkwabo carrying Zimi. Lulonke ran to his team. I couldn't see Onetta. Thank goodness because I was not in the mood for her. We got to sit down. Zimi went to sit on her daddy's lap. Me: "I'll get us some hotdogs. Ufuna tomato sauce Dumí?" Dumí: "yes. And mustard." Becca: "only tomato on mine please." I walked to the stall, quite a distance down. The game had started most people were sitting and watching. I bought three hot dogs. Ndazibeka on the table to put on sauces. "hey there.." I looked to the direction of the voice. What was his name again? The light tall guy. Onetta's husband. Forgot his name. Me: "hey. Ninjani? Where's your wife?" he made a face. Confused face. Me: "Onetta?" Him: "oh...Onetta is my girlfriend. Ex actually." Me: "Oh.." Him: "but we have a kid so... My name is Nangamso." Gummy!! Yes. Me: "Spho." we shook hands. I spread the sauces on the hotdogs. "what's the hold up man?" a second voice. That sounded familiar. Gummy: "just chatting. You want some sauce?" "Spho?" I looked at

him. Me: "Max." Gummy: "you guys know each other?" Max: "yeah...we've met. Its nice to see you." Me: "you too Max. I have to go guys." I took the hot dogs ndaya kwindawo yam yohlala. Dumi: "and then?" Me: "what?" he smiled. I gave Becca her hotdog. Dumi: "ndiyibonile la moment ye-dudes." he laughed. Me: "just eat." he laughed again. I ate my hotdog and watched the game. Half way into it Becca got us some drinks. Me: "nilele nini izolo." Dumi: "around midnight. Sandile left me there to fend for myself. That bastard. Ndincedwe ngu Sibu." I chuckled. Me: "he likes you man. Trust me. Sandile wouldn't even put energy in affecting you if bengakufuni pha." Dumi: " He enjoys inflicting pain on my heart." Me: "unentlonti wethu. He's just like that." Dumi: "Lakhe akhange abuye?" Me: "no. He went on a yacht with his new friends." Dumi: "oh." then he kept quiet. Dumi: "he'll never do anything to hurt you. He loves you." Me: "I know..." Dumi: "just be patient. Let him run around for a while, uzodikwa soon enough and be back in your arms. We're like that thina. We know where home is." I smiled. Me: "thank you Dumi." After the game we took the kids home. To my surprise, Sandile had already started the braai sefaka inyama. Sibu was playing some music ephethe dumpie yakhe. Me: "and Michael?" Sands: "ndisuka kuye. How was the game?" Me: "come." I hugged him. Me: "I know you're trying to keep me happy." Sands: "uyandaz nje ndingu stand up comedian.

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Please make those nice salads for us. I also bought snacks for the kids for the mean time." Me: "okay." I went to the kitchen and started with the salads, Becca came to help me. The guys were outside with the puppy and the kids playing with it. The intercom rang ndayovula gate. I waited at the door yangena imoto ka bhuti Khaya. I squealed in excitement. My family was here! I ran to the car. Khaya: "ndikugile ke mna." I laughed. They got out the car and I hugged them. Me: "I missed you so much." Khaya: "we miss you too mntanam. Kwenzeka ntoni apha. You having a party?" Me: "no. Sisuka kwi rugby game ka Lulo. Dumi's son. They're here for a braai." I brought them up to speed quick with Dumi and Becca and Sibu they already knew Sandile. We went in the house. Me: "mama, this is Becca. Dumi's private nurse." Becca: "good afternoon." Mama: "hello." we went outside. Me: "There's Sandile. Dumi and Sibu. The kids are somewhere around the yard." Khaya: "molweni." Sands: "molo tata." Dumi: "molo tata." Sibu: "Molo Tata." really? One by one? Uwoah. Khaya: "need help there?" he went to Sandile rolling up his sleeves. Khaya: "might wanna sprinkle some beer like this to make it tender." Sands: "nyani?" I left them to do their thing ndayokwenzela umama i-tea. I left her in the lounge ancokole with Becca ndabuyela e-kitchen to continue with the salad. Sandile came in to fetch water. Sands: "your dad is

so cool." Me: "I know. He has me as a daughter. Ayisecece." he laughed. Lakhe walked into the kitchen. Sands: "zond'fumana phandle mntase." he walked out without even looking at him. Me: "hey...how was your trip." Lakhe: "it was fun.....I just missed you so much mntu wam. Damn." he hugged me. Me: "I missed you too baby." see? It wasn't so bad that he went to have fun with his friends. I had to instill trust. Lakhe: "jonga." he took out his phone and showed me pictures. Me: "this does look fun." Lakhe: "but cold...undincedile with the jacket. I would've frozen to death." Me: "utata and Sandile are braaing meat. Awulambanga?" Lakhe: "I'll wait for it. Come say hi with me." to who? I held my hand and walked me out the kitchen to the back yard. Lakhe: "Tata." Khaya: "heyy! There he is. I was wondering Uphi." Lakhe: "I'd like you to meet my new friend, uyamazi uDumi right? Well, this Babalo. He lives next door." I stared coldly at this big blob of nothing. Sandile looked at me with a raised eyebrow. I was gonna be calm. Lakhe: "Balo, remember my wife." Balo: "oh yeah....sup, Miss." sup is gonna kick your ass inside out with a fucken pitch fork. Me: "make yourself comfortable. I'll bring you a beer." I smiled.

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Chapter 51

The braai was going great. Everyone was happy. What I didn't understand was where Babalo's wife is. Kuthen yena engazanga? Me: "hun..." Lakhe: "yes babe?" Me: "isn't your friend married?" Lakhe: "yeah." Me: "well...where is his wife?" Lakhe: "I don't think she's around. Anyway, I'm going to fetch Skhumbuzo from the Engen garage. He's getting lost." Me: "who is Skhumbuzo?" Lakhe: "Balo's brother. I'll be back just now." he left the house. Everyone was outside, I was tidying up the kitchen ndizobuyela kubo in a minute. After taking The dishes out the machine ndazifaka kwi cupboard zazo. Plus the pots and everything. I could feel something standing behind me. Probably Sandile. Me: "how's everything outside. Usalambile? Ndiyakwazi kaloku wena ngokutya. You just never get enough." "at all..." that wasn't Sandile. I turned around and saw Babalo. He was leaning on the door frame with one hand in his pocket, the other holding a glass that contained a shot of whiskey. Ebecuthe amehlo encumile. Me: "what do you want...?" I tried my best to keep my composure. Balo: "you." he smiled. Balo: "kutheni Uhleli wedwa apha kulendu....night after night. Jesus, I would never leave if bendihlala apha....would fucking tear that ass up." his face turned serious. Balo: "every night." he sneered. Me: "Babalalo, get the hell out of my kitchen and house." Balo: "I'll be in the back yard if you need me." he turned around and left. I felt sick to my stomach. This bitch!! He doesn't even qualify to be a

bastard! Uyi bitch ngoku. I called Lakhe but it went straight to voicemail. I paced up and down the kitchen. I wanted to stab him for making me feel uncomfortable in my own house. He needed to be stabbed. Khaya: "bunny? wenzantoni?" Me: "I hate that man!!" Khaya: "yuh. Hate is a strong word-" Me: "I feel it strongly tata. Ndiyamcapkela qha! Do you know what he said when he came in here?" Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "baby nanku Skhura." Me: "Molo Skhura. Lakhe can I talk to you?" Skhura lowo looked like wothusiwe yena self. Lakhe: "babe, ndicela uqal-" Me: "Lakhe I need you Now." Lakhe: "Skhura, ngena kwesa sliding door mfethu. Ndiyeza." Skhura left the kitchen. Lakhe: "what's happening?" Khaya: "what did he say?" Me: "I asked him ufuna ntoni apha. He said that he wants Me. And that why ndihlala ndodwa kulendlu night after night. If he lived here..." I didn't want my father to hear this part. Khaya: "if he lived here what?" Lakhe: "who are we talking about?" Me: "I just don't like him. He's weird! UBabalo your stupid friend." waske wahleka uLakhe. I don't know what made me more angry. Lakhe: "baby, Babalo IS stupid. He jokes about you all the time. He says you're attractive ewe, that's it. He's no harm." I just stared at him perplexed. Me: "are you fucking kidding me?" Khaya: "Language Spho." Me: "tata, uxolo. But awuyiboni lento yenzekayo?" Khaya: "hun...so what if he finds you attractive? A lot of men do. I'm sure noSandile and Sibu even Dumi would but bona bane filter abazokuxelela lonto." Me: "Sandile doesn't have a filter!!" Sands: "and when did I become a topic." he came to rinse his glass. Khaya: "don't you think Spho is attractive?" Sands: "is it a trick question?" Me: "just answer Sandile man!" I had my hands on my hips ndivutha ngumsindo. Sands: "I don't find you attractive because you're my brother's wife but you're fucking sexy ke qha.....gorgeous, smart, you're....attractive. To other people...excuse the language." he dashed out as quickly as possible. Me: "he would be the only person that would believe me if I told him. Nina tata, nizoyibona seku late lento. And I swear Lakhe, I swear to Satan because I fear and respect my God, if that boy being Babalo comes near me or so much as utters a breath around my presence, I will stab him to death. Do you understand me? I mean this with every might in me. So help me God." I stormed out the kitchen.

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Later that evening, bendihleli ndiqumbile alone in the bedroom. My mom came in. Mama: "awww my baby girl." I gave her a big bear hug. Me: "why doesn't he listen to me?" Mama: "your father told me what happened with Babalo. But he's a sweet boy baby, he even apologized, esithi he didn't know you'd be uncomfortable because Lakhe said the same thing ku Hlumi. She didn't mind. Uyanconywa umntu omhle sisi, don't feel offended." Lakhe? Lakhe didn't say this shit to another woman. Me: "okay." they already drew up

their own conclusion that I was the one over reacting. Babalo unexhwele bethuna elistrongo. He somehow has taken over everyone and akhomntu umbonayo that he's an ass. Except Sandile. Mama: "come mntanam. Masiyohlala at the lounge and have a glass of wine." Me: "hayi mama andiseli mna." Mama: "oh please Sphosenkosi. Iza." I giggled silently. We went to the lounge. From inside andithi the whole of the back yard was visible because biyohlulwa yi glass and a sliding door. I could see everything happening outside. Eyona nto indenze ndabuyela kumsindo was seeing my only hope playing rugby with this cockroach. Goodness Sandile. Really? Me: "can I have cognac instead?" she stared at me. Mama: "I said wine, child." I sulked. Mama: "only one shot and your father can never know." I smiled ndayozicutha nge shot. I downed it at once ndabuyela kwi seat yam. Sandile pushed Babalo into the pool and watched him struggled to breath, obviously dying instantly. Lakhe: "SANDILE!!!!" Sands: "what? He had to fetch the ball." Lakhe: "he can't swim!!!" Sands: "well.....I guess he's gonna die soon." Babalo emerged from the water gasping for air. Balo: "what the hell!!!" Sands: "oh you're alive. Welcome back." Balo: "what was that for!!!!" Sands: "a reminder of how short life can be just for a little mistake. I didn't see you there. Awuy'bawel shot?" he took a sip of his drink. Lakhe: "come. I'll help you change." he helped his friend out the water. I laughed out loud as soon as they entered the house. When I started I couldn't stop, I swear guys. Bade bayongena eroomin. Sandile was a class act manyani. Ithemba lam lokugqibela bethuna. Mama: "I'm glad I didn't have a son. Akeva la Sandile. Yoooh!" Me: "unentlonti gqithi uSandile." Mama: "he's an imbecile." Lakhe: "Spho. I need your help." I followed him to the bathroom. Lakhe: "I need these dry please, undiphathele the grey shorts and a white t shirt from my closet." Me: "he lives right next door." Lakhe: "ahambe ngempahla emanzi Spho?" I'm Spho now? Nigga my name is BABY!!! Sekutheni ndizobangu Spho? Heeee wow. Me: "okay.. And shoes?" Balo: "just sandals please." bendingathethi nawe wena. Me: "underwear also...?" I muttered as I walked to the closet. I took out the shorts, sandals and t shirt ndayonika uLakhe. Taking the wet clothes to the dryer. Unfortunately phone yakhe was in the pants icimile. After ndifake impahla in the dryer, I went to the kitchen ndayifaka kwi rice. Lakhe and his friend came out the house again. Sands: "nantsi shot. It will help with the shock." Balo: "you tried to kill me!" Sands: "oh please, if I wanted you dead, we'd be having after tears right now with a bunch of strippers. Stop being gay. Cheer up.. Sela nantsi shot." Lakhe: "leave him alone Sandile!" Sands: "wena awuyifun shot?" he said walking away. Dumi was with his children by the garden and Becca. Sibuhleli noSkhura. Khaya: "my love." he came to sit with us at the lounge. Mama: "hey." Khaya: "umbonile uSandile wenze ntoni?" he was in stitches. Mama: "ustout la Sandile." Khaya: "on

another note...I need us to talk a little. Hun can you give us some space?"
Me: "alright." I went outside ndama nje ndizama ukumamela bathini ngam. I pretended to be talking and laughing. By myself phof. Khaya: "do you remember when we adopted uSpho?" Mama: "yes..." Khaya: "and you remember umamakhe ekhala esithi singathathi owok'gqibela." Mama: "yes..." Khaya: "what do you think she meant?" Mama: "I don't know baby. Why uyicinga ngoku yonke lento...? A decade later." Khaya: "I don't know....ndiyamthanda umntanam man..." Mama: "everyone knows that." Khaya: "I

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think she might-" while ndimamele I'd even stopped distracting myself and just listened until Lakhe disturbed me. Lakhe: "my heart." Me: "yes babe?" Lakhe: "Kuthen ume wedwa nje apha." Me: "shhhh...I'm listening bathini." Lakhe: "you're eavesdro-" Me: "Shhh." they had stopped. Bebehleka ngoku. Me: "great. I missed it." Lakhe: "uyazithanda indaba...khawuze ndiphuze." Me: "ungayophuza friend yakho njena." Lakhe: "already did." Me: "then get away from me with your herpes." he laughed. Lakhe: "I'm kidding. Why do you hate him so much." Me: "because you spend so much time with him lately and I feel sidelined and I don't like the comments he makes about me." Lakhe: "okay, ndiyakuva baby. I'll schedule him." Me: "and?" Lakhe: "and tell him to stop with the comments." Me: "I want him to not talk to me Period!" Lakhe: "but I talk to your friends-" Me: "not Fez. You don't conversate with him at all." Lakhe: "we don't have anything to talk about." Me: "well, ifana nam noBabalo. We have nothing to talk about." he dug into his pocket wakhupha phone yakhe. He stared at it and searched for Sandile with his eyes. Me: "what is it." Lakhe: "I have to go. Ndiyeza ngoku vha." Me: "I'm confused." Lakhe: "I'll be back Spho." I stared at him. Lakhe: "baby, not now please." Me: "fine." he walked into the house. Sandile followed him.

Lakhe: "back to business." he undressed and changed into something else. Sands: "what's up." Lakhe: "Code 4." Sands: "I hope no one else knows bout this. Funeke sibengu in and out before anyone notices we're missing." Lakhe: "I just told Spho, I had to go." Sandile shook his head changing his clothes. Sands: "I don't like that guy." Lakhe: "I know you don't. Can we do that later?" Sibu came into the room. Lakhe: "code 4. Change. Uzosifumana phambili." Sibu: "sure boss." he got dressed. Sands: "make sure. Nobody knows where we are." Sibu: "count on it." They left the house, driving the ML out the garage. Sandile drove the car to their Code 4, racing through the traffic. Lakhe clicked on his phone to verify attendance. Lakhe: "Bull Cloak isn't in town." Sands: "ndim'checke?" Lakhe: "no myeke. He's the only one. Family

emergency." Sands: "otherwise si-set?" Lakhe: "why do I have a feeling this won't be a fruitful meeting?" Sands: "Sukoyika. Ndizophaka." he pulled his pistol out from under the seat. Lakhe: "bani lo usemven kwam?" Sands: "ngu Sibu. We're dropping this one here. Sinyuke ngale yakhe." he parked the car and got out. They went into the rented white Polo Vivo. Sandile took the driver seat. Sibu passenger and Lakhe at the back. Lakhe: "Sibu, ushiyeke apha emotweni. I don't want you in there." Sibu: "ok bhuti." Sands: "still feeling?" Lakhe: "yes. We're getting closer. Take your right." Sandile swerved and turned right. Lakhe: "without drawing attention please." Sands: "you know me. I like to play and have the fun in the streets." he said in a Mexican accent. Lakhe: "you have exactly 4.3 seconds." the car slowed down. Lakhe: "stop." Sandile stopped. Sands: "play time." he jumped out the car tucking in his gun behind his back. He walked before his brother. Lakhe walked a little far left behind him. They entered the building and were escorted to a private room downstairs. Sands: "Sergio!" Serge: "my Sandcastles. Been long enough. G." he nodded. Lakhe: "where's the rest?" Serge looked at his tablet. Serge: "Kolo is a minute away. Frank, 2 minutes. Leon at the door. And you saw the notice of Bull Cloak not attending. You also have a new member." Leon: "boys... G." Lakhe: "who's the new member? From?" Serge: "I don't know. He's not on the data base yet. With Loco gone, we needed someone to take his place. His brother also went missing so..." Leon: "do we really need another member here. We're sufficient." Serge: "different operations for different cities. Your call, G." Lakhe: "we'll see when he gets here." he looked at Sandile. Sandile nodded once and looked at his shoes. Sands: "so we still don't budget snacks or...." Serge:

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"No." the rest of the board arrived. Lakhe: "now we're waiting for mystery man? Let's start so long. We have no time to waste. Leon." Leon: "340." Lakhe: "Kolo." Kolo: "329." Lakhe: "less than last month. What happened?" Kolo: "had to smoke out one of the men, they steal my product." Lakhe: "pick it up. I need you to make the target. Frank." Frank: "332." Lakhe: "reason?" Frank: "smoked out one." Lakhe: "so we have a meter and a grand." Serge: "are you still not putting in?" Lakhe: "still checking for spots and stripes. Our next shipment is tomorrow 12 midnight. The 24 express." Serge: "I'm in." Lakhe: "Serge, you're my eyes." Serge: "I can handle it." Lakhe: "okay. 500 is going in for the express team. Kolo, Leon and Frank, you're leaving with your 167k. Are we happy?" Leon: "sure thing." Lakhe: "Sands, Serge. Sort please." Frank: "wait." he looked at the door. Lakhe: "who you." "I'm the Black Stallion. Your new member. Must say, you run a very....smooth enterprise." Lakhe: "who referred you?" BS: "Sepua. From Mexico." Lakhe: "unfortunately, you can only

put in next month-" BS: "I have 500k in that bag. I need your ship to transport my drugs to Sepua. You're the only man that can help me." everyone kept quiet. BS: "700." as though they were holding in their breaths. BS: "I'm stopping at 800k. Its that or nothing." Lakhe: "how much.." BS: "600kg." Lakhe: "I'll need a bar for that." BS: "a million?" Lakhe: "I don't transport drugs. I transport merchandise only. Jewelry. Cars. I'll need a bar for your service." BS: "fine. I'll raise the rest in two days." Lakhe: "Black Stallion is it?" BS: "yes." Lakhe: "There's a ritual.....that we perform for new members. To see if you're viable for our business." Black Stallion stared at him wide eyed. BS: "what kind of voodoo shit is that?" Lakhe: "Sandile. Serge. Take him through the channels." Sandile grabbed him. BS: "noo.....wait!!!!" Lakhe: "what for?" BS: "I wasn't told about rituals! What ritual? What the fuck is that?" Lakhe: "you want to be my associate? We need to test you first. Serge, undress him. Sands, ndizok'fumana endlin. Meeting adjourned."

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Chapter 52

Lakhe came home when it just started getting dark. Me: "Uphi uSibu ?" Lakhe: "he said he'd be back soon. Ikhona into ayoyilanda. How's everything?" he kissed me. Me: "everything is fine. Uvelaphi?" Lakhe: "just to check on something. Did Balo annoy you again?" Me: "no, he stayed away. Or else we'd be at the police station now." he laughed. Lakhe: "mabahambe ngoku ababantu. I want my wife alone.." Me: "bagxothe kaloku.." Lakhe: "yuuh." I went to the bedroom, honestly I needed some quiet time. Away from the laughing and music. Lakhe went to his friends ndakhwela ebhedini yam mna. In a few minutes he came in. With the face. Me: "No." Lakhe: "I didn't say anything." Me: "I did. I said No." Lakhe: "but why?" Me: "because you have the asking look on your face." Lakhe: "I'm not asking for anything. Ubuyile Sibuyile wakho." Me: "oh..." Lakhe: "you like being in control. So much so, I can't even be relaxed." Me: "are you relaxed now?" Lakhe: "ewe." Me: "I believe you." Lakhe: "babe?" Me: "yeah.." he hopped into bed next to me. Lakhe: "I know I haven't been around lately, emotionally and physically. I've been absorbed kumsebenzi kunye nee-friends. I'm sorry about that. Thank you for being strong and waiting for me." Me: "am I gonna have to do it again?" Lakhe: "no baby, iitshomi funeke zibene limited time ngoku." Me: "okay." Lakhe: "Balo ucela uxolo, for making you uncomfortable." Me: "betshilo umama." I rolled my eyes. Lakhe: "I know you don't like him. He's harmless baby, I promise." Me: "he's coming between us Masilakhe." Lakhe: "ndiyakuba love. Its done now. If you can go out with your friends, I also have the right to go out with mine-" Me: "but you must come back home. I come Home every time. And I don't

like what he said to me." Lakhe: "baby it was a compliment." Me: "he said he would tear my ass up! How is that a compliment?" Lakhe: "what?" Me: "I couldn't say this in front of my dad because I didn't want drama. He said he'd never leave if he lived here." he kept quiet. Me: "and now?" he got up and walked out. I followed him bendingazomnqanda qha bendibawela umbona xa egxothwa. I saw Lakhe talking to him kancinci then showed him the door. Babalo walked out the house walandelwa ngu Skhura wakhe. Sandile spoke to Lakhe for a few minutes, joined by Sibuy. A little caucus meeting. Khaya: "mntanam." Me: "yes tata." Khaya: "siyanishiya ke thina ngoku. Bekumnandi uhlala nani." Me: "I enjoyed it too tata." Mama: "I hope uzondi joiner ecaweni ngomso." Me: "ewe mama." Khaya: "khome ndisaya kuLakhe." he went to Lakhe and left me with mom. Ma: "my love. Ithini into ye- date." Me: "we are still discussing it mama." Me: "Lakhe wanted to do it overseas. Then have our honeymoon there with the family." Ma: "its a nice idea. It could work, but mna I think you should start nge traditional wedding. Then a few months down the line, xa ukhululile niyenze the white one." I kept getting re-confused by which wedding first. Me: "okay mama." Khaya: "we're on our way." Me: "bye tata." I walked them to the car. Khaya: "Ubuya nini?" There's the question I've been waiting for. Me: "aphe vekini tata." Khaya: "good. Stay well my princess." Me: "nihambe kakuhle tata. Love you." Ma: "we love you too mntanam." they got in their car and left. I went back to the house. Lakhe was sitting in the lounge with Sibuy and Sands. Sands: "I can feel my heart beat in my eyes." Lakhe: "uphambene wena. Xa ubungalindi ngoba?" Sibuy: "he didn't hear anything." Me: "who didn't hear anything?" they all looked at me. Sands: "Balo. He didn't want to listen when I told him he wasn't welcome here. Until Lakhe said it...what did you say anyway." Lakhe: "I told him to leave. Help me clean up. Uphu uDumi?" Dumi: "right here. Thanks for forgetting me outside.....Again." Sandile chuckled. Lakhe: "sorry bra." he helped him in. The kids followed with Rebecca. Dumi: "Spho, uzoba godusa ubase kumamabo?" Me: "uhm...I could." Dumi: "thank you." Me: "you're

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not coming?" Dumi: "No." he fixed his son's shirt. Dumi: "be a good boy uyeva? Take care of your little sister. I love you okay?" Lulo: "I love you too dad." Zimi: "love you toooo." she pouted her lips. Dumi picked her up and sat her on his lap. Dumi: "I love you my baby. Mwaah." Lakhe: "baby, cela uhambe nge Audi." Me: "oookay." I took Zimi's baby seat ndayofaka in the car. When they were done with their goodbyes I took them home. Ufika kwam kwa Zingi, there was a white C220 Benz parked outside. I took Zimi out her seat Lulo took her bag and we went to knock on the door. The door opened. A tall blue eyed man stood in front of me. He melted into a sweet smile. Me: "uhm..hi."

was in the right house? Man: "hey. How are you?" Me: "I'm looking for Zingi." she appeared behind him. Zingi: "hey peto....usamkhumbula uPeter?" what? Who was this? Me: "uh-uh." Zingi: "oh kanene. Peter, Spho, was in an accident a couple of months ago. She lost her memory." Peter: "oh? How come Dumi never told me?" Zingi: "I'm not sure." Me: "were you crying?" I walked into the house. Peter: "should I come back another time?" Zingi: "no Pete, its okay." who was Peter guys? I'm sure Zingi saw my confusion. Peter was in the kitchen ingathi uya-frysha sana. Me: "tshomi. Kwenzeka ntoni?" the kids ran to the bedroom beyodlala. Me: "who is this peter?" Zingi: "one of the lawyers at the firm." Me: "oh?" Zingi: "Dumi is asking for divorce." Me: "what!" Zingi: "yeah." Me: "he didn't mention this." Zingi: "You've seen him?" oh shit... Me: "uhm yeah...Lakhe kind of....brought him to the house." Zingi: "brought him to the house how? Like he's living with you?" Me: "for a temporary while." Zingi: "oh..." Me: "I thought you knew." Zingi: "how could I know Sphosenkosi?" hayi ke iworse. Me: "then what is Peter doing here?" I whispered. Zingi: "Peter is going to represent me in court." Me: "yima, so Peter who is Dumi's practice is representing you in court? Going against his employer? Do you think that's wise for his career? Okanye There's something happening between you?" Zingi: "There's nothing happening between us Spho. Peter is a good friend. He's what I can afford." Me: "I don't think its a good idea mna Zingi. This isn't going to help your case at all." Peter: "its what I've been telling her." he brought the tray with tea. *raises eyebrow* Peter: "I love you my friend. But....its difficult hey. Maybe I can find you someone good that can do this for you and charge you my account." Zingi: "I don't know anymore Pete. I just don't....I'm so numb." Peter: "it can't be easy at all. Have you tried talking to him?" Zingi: "no, he lives with Spho now." excuse me? Ingathi ndimxuthile bethuna. Peter: "maybe Spho can talk to him then." Me: "I did. He refuses to talk about it. He's having a really difficult time too." Peter: "well then..." he leaned back on the couch. Peter: "drink your chamomile tea ladies. I have to go home now. I'll call you when I'm home angel okay?" Zingi: "alright. Thanks Pete." Peter: "bye Spho. It was lovely seeing you again honey." Me: "bye Peter. And thank you." he walked out the car and I heard his car roar and speed off. Me: "tshomi." Zingi: "yeah?" she took her tea. Me: "please tell me the truth. What was Pete doing here?" Zingi: "he just came to offer his support and like I said, I'd asked him to represent me." Me: "are you guys an item?" Zingi: "Spho....Peter is gay." Me: "Oh." relief and embarrassment. Rembarasment. Me: "I'm sorry....I didn't imply that you're-" Zingi: "a whore? Spho, you're supposed to trust me. I'm your friend. I'd never lie to you. I couldve easily twisted the truth ngento yonke bendikhe ndak'xelela yona but I didn't. Because I know you're the one person that won't judge me, no matter what...." Me: "you're right. I'm sorry. I guess it explains the tea." Zingi:

"yeah...his boyfriend is a contemporary dancer. Into arts and stuff." Me: "nice..." Zingi: "I feel like my life is spiraling down a drain. I guess I deserve it." Me: "you don't... Both you and Dumi are guilty and suppose niyahlala phantsi nithethe. The thing is, we can't force that on him. Or you. And we can't do it for the both of you, we can only offer support." Zingi: "I understand

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tshomi shame. I wouldn't put you in an awkward position." Me: "is the baby okay..." Zingi: "yep... The little warrior survived." Me: "does that mean you're keeping him?" Zingi: "yeah... If I wasn't supposed to have him, God could've just taken him back but he didn't." Me: "I'm happy for you babe. Uhm....I should get going, Lakhe is going to start panicking, I'm not really used to driving in the dark. We'll have the tea another day vha?" Zingi: "that's okay babe. Unyansile, you just got back on the road.." I hugged her goodbye and went to my car. I drove back home. I was a bit upset that I lost my baby..someone I would've done everything in my power to protect. He just slipped from me and Zingi is having another chance. A fourth one actually. I was a little jealous but also glad that my friend came to her senses. At least now she'd take good care of the baby and herself. I was proud of that.

I arrived at hom ndafika as usual kunga light'wanga. I walked in the house kungekho mntu. Me: "Lakhe!" I put down the keys. Lakhe: "bedroom." he yelled back. I went to the room. He was lying on the bed with his laptop open. Me: "I'm going to take a quick shower yeva." I went to the bathroom. Lakhe: "babe?" Me: "yeah." I undressed in our bathroom. Lakhe: "uright?" Me: "I'm fine. Where's everyone." Lakhe: "playing that stupid game." I switched on the shower then tied up my hair ndaxiba shower cap yam. Lakhe: "hun?" he walked in the bathroom. Lakhe: "what's up? Unjan uZingi?" Me: "Dumi wants to divorce her." Lakhe: "damn...he never said anything to me." Me: "how could he Lakhe? Ubuphi iveki yonke?" Lakhe: "seriously? I'm being attacked again?" Me: "I just need the shower." Lakhe: "why not take a bubble bath, I'll put on the pulsating jets to massage your body while you're in the water." Me: "I just want to shower." he switched off the shower. Lakhe: "kwenzeka ntoni baby? Talk to me please?" Me: "its nothing." Lakhe: "I'm getting snapped at. Its definitely something. Ndibagxothile nje ooBabalo." Me: "its not that.... Zingi is pregnant." Lakhe: "oh?" Me: "yeah..." Lakhe: "I'm sorry my love." Me: "why are you sorry? You didn't make her pregnant did you?" Lakhe: "I know how you're feeling. You don't have to hide it from me." Me: "its just selfish of me." Lakhe: "you're human. Sometimes, you must let human feelings be. Don't feel unnecessarily guilty ngento ongena control yayo. It'll pass soon. Its better to deal with it now than later." Me: "okay." Lakhe: "let me run you your bath." he

kissed my forehead and ran my bath for me. When he was done, I got in. Lakhe: "I'll get you your glass of wine my lady. Any preference?" Me: "sweet white please." Lakhe: "noted." he left the bedroom, walked through the lounge and took a bottle of wine. Lakhe: "Sandile!!!" Sands: "I'm right here. Yinton ingathi ndise Egypt. Geez." Lakhe: "thought you were still playing." Sands: "came to fetch some juice. What's up?" Lakhe: "I'm gonna need you to head up tomorrow midnight's express. I can't leave Spho's side for a while. She's not in the best shape emotionally." Sands: "of course.. No problem." Lakhe: "I'll update the others as soon as possible. I'll fill you in, in a minute. Just taking this to her." he poured a glass of wine. Sands: "uzondifumana apha." Lakhe walked to the bedroom and into the en suite bathroom. Lakhe: "my heart." Me: "thank you love." I took the glass. Lakhe: "if you need anything please shout." Me: "I will." he left the bathroom...

Sunday evening I was preparing dinner. I'd finally been able to convince Lakhe to go to church with me. After church, we'd gone for lunch with my parents and went to the mall for a bit of shopping. Ubuya kwethu wahlala kula couch asahleli kuyo nangoku. He was busy with his ipad. Dumi ebehleli apha endlini with Rebecca, Sibuy and Sands. Phof Sandile had left, as usual no one knew where he was. He came back just after we did. Lakhe: "baby." he hugged my back. Me: "uyafeketha ke wena." Lakhe: "ndiright wethu. Uggqiba nini? Let me help you." Me: "no baby, I got this. Go sit." Lakhe: "I'm bored." Me: "iya ku

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Dumi kaloku." Lakhe: "he's exercising." Me: "Uphi uSandile?" Lakhe: "he's being nasty. I can't sit with him." Me: "I'm not even sure what that means. Awulambanga?" he shook his head. Me: "you didn't eat lunch. You just had juice." Lakhe: "you know me and outside food." Me: "now that you're here. We can discuss our date." Lakhe: "next week." Me: "what's happening next week?" Lakhe: "let's do it next Saturday." Me: "do what ngoku Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "let's get married Saturday." Me: "why unje? Do you know or understand what planning needs to be done for a wedding? Besides, umama says let's start with the traditional and then in a few months senze white wedding." Lakhe: "andithi uNext week can be our traditional?" Me: "no, its too soon." Lakhe: "the following Saturday then. Love, I really don't want a big thing ne? Just my family and yours. Senze sigqibe iphele into bithethwa." Me: "you make as though this is not a big deal." Lakhe: "baby, our life together is a big deal. You being my wife is a big deal. A little celebration of one day to please other people isn't." Me: "I don't have the same thoughts." Lakhe: "I understand that sthandwasam." Me: "I just thought this day would

mean something to you." Lakhe: "why do you think I want it sooner? I can't wait to make you my wife Sphe. As much as I'm not into the whole celebration, I just want you to be happy and be mine. Qha. Hey? Why are you so upset with me?" he kissed my cheek. Me: "stop.." Lakhe: "stop what?" I giggled. Me: "khandiyeke man." Lakhe: "Andifuni tshi." Me: "Lakhe, uzonditshisa ngembiza." Lakhe: "uzobalilahla lam ok'salayo." Me: "you mad." I laughed. He stayed with me in the kitchen until I finished cooking. We covered the plates because Sibule and Dumi were still busy with that game kwakhona. Sandile wasn't hungry ehleli noBoogie wakhe. Lakhe took his plate to the bedroom ke yena. I poured myself juice ndagquma nokwam going to the bedroom after him. He ate his supper eyawa busy nale ipad. Me: "awusoze uhluthi ujongene nalonto." Lakhe: "sendihluthi nje baby. This was amazing." Me: "awukagqibi." he put the plate aside and kissed me. Me: "baby?" I put down the glass. Me: "and now?" Lakhe: "I missed you." he was now on top of me looking into my eyes. Me: "I missed you too I guess.... Ufunda undenza ntoni?" he smiled. Lakhe: "nothing...just want to kiss you qha uyathanda uthetha." I grabbed his face and kissed his lips. Me: "I love you. When I yell at you its because awuva and I want you to do right, not because I don't like you. You're my love. Andifuni tu ucinge andik'hoyi or andikuthandi." Lakhe: "awww...umntuwam bethuna...you really mean that baby?" he kissed my cheek and ear. Me: "yes I do baby. Wenzanton?" Lakhe: "ndikvisa kamandi." Me: "I'm perfectly fine when you're sitting next to me baby." he looked at me pleadingly. Me: "come, let's watch TV." if he thinks he's getting it after this entire week of pushing me to the side, he hasn't seen Satan yet. Lakhe: "sungcola baby." Me: "iza love, kuzodlala uDate my family." Lakhe: "baby..." Me: "come sthandwa sentliziyo yam." Lakhe: "you are so mean." he grumbled ezohlala ecamkwam. He took the remote. Lakhe: "akadlali date my family namhlanje." he changed the channel to Ignition. Really? Why you being petty? Lol. I fit in everywhere mna nakwezi moto azifakileyo akhonto. I leaned on his chest ndabukela TV. I received a facetime call ingu Fez. Lakhe: "usuke ke kum sisi." Me: "khayeke uchuku." Lakhe: "liqalwa Nguwe uchuku. Nako undivimba ice cream yam. Mxim." Me: "uqumbile?" Lakhe: "andiqumbanga wethu." I sent a message that I was busy. Me: "babe?" Lakhe: "hm?" Me: "uyamazi uPeter from Dumi's firm?" Lakhe: "yes. I met him once I think." Me: "is he gay?" Lakhe: "I don't know." Me: "ndifike epha endlin ka Zingi. She wants him to represent her in court." Lakhe: "I thought she didn't want the divorce." Me: "she doesn't. I think she's genuinely sorry." Lakhe: "you have such a soft heart. Undenza i-worry." Me: "ndizoyeka ukubalisela fillet yam ke mna." Lakhe: "oh please, Uthi yi fillet Eli phiko lomileyo undibalisela lona?" Me: "and I'm the mean one." Lakhe: "did

you know ngubani utata womntana ka Bianca?" Me: "the receptionist Bianca?" Lakhe: "ewe." Me: "ngubani?" Lakhe: "take a guess." Me: "tell me!" Lakhe: "guess!" Me: "hayi man Lakhe. I don't know." Lakhe: "dude its Harold." Me: "you're lying." Lakhe: "sharp ke." Me: "Kuthen une lies?" Lakhe: "why would I lie? What reason would I have to lie?" Me: "isn't Harold married?" Lakhe: "yep." Me: "oh my goodness! Uyivephi wena?" Lakhe: "the horse's mouth obviously.... He came to my office some time this week esithi usengxakini and needs help." Lakhe: "I thought he meant financially so naturally ndibuze how much he needs-" Me: "naturally huh?" Lakhe: "let me be. So he says he doesn't need cash, he needs advice. I put on my Dr Phil swag ndibuze what's up. Wathi he regrets what he has done to his family and akayazi uzobaxelela njani, xandibuza intoni, waza nale bomb." Me: "Yoh!! And then what?" Lakhe: "hayi ndiske ndabhidwa nam. What was I to say? I asked him yena ufuna Uthini wathi he doesn't want to lose his wife, nothing else matters to him." Me: "what about Bianca?" Lakhe: "why do you think he's relocating to Australia?" I gasped. Lakhe: "exactly." Sands: "anihlebi hehha." he walked in. The door was already half open. Lakhe: "uqale nini ubaliphela Sandile? Wangena ungabizwanga? What you want?" Sands: "I would swear awundifun apha yazi. Ndizothi enkosi ku Spho nge supper. I wouldve helped qha bendiyolungisa izinto zomzi wam." Me: "unomzi na?" Sands: "uyayazi nje." he winked. I laughed. Lakhe: "I don't get it." Sands: "bhuti, ndizok'xelela ba ndiphumile ne?" Lakhe: "express?" Sands: "ja." Lakhe: "update me. Keep your phone on." Sands: "sure thing. Goodbye mntase. Ndizobuya late." Me: "bye Sands." he walked out. Me: "what's express?" Lakhe: "zezindawo zakhe azithandayo." Me: "ndisamamele Harold. Uzothini ngo Bianca? She's heavily pregnant." Lakhe: "Uthi kaloku wamnika Mali for abortion, instead yena wayokwenza baby shower." I laughed hysterically. Lakhe: "heee. Awazi nto wena. He doesn't want to be involved at all. Akafuni nova niks. Qha usengxakini because she's threatening to come out ngalento yonke. And you know what that means." Me: "shame man...." Lakhe: "I just hope she doesn't take it further, this all happened ndingekho, Harold is only part time with us, matter of fact uyahamba month end. Ingaske ahambe ngomso lo usayo for Le piece. I don't need a sexual harassment scandal for my company." Me: "poor Bianca." Lakhe: "what poor Bianca? She was happy to sleep with him, she was never forced." Me: "she can't be alone kule pregnancy though. Why didn't he use protection kodwa he's married?" Lakhe: "why didn't she ask for it kodwa she knows he's married and akahlabi? Its a two way thing this. No blaming of anyone but both parties." Me: "so you think its right that he leaves her like this?" Lakhe: "he gave her an option out this situation. She decided to

throw a party. Athini kengoku yena Harold? He made it clear akafun mntana." Me: "so you support abortion?" Lakhe: "how did this jump from Harold to me ? Ndenzeni mna?" Me: "its a question?" Lakhe: "it depends babe. Yi-choice yomntu I suppose. Mna, personally I wouldn't force umntu ondim'mithisileyo to have an abortion, neither would I stand in her way if ufuna ukuyenza. Choice yakhe. Except you though, you don't have a choice, izogcwala lendlu ngabantwana bam." Me: "and Harold's actions? Umithisa etshatile?" Lakhe: "that I don't support. Uyayazi nawe lonto." Me: "is there any positive marriages around us?" Lakhe: "yeah. Your parents." Me: "really?" Lakhe: "they're amazing babe. Leave your mother's mistakes aside." Me: "and your parents?" Lakhe: "that is an icy marriage. I don't even wanna get into it." Me: "let me check on Dumi noSibu." Lakhe: "Sibu umke noSandile." I went to the game room. Me: "you okay there?" Dumi: "yeah, I just call Beks, she's taking me to bed soon." Me: "Dumi..." Dumi: "I don't want to hear what she said." he already knew what I wanted to say. Me: "can we talk ngomso? Please?" Dumi: "fine." Me: "goodnight vha?" Rebecca came in. Dumi: "goodnight Spho." I

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went back to my room. Lakhe and I spent hours watching movies. He kept checking his phone and then his ipad. Me: "everything okay?" Lakhe: "yeah." I could see he was panicking qha I didn't want to irritate him. Finally his phone rang, I had dozed off a bit ndothuka and checked the time. It was a little after midnight. Lakhe: "what the hell is going on there! Kutheni icinyiwe phone ka Sandile when I specifically told him to keep it on? Where is he?" he sat up. Lakhe: "Sibulele... Where is he?" I was fully awake now. Lakhe: "what?" his voice almost a whisper ingathi utyhafile. He hung up his phone. Me: "is there a problem love?" he covered his face with both hands. Me: "baby?" I sat up and crawled to his side. Lakhe: "Sandile..." Me: "Utheni uSandile?" Lakhe: "he got shot Sphosenkosi."

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Chapter 53

Lakhe dressed quick and paced up and down the passage. I also got dressed and went to him. Me: "where are they now?" he looked at the gate while it opened. Lakhe: "here." Me: "Masilakhe, we must call an ambulance." Lakhe: "no. No ambulance." he opened the door and rushed to the car. I waited inside the house. Panicking. Rebecca came out her room kanye xa uLakhe engena endlini with Sandile and Sibu. They were filled with blood. Sandile looked weak but he was still singing esiwa enjalo. Becca: "what

happened?" Sands: "No hosp....ital" Me: "Sandile you need to go to the hospital." Lakhe: "can you fix him Beks?" Becca: "let's see. Spho can I have a blanket quick?" I ran to the spare room and grabbed a blanket yabekwa phantsi. They put Sandile on it and Becca tore his clothes to expose the wound. Becca: "my first aid kit." Lakhe brought it to her. Becca: "I need warm water. I went to the kitchen, Sibu brought towels. Sands: "Spho..." Lakhe: "Spho!!" I was in the kitchen pouring the jug with warm water from the tap. Me: "I'm almost done. Ndiyeza." I went back with the jug full of water. Sands: "Spho.." Me: "hey...." Sands: "ulapha mntase." Me: "I'm here.." Sands: "I can't hold..." Me: "No! Sandile. You need to be stronger than that! Stay awake." Sands: "callhim..." Me: "Sandile.." Sands: "Philani." he closed his eyes. Becca: "we need to take him to the hospital, he needs surgery." Lakhe: "Beks there must be a way. Please." Me: "wait..." they all looked at me. Sibu: "what is it?" Me: "we were in hospital, when Dumi had an accident." Lakhe: "yes and?" Me: "iphi phone ka Sandile!" Sibu: "nantsi." he gave it to me. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi?" I took Sandile's finger and unlocked the phone. Me: "In hospital he said he had a contact, if I needed any help, he would call someone to organize me something inside the hospital to get a job done. This has to be Philani." I found the contact and dialed the number. It rang to voicemail. Lakhe: "are you sure about this?" I dialed it again. Me: "I hope so." the call was answered. Phila: "Saida?" Me: "hi, Philani? This is Sandile's sister in law. Ndicela ubuza if you're at the hospital?" Phila: "uhm..yeah, I'm doing night shift. Why?" Me: "we need your help. Sandile got shot." Phila: "and you need a private way inside an operation room?" Me: "Yes! Please help-" Phila: "okay. Look. Bring him to the ungerground parking lot, I'll direct you to which space and will take it from there. Be here in under 15 minutes. That's the only free time I can spare." Me: "done." I hung up. Lakhe: "let's go." they carried him to the car. Me: "ngubani ozoshiyeka noDumi?" Sibu: "I will. You guys can go." Lakhe: "Spho, drive." Becca helped Lakhe with Sandile and I drove us to the hospital. Lakhe: "is he going to make it?" Becca: "he has a very light pulse. Let's just pray that we arrive on time." I pressed a little harder on the accelerator. Lakhe: "Sands? Come on brother, vuka fondini. Please don't do this to me awti yam..." I was shaking and praying that he makes it. For Lakhe's sake. I finally made it into the underground parking, Lakhe reading the instructions from the text Philani sent ndamisa. Philani was already waiting for us, he threw away his cigarette, blew the smoke out his nose and mouth walking to our car. Me: "hi Phila. Here he is." Phila whistled once only and two other guys appeared with a stretcher. They put Sandile on it and covered him with a white sheet. Lakhe: "what the hell is happening!!!" Phila: "its the only way I can pull him inside. Wait in the caf. I'll update you soon after the op." Becca: "I'm coming with you." they left together. Lakhe leaned on the car.

Me: "baby..." I hugged him. Me: "he's going to be okay." Lakhe: "thank you Spho... You're the only person that knew him well enough to save his life. I don't even know lo Philani. I could've just lost my brother because andithethi naye and I don't understand him like you do." Me: "suzi stresser ngalonto Lakhe, right now he needs you to be strong. You have another chance to speak to

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him about anything and everything. You know Sandile loves you." Lakhe: "I know." Me: "masambe babe....let's get you something to hold you up." we went to the caf and waited as told.

It was only before 6am when Philani came to us. This dude really didn't have emotion at all. Just a blank expression and a calm walk. Lakhe: "where is he?" he stood up. I was on my feet. Philani: "recovering from surgery. He's going to be fine. Can only keep him here for today and night. Tomorrow you'll have to take him home." Me: "can we see him please?" Philani: "yeah sure. Two minutes." Me: "by the way, I'm Spho, sorry I didn't get to introduce myself." Philani: "I know who you are. And Lakhe? Nice. Come this way." Lakhe: "how do you know?" Philani: "he told me. Some weeks ago." he popped chewing gum in his mouth sayongena kwi room where he kept Sandile. Lakhe: "and the machines?" Phila: "he'll be out of them in a few hours. Just so long as he's relaxed. I'll be back in a couple of minutes when I knock off." Lakhe: "xa uzohamba uzojongwa ngubani kengoku?" Philani: "a friend of mine. He knows him. He'll be in good hands." waphuma. Lakhe: "no wonder evana noSandile lo. Bayafana. Akaboni nto i-serious at all. He's not even shocked that itshomakhe is shot." Me: "uyambona nawe? I wonder why he's kept a secret though." Lakhe sat down. Lakhe: "undothusile mfo. I thought I'd lost you." I went out the room to give him space. Philani was in a distance, talking to another guy and Becca. She looked up at me and walked toward me. Becca: "hey.." Me: "hi..." Becca: "Sandile is strong, he's going to be alright." Me: "I know." I looked at her. Me: "I thought you only specialized in physiotherapy." Becca: "no, not only that." Me: "and you just happened to be awake last night." she kept quiet. Lakhe came out the room. Lakhe: "masambe baby. Sizobuya late." Becca: "I'll stay here until he wakes up." Me: "and what about Dumi?" Becca: "Sibu's got him. He knows what to do." I walked to the car. Something was up ngalo sisi. I don't know what it is but it was something. I got in the car's passenger seat. Lakhe got in to drive and we went home. Lakhe: "Spho..." Me: "what happened?" Lakhe: "I don't know. I was with you the whole time njena." Me: "the way you were panicking all night makes it seem like you knew something was happening. As if you knew

where he was." Lakhe: "Spho, I don't know what happened. I just.....felt something was wrong when he didn't respond." Me: "and Becca? She was just awake waiting for someone to collapse?" Lakhe: "Becca is a light sleeper kuba eyi nurse. Ibizoba funny mos, yena angavuki kodwa she has a responsibility 24/7." Me: "why didn't you want to go to the hospital?" Lakhe: "the last thing I need right now is to be asked a whole bunch of questions as if ndim lo udubule uSandile. I'm going to fix this myself. Hospitals draw attention and unnecessary chaos. I don't need that right now." Me: "your brother could've died!!" Lakhe: "but he didn't. Umvile mos uthe akasifun isbhedlele." Me: "but why! Is he doing something illegal dan?" Lakhe: "when Sandile is awake, do best and bomb him with these questions. I don't have time for this." the rest of the drive home was in complete silence. He stopped in front of our gate and opened it, driving in. He parked the car in the drive way ndahluka ndayongena endlini. Sibu had made Dumi his porridge behleli in the lounge watching TV. Dumi: "how is he?" Me: "fine." ndayongena eroomin to our bathroom Ndangena kwi shower. After my shower, ndisiyothambisa. Lakhe was sitting on the bed. Lakhe: "baby." Me: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "please look at me." I looked at him. Me: "so you have time now?" Lakhe: "Spho kodwa you can't expect me to be 100% when I almost just lost my little brother. All I needed was a little support from you, the questions later. Instead, ndisazama ulungisa intliziyo back in its place and you're attacking me." Me: "you're right...I'm sorry." Lakhe: "I'm going to find

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out what happened... Alright? Just that right now, our main focus should be his recovery." Me: "I'll go fix his room for when he comes back tomorrow." Lakhe: "yiyeke baby. He's going to freak out if anyone touches anything pha." Me: "ndimfownele uKhanya?" Lakhe: "rather not. The less stressed people, the better. Uya emsebenzini?" Me: "yes." Lakhe: "okay, ndizocela undingenele meeting zam, I'm gonna be home all day." Me: "okay. I'll get dressed." I went to the closet to look for something to wear. I took out my maroon tight-fitting bandage dress. It had long sleeves, a V neck and puffed shoulders. The material being suede. I wore it with the black Christian Louboutin pump. Lakhe: "asizokuwisa esis'hlangu?" Me: "since when?" I looked for my black bag. Me: "what times are your meetings?" Lakhe: "I emailed you my schedule just now. Kuzofuneka usebenzele kwi office yam." Me: "sure thing." I went to do my hair and make up. Lakhe: "thank you baby." I could feel him staring. Trying to read my emotion. Ugqiba kwam ndathatha my work bag and hand bag. Me: "I'll see you later vha." Lakhe: "okay." I kissed his cheek staining it with red lipstick. Me: "bye." I walked out.

Lakhe sat in the closet after his shower. He picked out his black G Star jeans and a plain black t shirt with all black Maison Margiela sneakers, getting dressed. Sibú knocked on the bedroom door. Lakhe: "ngena." Sibú stepped in. Lakhe: "I'm waiting." Sibú stared at him. Lakhe: "Sibulele." Sibú: "bhuti, they came out of nowhere." Lakhe: "who!" Sibú: "the niggas that attacked us! We were waiting at our spot for midnight, our shipment arrived and we started moving the weight off. They got there exactly at that moment and jacked us." Lakhe: "Sibulele. We've never been robbed before. Why kuzoqalwa ngoku?" Sibú: "bhuti...I don't know." Lakhe: "get ready, we're leaving in 10 minutes. Sihamba nge hired yakho." Sibú: "There's still Sandile's blood in it." Lakhe: "then find me a car Sibulele." Sibú: "uDumi bhu-" Lakhe: "uzom'laysha phe motweni Sibulele man!!" Sibú hurried out the room. After 30 minutes, they met outside, a hired car was brought to the house by Tololo. Dumi in the passenger seat, Lakhe at the back and Sibú driving. Dumi: "so where we off to. Boys day out?" Lakhe: "you better keep your mouth shut." he unlocked his ipad. Dumi: "but siyaphi though?" Sibú: "not now Dumi." he drove the car out the yard. Sibú: "bhuti." Lakhe: "same spot." Sibú: "sure." he kept quiet and continued on the road. Sibú: "bhuti...do you think maybe its this new guy?" Lakhe kept quiet. Sibú understood not to question after silence. Dumi: "what's happening?" he whispered. Sibú looked at him and shook his head quickly. He parked the car where it was the previous time. Lakhe: "phumani." Dumi: "I think I'll stay in the car." Lakhe: "then you better pray to God you're invisible." Dumi swallowed. Lakhe walked to the building, followed by Sibú. The same escort took them to a different private room downstairs. Sergio, Frank, Kolo and Bull cloak had arrived earlier. Serge: "G." he nodded. Lakhe: "where is he." he hissed. Serge: "on his way boss." he trembled. The room was dead silent for a full 10 minutes waiting on the last remaining member. Black Stallion arrived. BS: "members." he greeted, a little out of breath. Everyone stared back at him. BS: "I'm sorry I'm late. I just came from Uitenhage. Guys you can't just say you want to meet someone in 10 minutes not regarding where they actually are. Seriously. What did I miss?" Lakhe: "Sergio." Serge went to Black and grabbed him, pulling both his arms behind his back. BS: "what's happening?" Lakhe: "what the hell did you do." BS: "nothing!!!" Lakhe: "Black Stallion. I don't repeat myself." BS: "bro-" Lakhe: "I'm not your fucking bro." BS: "I swear I didn't do anything." Lakhe: "for the first time ever since I started my business, I've never been robbed. In three continents. Who the fuck do you think you are?" BS: "Lucky, I swear to God, I know nothing about what happened!!!" Lakhe: "do you know what I do to

snitches Black?" BS: "I don't want to....please....." Lakhe: "this is your last chance." he took a container full of paraffin and a lighter. BS: "Lucky, I just arrived here, why would I mess it up like this? I promise to God, I will find out whoever did this and bring them to you!!" Lakhe: "you have 24 hours. And if you fucking dare pull a runner on me. I will look for you. I will find you and feed your flesh to the soil. Do you understand me?" BS: "y-yes sir." Lakhe: "Sergio. Go with him. I want whoever did this by this time tomorrow and I'm not fucking playing with neither of you." Serge: "sure G." he dragged Black out. Lakhe: "how much did we lose." Kolo: "everything." Frank: "how is Sands doing." Lakhe: "Kolo, get hold of Sepua and inform him of the bust. We have to scrape from the bottom like peasants now. Nxx!" Kolo: "yes boss." Lakhe: "meeting adjourned. Sibuh, let's go." he walked to the car. Lakhe: "ugoduka nini Sibulele." Sibuh: "I was thinking of moving here bhuti. Still unsure." Lakhe: "and your job back in Durban?" Sibuh: "maybe Accounting isn't for me." Lakhe: "you know you have to keep a job to be part of the group. We can't draw unnecessary attention by being unemployed and wealthy." he got in the car. Lakhe: "make a decision if you're moving here or not. Whichever choice you make must be beneficial for you." Sibuh started the car. Sibuh: "ndiyakuva bhuti. Home?" Lakhe: "no...I want you to follow Frank." Sibuh: "now-" Lakhe: "undive ndithintitha Sibulele?" Sibuh: "No sir." he lowered down Dumih's seat and his own. Slowly tailing Frank's car.....

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Chapter 54

I arrived home in the evening around 6pm from work. When people say Mondays are difficult, I absolutely agree. Today just showed me extreme flames. Its as though I had to crawl out the building barely alive. I took my shoes off when I entered the front door. Sibuh was helping Dumih exercise bebukelwe ngu Boogie. Shame the poor thing was laying on his tummy, looking upset. Me: "molweni." I picked him up, brushing his fur. He rubbed his face against my suede dress. Sibuh: "hey." Dumih: "hi Spho. How was work?" Me: "I don't wanna go back there." he laughed. Sibuh: "can't be that bad." Me: "it is. My head is spinning. I think I might just collapse. Uphih uLakhe?" Sibuh: "making supper." I went to the kitchen. Me: "my house husband." Lakhe: "my hard working wife." he kissed my head. Lakhe: "so I heard great reviews on how well you managed today." Me: "I was struggling throughout the whole day." Lakhe: "you did well baby." Me: "I tried calling you." Lakhe: "I don't even know where my phone is." Me: "has Boogie been fed? He looks hungry." Lakhe: "hayih inoba ufuna uncanca ibele kengoku. Kunih esitya? Yuh." Me: "I need to take a bath. Sizoya nih kuh Sandile?" Lakhe: "you don't have to go

baby xa udiniwe. I'm just going to check on him. He'll be back ksasa. You've been on your feet since Saturday, its time for you to relax." Me: "okay. Mandiyovasa ke." I went to the bathroom to take a bath. While I was in the tub, the puppy was on the fluffy mat scratching his back. He started sniffing and rolling around. Then followed his nose to the bin under the sink. He couldn't reach up to the open because he was lacking height. Dogs just like rubbish and being messy. But then he started making a noise. Me: "Boogie, yinton ngoku." he looked at me pleadingly. Me: "what's in there? Its just paper baby. Uzomoshwa wena." he turned back trying to knock it over. Can't even have a peaceful bath in this house. I got up ndathatha lomgqomo and put it as it is on top of the sink. Me: "its either uzongena apha emanzini sivase okanye ulale apho." he wagged his little tail. After my bath, I got out ndayonxiba a short pajama and a long gown after moisturizing my body. Me: "let's go." he followed after me to the kitchen. Sibuy and Dumiy were watching TV quietly. I passed on to the kitchen. Lakhe: "baby...suppose you're resting your feet bonanje. Why are you here ungenxibanga zihlangu?" Me: "the tiles are heated Lakhe. Why are you trying to get rid of me so hard?" Lakhe: "hayi not mna. Supper is almost ready." he kissed me full on the lips and turned back to the stove. Me: "what were you doing today?" Lakhe: "nothing much. Just watching TV." Me: "what did you watch all day?" Lakhe: "you know my channels babes. Wanted to exhaust them before Sandile is back." Me: "okay." I went to the lounge. Me: "so what have you guys been up to all day?" perks of having a gigantic house was, if you're in the lounge, you don't hear a thing from the kitchen. Sibuy: "erh....we uhm, went out. To the mall." Dumiy: "yeah." nervous and unsure. Me: "really? Nihamba noyi two qha?" Sibuy: "we..." he looked at the kitchen entrance. Sibuy: "no.....yes." then back at me. I looked behind me. Nothing. Something was going on here. Me: "Dumiy?" he looked at me as if he was about to explode. Me: "did you have fun today. At the mall?" he nodded. Me: "nyani?" Dumiy: "yeah." Me: "remember, we were going to talk? Last night?" he nodded. I sat next to him. Me: "Zingi says you want a divorce....you never told me this." Dumiy: "we're not working out Spho. There's too many issues that have built up over the years and I can't change them." Me: "Dumiy uZingi ngumama wabantwana bakho. You love her." Dumiy: "yes, but...things have changed. We're not compatible any more. Not the way we used to be and its never going back to that." Me: "can you at least please talk to her? She's suffering pha, all by herself. The least you could do is talk." Dumiy: "I'm not gonna talk to her." Me: "which mall did you go to?" Dumiy:

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"Baywes-" Sibuy: "Greenacres." and there we have it. A LIE! I got up and went to the bedroom.

Masilakhe walked out the kitchen to the lounge after Spho went to the bedroom. He checked the passage before he spoke. Lakhe: "what is wrong with you two! You better man the fuck up. Man up mani! Why you squibbling like little boys?" Dummi: "I can't lie!" Lakhe: "You're a lawyer fuck damn it! You're used to this! Wena? What's your problem?" Sibuh: "I'm scared of her." Dummi: "Lakhe this is crazy. Why are you doing this!" Lakhe: "ask me one more time and remember who cooks your dinner." Dummi held on to his wheelchair. Lakhe: "is that car clean Sibuh?" Sibuh: "No sir-" Lakhe: "ilinde bani perhaps?" Sibuh got up and went to the car outside. Lakhe looked at Dummi. Lakhe: "you better learn how to handle yourself unless you want to dangle upside down on an electricity pole." he walked to the bedroom. Lakhe: "my heart." I looked at him from the bed. He smiled sweetly. Lakhe: "supper is ready. Ndikuphathele or uzotyela lounge?" Me: "ndiyenza baby. Ukhamba nini ukuya kuSandile?" Lakhe: "after dinner. I'm taking these two with me." Me: "why?" Lakhe: "Sibuh to drive and Dummi needs assistance ixesha elininzi. I don't want him to bother you." Me: "I don't mind. He's my friend." Lakhe: "he's a man, and often needs to go to the toilet to relieve himself. I don't think his self esteem can handle you doing it for him. He's my responsibility anyway, it's fine." Me: "if I didn't know any better I'd say you 3 were avoiding me." he tried to hide a smile. Lakhe: "that's not true." Me: "kwenzeka ntoni Lakhe?" Lakhe: "nothing baby. Why u-curious kangaka? It's like you don't trust me at all." Me: "it's just that Dummi and Sibuh are acting weird. Bathi they were at the mall and they're talking about two different malls." Lakhe: "maybe they went to both." Me: "but then Sibuh wasn't sure if bebehamba together or with anyone else." Lakhe: "who knows what's going on with those two? They often spend an entire day bedlala la play station. They don't even remember what day it is." he went to the bathroom. Lakhe: "why is the bin in the sink?" Me: "Boogie was trying to sniff it and knock it down so ndayisusa phambi kwakhe." Lakhe: "oh." I got up and we went to the dining area for dinner. It was quiet during the meal, Dummi wasn't eating. He just picked at his food. Me: "Dummi? Is there anything wrong?" he shook his head looking at Lakhe then back at his food. Me: "awulambanga?" he shook his head. Me: "would you like a sandwich instead?" he nodded. Lakhe: "I'll make it for-" Dummi: "No." Me: "it's okay. I'll do it." I went to the kitchen ndamenzela a grilled cheese sandwich. When I went back to the dining area I could sense heavy tension. Lakhe: "too spicy Damian?" Dummi: "yeah..." Lakhe: "I'm sorry. Sibuh wena uright?" Sibuh: "I'm okay." Me: "ina Dummi." he smiled and happily ate his sandwich. Dummi: "thank you Spho." after dinner I packed the dishes into their machine. The dudes got ready to leave for the hospital. Ndanxibisa Dummi his jacket because it was late and hospitals were cold. Sibuh pushed Dummi's wheelchair out the house wayomfaka emotweni. Lakhe: "sizobuya kwangoku babes." Me:

"wait...umphakele uSandile?" Lakhe: "no. We don't even know if he's awake yet." Me: "take him some food, just in case." ndaphaka kwi plastic container and gave it to him. Lakhe: "thanks my love." he kissed me and walked out.

On the way to the hospital, everyone was quiet in the car. Dumi tried to regulate his breathing in quick intervals and held it in everytime the car stopped at an intersection. Lakhe: "what is it." he broke the silence. Not one of them dared to answer. Lakhe: "ndinyile? Kuthen ndingaphenduleki?" Sibu: "no bhuti akhonto." Lakhe: "Dumisani. Out with it." Dumi: "its nothing." Lakhe: "you want to ask me. Ask now or forever hold your peace. But if you ask, there's no turning back for you. So what's it gonna be?" Dumi looked at Sibul.

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Sibulele stared ahead at the road without flinching a muscle. He'd been in this situation before. With Sandile in the driving seat and him on the passenger after fetching Lakhe from work. He knew the best decision was to keep quiet but he'd also wanted to know what exactly was going on. What was this secret code they used to communicate? Why were they so rich? Dumi had one of two choices, either way, whichever choice it was, his life would never be the same again. Lakhe: "Dumisani." Dumi: "I don't want to know anything. Its okay." Good decision, thought Sibul. Lakhe continued clicking on his iPad. Lakhe: "well, you don't really have a choice now that you live with us. Sooner or later, you'll have to grow some horns." Sibulele arrived at the hospital. Lakhe: "342. Nizondifumana phambili." he got out the car, walking inside the building. Dumi: "Sibu. What's going on? Why is Lakhe like this?" Sibul: "don't worry about Lakhe being like this. He is stressed because his brother got shot. Wena, pray and hope that Sandile wakes the hell up because he's the only person that can get you out of this trap with Lakhe. If you thought Sandile was a demon, you clearly haven't seen his brother who is the actual Satan. Pray Sandile is awake. That's all I'm saying." Dumi: "Sandile doesn't like me!" Sibul: "Sandile doesn't like anyone. The better thing about him is that he doesn't need to like you, in order to help you." Dumi: "I feel like that's a trap." Sibul: "of course it is! Where the fuck do you think you are? Ucimba ungu Alice in Wonderland? Obviously, you're gonna owe him big time. And until you pay your debt, he will own you." Dumi: "Sibu, I don't want to be part of any of this mna!" Sibul: "do you think I wanted to be? There's very little I can do for you now. Thandaza qha wena uSandile avuke." Dumi: "I thought he was coming home tomorrow." Sibul: "that's if he makes it off the machines." Dumi: "maybe I should just move out the country." Sibul: "that's literally the worst thing you can do for yourself at this point." Dumi: "but kwenzeka ntoni though?" Sibul: "I can't tell you Dumisani." Dumi: "so now my fate rests on

Sandile's consciousness." Sibu: "precisely." he got out the car, taking out the wheelchair and helping Dumi on it. They locked the car and went up to room 342. Dumi: "what if he doesn't wake?" Sibu: "he will. I'm sure he will." Dumi: "what did I do wrong?" Sibu: "Dumi, calm down okay? Its not like you're gonna die.....Yet." Dumi: "why do you say things like that!" Sibu: "relax." he wheeled him to 342. Standing by the door, Dumi took a deep breath and opened. They entered. Lakhe was sitting next to the bed on a lone chair, he looked up at them then leered his eyes back to the floor. The machine still beeped. Dumi looked at Sibu. His heart skipped a beat. Sandile's eyes were shut closed. Judging from Lakhe's expression Lakhe: "He hasn't woken up."

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Chapter 55

I was in bed waiting for Lakhe to come back from the hospital and when I least expected him, he walked in. I looked at him and put down my iPad. He closed the door behind him slowly and closed his eyes. His bottom lip quivering and he slid down the door. I jumped up immediately and ran to him. He sat on the floor shaking. I hugged him, brushing his head. I didn't want to even think about this. Was Sandile gone? He can't be. Me: "its okay baby...Shhh...." ebengathi unesngqala and struggled breathing. He held on to my gown then broke down. My entire heart broke into pieces. I held back my own tears and kissed his head. Me: "uxolo sthandwasam..." was all I could mutter. Lakhe: "he can't leave me!!!" he cried. I was honestly getting weaker by the second but still held him tight. My heart wasn't coping at all. Lakhe: "he just.....my baby brother Spho." I wiped his tears, rocking him back and forth. We sat against the door, listening to his silent sobs, his body shaking. Me: "Nkosi ongaMandla onke.... Nanku unyanakho, mnike ithemba umnike amadla. As You took our pain and bore our sufferings, you can sure do in this moment as we seek your guidance. Siyakwazi Bawo wethu awohlulwa nto kulomhlaba siphila kuwo Thixo. Sithembele kuwe utshize ngegazi lakho Nkosi enofefe. Thethelela abantwana bakho Somandla. Egameni lika Yesu, uNyana kunye nawo uMoya Oyingcwele. Amen." he stayed quietly on my lap. At least he'd stopped crying. I felt a little stronger than before. Lakhe: "why is he not responding." Me: "baby, sometimes it takes a little longer." Lakhe: "Sandile isn't responding. He isn't waking. They don't think he's gonna wake." Me: "miracles do happen. We just have to stick to prayer and trust in the Lord." Lakhe: "how can I trust someone I've never seen." Me: "because if your brain was just a random collection of chemicals formed by chance, how can you trust your own reasoning processes and thoughts that you think? The God that I worship, isn't limited by space or matter. He's an infinite God. How

else would we be able to have such emotions as love, anger, hatred, envy? If you can reason all that without any kind of spiritual being within us.....I don't think we would be the way we are. Otherwise dogs would talk and be CEO's as well. Cows would be driving our transportation and cats teaching our children at schools. Masilakhe. Believe in God and what He can do. He created all of what we are, have and have the potential to be. I can't put my feelings into immediate sentenced words, all I can is, Only God has the power to show you, who's God." he kept quiet. Lakhe: "can I ask God to wake my brother from that coma?" Me: "you can ask God anything my love." he sat up. I went to the bathroom to fetch a damp cloth to clear his face. Me: "come to bed baby." I helped him up and he went to bed. Just as he was. I had to start by taking off the shoes, his pants, the jacket ndamshiya with only underwear, t shirt and socks. He got into bed I went in next to him and cuddled him. Me: "do you need something to sleep?" Lakhe: "no...I'm okay. Don't want to get used to drugs again." Me: "I was talking about sleeping pills. What drugs are you talking about?" Lakhe: "pills are drugs. Which is why you're given a dosage for them. If you take more than that then they have the potential of harming your wellbeing. Sleeping pills, to me, qualify as drugs." Me: "okay baby. Not even warm milk?" Lakhe: "hm.hm..." he declined and held onto me.

Tuesday morning. I was woken up by a phone ringing. It actually startled me because I'm not sure when I'd fallen asleep. I sat up and looked around me. It was Sandile's phone. I'd charged it last night when Lakhe had gone to the hospital ndayilibala kwi charger. I picked it up and put the ringer off. It was just a random number. Lakhe was still fast asleep thank goodness. The time 5:38am. My wake up time being 6am. I could just get up now. The

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moment I began moving off the bed, he woke. Lakhe: "baby..uyaphi?" Me: "its almost 6." Lakhe: "please stay. I don't think I can face the world today." this was difficult. That company will crash and burn bonanje when both leadership is absent. Then There's Harold and his scandal. Me: "only if I can work from here my love." Lakhe: "okay." I got back into bed and sent an email that I won't be in the office, only working from home. Lakhe curled up, his arm around my waist ebuyela ebuthongweni bakhe. Sandile's incident really cut him deep. He was so afraid of losing his baby brother. What I appreciated was him opening up to me and not shutting me out. Taking care of him made me feel needed. I felt like a pillar, holding up a huge castle. I put down the ipad and slid down to him. He opened his semi swollen eyes staring at me. Lakhe: "I love you." he whispered. I don't know what looked more

beautiful. His eyes? The way they yearned to see me, peeking out of pain. Was it the shape his mouth took when he whispered those words? Or was it simply the voice that meant it all? Nothing I could've said from poetry would've sounded any better. He kissed my lips. Then pulled me closer. He held himself up with his left elbow and tucked me underneath him, not for once taking his lips off mine. He stopped then looked at me biting his lower lip. He closed his eyes and lay his head on top of my shoulder. Lakhe: "I don't even know where to begin. It just hurts. Ndizothini kutata?" I held my arms around his body. Lakhe: "I can't release my pain into you right now....because I'm gonna turn my back on you and sleep. I just want you to hold me till I'm okay." Me: "I understand baby but you may want to shift to my side because" Lakhe: "I'm suffocating you? Sorry babe." he shifted and rested on his side, one leg still on top of mine. Lakhe: "you know what you said about God?" Me: "yes..." Lakhe: "do you think he does bad things to us if we hurt others? To teach us a lesson?" that is the one question I was never prepared for. Me: "I don't think so. Bad things also happen to good people and they certainly don't deserve it." Lakhe: "then why does it happen?" Me: "well.....maybe its to test their faith. To make them spiritually stronger. You know? Challenge them for the better. To be able to conquer and defeat their own fears." Lakhe: "and the bad people?" Me: "maybe a chance for them to change their ways. To ask God to forgive them for what they have done bad." Lakhe: "and does He forgive?" Me: "Yes. If you truly repent and give yourself to the Lord. He will show you great favor." Lakhe: "I've got so many questions but its for another day. I wanna go back to sleep." Me: "should I call Philani and ask him about today?" Lakhe: "no...he said he'll take care of it. We can't move Sandile until he wakes. Or doesn't....then.....the machine must be switched off." his voice kept breaking off. Me: "okay. Let's sleep my love."

During the afternoon, I went to the kitchen to make lunch. There was no sign of Dumi or Sibú in the lounge or the game room. But all cars were here. After putting my spaghetti to the boil, I went to the rooms to knock. Me: "Dumz." cwaka. I knocked again. No response. I went to knock at Sibú's room. Me: "Sibú." no reply. That was odd. I went back to my kitchen ndaqhubekeka with my mince. I finished up in no time ndaphakela uLakhe who miraculously walked into the kitchen. By miraculous, I meant he was bathed and dressed. I left him in bed. He was probably going to the hospital. Me: "yima ndikuphakele ke bhuti. Before you step out that door." Lakhe: "but andilambanga." Me: "you're not leaving this house ungaryanga. You didn't want breakfast. You're gonna eat this. Sit." he sighed. Lakhe: "where are the two buffoons?" Me: "I don't know. Not in the rooms, game room, can't find them." he sat down and took out his phone. Wayicofa wayibeka endlebeni.

Lakhe: "Uphi." he waited. Lakhe: "okay. Izanoty lunch. We're leaving in 30." he hung up. I dished up for

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the 4 of us. Bafika aba babini kanti bebethathe a stroll down the street. Me: "molweni." Dumisani: "hello Spho." Sibuyi: "hi sisi." Me: "here's your food guys." Sibuyi: "siyabulela sisi." I left them at the table ndayolungisa room. After about 10 minutes, Lakhe came in. Lakhe: "sizohamba ngoku baby." Me: "okay my baby." I hugged and kissed him. Lakhe: "I won't be long. I'm not good company today. I think you're the only person that understands that. Thank you so much. For literally being here for me the entire time." Me: "its my pleasure mntuwam. You know I'd do anything for you." Lakhe: "anything?" Me: "Anything." Lakhe: "I'll hold you to that promise." he smiled and kissed me again. I let go of him. Feeling a bit cocktailish now. I was relieved to have some free time, I was also stressed about Sandile. Then worried about Lakhe. I hope There's at least some good news today. Just a little. He walked out the bedroom to the dining area. Lakhe: "Time." he said as he strode out the house to the car carrying a large bag to the boot. Sibuyi: "you can't stay. Do not put me in a crazy position please. Uyambona uLakhe is not himself. Do not make this difficult Dumisani please." Dumisani: "Sibuyi... What the hell is in that bag?" Sibuyi: "I don't know. I've never seen it before." Dumisani: "ndiyakucenga bra? Tell him I'm exh-" Sibuyi: "Dumisani. Dumisani. No. Right now isn't the time for this shit!! We're leaving!" Lakhe walked back in and stood in front of them. Sibuyi pushed the wheelchair out nervously. Lakhe followed them to the car, getting into the backseat. Sibuyi wafaka uDumisani in his place and also got in. The drive was as usual, quiet and icy. Lakhe tapped on his knee impatiently. They arrived at their destination. Lakhe: "best you both stay in the car for this one." he got out and opened the boot. Taking his bag out, walking to the building. Inside, the rest of the members were there. Serge and Black too. There were two captives tied up on the cement floor, their mouths taped shut. Lakhe: "I'm listening." Black: "we-" Lakhe: "you don't talk to me unless I ask you a question. Serge. Speak." Serge: "boss. After we left yesterday, we searched out and listened for any new merchandise then found out that one of the distributors in the northern area had received. When we got there, I got these two." Lakhe: "how is that helping my case? Did they bring my shit with them?" Serge: "they say it was taken by a guy called Rico." Lakhe: "so basically, they didn't bring it? Meaning I'm still on square one. My hands are still itching and someone is going to die. Is that what you're saying?" Serge removed the tape from their mouths. Serge: "where do we find Rico?" the guy breathed. "I don't know!" Serge: "okay, accused number 2." Guy2: "he lives in blue water bay. I can get you directions to his house." Guy1: "what the fuck are you doing!!" he

whispered. Guy2: "Weet jy wie dit is?" Guy1: "Rico will kill you!" Guy2: "Sal somer sterf." Lakhe: "can you shut up? The both of you? Just Keep." he sat down. Lakhe: "what's your name." looking at the snitch who ratted out on his boss. Guy2: "Leeroy." Lakhe: "Leeroy. I want you to tell me what happened on Sunday. On my midnight express. In return for your survival." Guy1: "Leeroy!!" Lakhe: "this one is starting to irritate me very slowly. Its like an itch under my armpits." he opened the bag taking out a long rope. Leeroy: "a man phoned Rico and asked if he could do him a favor. Which meant bringing out the best men on the job, to take and to kill a elite gang leader." Frank: "just kill these bastards G!!" Lakhe: "so let me get this straight. Someone made a call to your boss, to take certain merchandise off my express and kill.....Me." Leeroy: "Precisely." Lakhe: "instead I wasn't there, and you shot my brother." Leeroy: "I didn't shoot sir. I was just loading off the merchandise." Lakhe: "who shot him then?" Leeroy looked at his friend. Guy1: "Leeroy, Don't do this..." Leeroy: "vertel hom die waarheid." Lakhe: "sometime this week please." Leeroy: "Jamal and Kyle were the ones with guns." Lakhe: "I'm guessing you're Jamal?" the other one stared at him quietly. Lakhe: "okay." he stood up, taking the rope. Lakhe: "so

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Leeroy, I have one more question for you and you're free to go." Leeroy: "yes sir." Lakhe: "do you know who called your boss and ordered this hit on us?" Lakhe threw the rope to the open ceiling it clung onto a pipe and the other side of the rope came back down. Leeroy: "Yes." Lakhe held on to both ends of the rope and pulled himself up to check its strength. Lakhe: "perfect. Black, khaze noJamal." Black: "boss?" Lakhe: "did I fucking stutter?" Black took Jamal to Lakhe. Lakhe: "Serge. Tie this to his feet." they tied the rope on a screaming Jamal's legs. Pulling the rope down, which dragged his body higher into mid air. Lakhe securely tied both legs with both rope endings, leaving Jamal hanging upside down and took out a knife. Lakhe: "so, Leeroy." Jamal: "Lee asseblief my bru." he cried. Lakhe: "who is the person who called your boss." he held Jamal's head still and slit his neck open with the knife. The blood oozed out like a running tap as the victim struggled to breath, seconds later.....stopped. Like a slaughtered animal in a butchery, his lifeless body swayed and dripped of blood. Leeroy trembled in his corner watching his friend die. Lakhe: "Leeroy." he wiped his face with a cloth. Leeroy: "Its.....its the guy... behind you. It was Frank."

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Chapter 56

Lakhe: "Las ratas se va a ratas , serpientes van a silbar." (rats are gonna rat, and snakes are gonna hiss.) he looked behind him. Frank stared at him wide eyed. Frank: "he's lying G!! I would never do that to you and Sands!" Leeroy: "he also came to the house after you had your last meeting." Frank: "shut the fuck up!! You're lying!" Leeroy: "I saw you Frank. It was late afternoon Saturday." Lakhe: "Frank?" Frank: "G, this is a set up. Why would I do this to you? We've been clicking for months." Lakhe: "then why would you steal from me?" Frank: "I didn't!" Lakhe: "but you want me dead." Frank: "No!!!" Lakhe: "Serge..." Sergio stepped forward. Lakhe: "please bring me my table." Frank: "G!!! NO. G, don't do this!!!" Lakhe: "Black, please contain Frank for I." Frank: "don't fucking touch me!!! Lucky, I didn't do this. I swear!!!" Lakhe: "then who did." Frank: "I don't know!" Sergio pushed the table into the room. Frank: "Lucky, I swear on my mother's grave!! I would never do such a thing to you." Lakhe: "Leeroy. Come here." Lee got up and walked to him. Lakhe: "please lay on the table on your back." Leeroy hesitated. Lakhe: "you don't trust me?" Leeroy: "I do." he got onto the table and lay on his back. Lakhe went back to his bag, pulling out a chain saw. Lakhe: "you shouldn't." he switched it on and it roared to life. Leeroy: "NOO!!!!!!!!!" he screamed. Lakhe: "hold his head." the boy was held down Leeroy: "God please help me!!!!!" he cried. Lakhe switched off the machine and smiled. Lakhe: "do you know what I do to people that hurt my people Frank?" Frank: "you cut their heads off and post it to their homes." Lakhe: "do you know what I want to do to you Frank?" Frank shook his head. Lakhe: "I want to hurt you. I want to hurt you so bad that you're unable to control your bowels every time I walk into a room. Every time you see me.....I want you to get loose. Killing you is easy. Watching you count your days is even better.....but waiting for you to fuck up one more time, would be an absolute pleasure. You should know, all that have tried before, have burnt to ashes. Others who's bodies will never be found. Frank, I want you to try and kill me. Try it one more time." he switched on the chainsaw again pressing the spinning sharp blades on Leeroy's bare neck. Pieces of flesh flying about, he sawed the head off watching it drop to the floor. Black Stallion threw up repeatedly. Lakhe: "Try Me." he dropped the saw. Lakhe: "Serge, show Black the drill. The rest of you clean that shit up." he took off his sweater and walked out folding it and wiping himself. He got into the car. Dumi: "Sibu. I need a toilet." Sibu: "uzochama endlini." Dumi: "Sibu.....now." Sibu: "just go. Soyilungisa endlini." he started the car drove away. Lakhe: "start at the hospital." Sibu drove to the hospital first. On arrival Lakhe got out the car and walked inside the building. Sibu: "what is wrong with you?" Dumi: "Sibulele I want to go home. I can't do this anymore. Did you see him come out of there dripping blood? I can't mna Sibu. He is an animal!" he cried. Sibu: "at least you didn't get to see whatever happened." he sighed. Dumi: "You've

seen something before?" Sibú: "Dumisani. You need to start preparing yourself ngoku. By the looks of things...Sandile might not come back. You'll have to grow a thick skin and get used to this life. You're lucky that you're in a wheelchair. You won't have to drag bodies and bury them. Nyamezela qha ngoku." he got out the car. Sibú: "are you gonna stay here ?" Dumí: "I need the toilet." Sibú took out the wheelchair and helped him onto it. He locked the car and wheeled him inside the hospital. In the hospital room, Lakhe stood with Philani on the side. Lakhe: "do you think it might work?" Phila: "we'll have to try at least. Right now its the one procedure that could possibly revive him." Lakhe: "then do it." Phila: "I've set it up for tomorrow morning. It could take a while, I don't want you to be hopeful at the first attempt. Plus I'm not supposed to be doing this,

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so let's just keep it under wraps. Also repetitive daily cognitive stimulation, despite apparent lack of response, may contribute to coaxing the brain to recover. So talk to him, share with him your memories and his favorite things." Lakhe: "no problem. You'll call me when you need me." Phila: "sure." he left the room. Lakhe sat down in the chair. Lakhe: "bro, ingathi ngowuvuka before I lose my damn mind. I just found out Frank is the one that ordered the hit on us. I put a tag on him. He's waiting for you. Ndiyadikwa nazezi moemish ndihlala nazo. They are so damn weak. Yeses. At least try and wake up ngomso. Phila is gonna try some procedure to help you wake up. khazame...for us. Just try and wake up mminawa. You know I can never do this without you." Sibú walked in with Dumí. Sibú: "bhuti.." Lakhe: "what." Sibú: "Becca, ufuna uthetha nawe. She's right outside." Lakhe: "ithi makangene." Sibú called her in. Becca: "Mr Sobz." Lakhe: "yes Becca." Becca: "I know I've been absent from service for the past few days. I'd like to apologize for that." Lakhe: "who do you think is taking care of my friend while you're busy galivanting all over this hospital? I pay you to take care of Dumí. What I don't understand is what you doing here." Becca: "I'm sorry Mr Sobz. Can I come back to work?" Lakhe: "No." he looked back at his brother. Dumí: "Lakhe, please give her another chance. I'm already used to her Andifuni uqala umntu omtsha mna and ndiyam'sokolisa uSibú." Lakhe looked at him. Lakhe: "u-sure?" Dumí: "yeah." Lakhe: "fine." he got up and walked out. Lakhe: "Masambeni."

It was almost dark when Lakhe and the others came home. Mama wam was here while I worked she cooked dinner. Ufike esithi Uhleli yedwa kulandlu and unesthukthezi. I was overjoyed that she chose to come visit me instead of you know what. So in the lounge ndihleli kamandi, the TV was on the News

channel. Lakhe walked in the house. Me: "hey..." Lakhe: "hey baby. I need a shower. Ndiyeza." ookay. He went to the bedroom. Dumi and Sibubangena noBecca. Me: "hey guys." they greeted back. Was nobody going to give me feedback on Sandile? Me: "Sibulele?" Sibub: "yeah?" Me: "Unjani uSandile?" Sibub: "he's still the same." Me: "are they going to at least try something? Or they just gonna let him lie there by himself?!" Dumi: "they're trying the best they can-" Me: "what are they trying kaloku?" Becca: "I know you're frustrated Spho. These things take time. It all depends on him now." mxim. I packed away my work ndayobeka eroomin ndabuyela elounge. Everyone had gone to their rooms. Lakhe came out to the lounge wearing black board shorts and white socks qha. Me: "sibephi iskipha? You know we have a guest right?" Lakhe: "who's our guest?" Me: "my mom." he sat down next to me. Lakhe: "don't lie. Uhleli wedwa apha. And you missed me." Me: "heee." Lakhe: "you missed me and you missed Postman Penis." I giggled. Me: "why is he a postman?" Lakhe: "ufuna abeyi President. Ungu President Penis ke." I laughed. Me: "I'm serious. My mom is here. Use kitcheni uyapheka." Lakhe: "lies." he kissed me laying me down on the couch. Me: "Lakhe!" Lakhe: "awundifuni? Here I come trying to look sexy for you in my white socks, wena awundifuni?" Me: "you look very sexy in your white socks baby." Dumi: "guys...come on." he wheeled in the lounge. Lakhe: "come on what?" Sibub: "sicela ubukel i-TV?" Lakhe: "both your bedrooms have TV's." Me: "ambovula emnyango you have a visitor." he got up wakroba. Lakhe: "nawe awundifuni." Dumi: "what the hell...." we both looked at him, he was staring at the news. Reporter: "just a little over an hour ago, the Sanders family received a devastating, gruesome shock that would rattle their entire lives. The beheaded body of their 19 year old son, Leeroy Sanders was dropped off at their home by an unknown vehicle. Nobody knows where his head is, or what happened to him. Police are still investigating what might have happened and who could have brutally taken the life of this boy. The family is too shaken to be able to

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comment on the matter, a neighbor has agreed to speak on their behalf. Mrs Jantjies, did you see anything prior this incident that might have hinted this terrible nightmare?" MrsJ: "absolutely not! These boys have all kinds of friends and we don't pay attention anymore. All I know is that Leeroy's mother is half to death in pain because it was her only son. Which she loved so much. The other burden would be how they're going to pay for this funeral. Another one.....so soon after the father passed." Me: "oh my God..." I sat up. Ma: "yinton Le niyibukeleyo!! Sphosenkosi tshintsha lonto!!" she screamed. Bendikhonyuluka actually, I just ran to the bathroom and threw up. Lakhe came in the bathroom. Me: "what the hell! They say there might be a

psychotic murderer apha ebhayi." Lakhe: "that's not true." Me: "were you listening! That boy came home without his head! What kind of lunatic does that!!" he pulled me up. Me: "that poor family...." he hugged me. Lakhe: "You've got such a soft heart." Me: "Lakhe, kodwa ngumntu onjani lo uzokwenza into enjeya? Where did he leave the boy's head? Uzoyithini? Why did he cut it off in the first place?" I pulled away and rinsed my mouth. Me: "baby, we should help these people." Lakhe: "we don't even know them." Me: "we don't have to know! Imagine uyazisokolela kufike this bomb in your house. Now you have to deal with your emotions and this financial burden. No." Lakhe: "yoh. Hayi undixakile." he walked out. I went back to the lounge. The boys were watching something else behleka kumnandi. Lakhe: "apparently this kid was a thief and he sold drugs. Jonga." he showed me his iPad. Me: "he didn't deserve to die like that." Lakhe: "even after raping younger girls in his neighborhood. Jonga, these is a live stream of what's happening in that street right now. They're literally celebrating. Watch." How could people be so cruel? Lakhe: "someone did them a favor. Guess he messed with the wrong one this time." he went to the kitchen eyoncokola nomama. Dumi: "you have a good heart Spho. Its just that sometimes, you shouldn't give it to everyone. This was a case of bad karma. He did something and paid badly for it. It wasn't an accident at all." Sibu: "yeah, I think I'd kill someone that hurt my daughter or sister too. Ndingambulala afe fi. Rhaaaa." Dumi: "he'd probably lose the penis too." they laughed. I put down the ipad and went to my bedroom. A lot of emotions were circling my head and rushing up and down my body. It wasn't even about this kid anymore. It was about myself. How I'd wished all those years ago when I was abused almost every night somebody had come and killed for me. When they eventually did, over a decade later, I just didn't know what to feel. This just brought back the emotions of the day I found the corpse sitting on that couch. All my time of suffering had been brutally carved onto him. I hope he suffered. Long and hard. Lakhe: "baby?" I covered myself under the blanket. Lakhe: "mntuwam you have to eat something. Don't pay attention to lento yenzekayo on TV." Me: "I don't want to eat. I'm ok." Lakhe: "hun...please talk to me." he got into bed, looking for me under the covers. Lakhe: "I missed you." Me: "miss you too." Lakhe: "talk to me baby. You want to help that family? We could pay for the funeral if you want." Me: "No." Lakhe: "but you said-" Me: "I know what I said." Lakhe: "is it because of the live streaming you saw?" Me: "he hurt other people." Lakhe: "well....yeah. But you're right, he didn't deserve to die like that." Me: "maybe he did." I turned my back on him. Lakhe: "you don't mean that.....do you?" Me: "he ruined young girls' lives." Lakhe: "oohh...so that's where we are now." he moved closer to me. Lakhe: "baby wam...." Me: "I just want to be alone." Lakhe: "I can't let you be alone. Ungumntuwam ngoku, its

my job to make you feel protected and safe. I'm going to be here for you, the way you are always here for me. Even though andikwazi ke mna uthandaza nje ngawe, I'm just gonn sit here and sing." Me: "please don't sing. Just be quiet." Lakhe: "u-sure? I was in the choir." Me: "don't lie." Lakhe: "so awufuni ndicule?" Me:

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"no thank you." Lakhe: "at least look at me ke." I turned to look at him. Lakhe: "my beautiful queen." Me: "my ugly king." Lakhe: "suxoka sisi. I know I don't only turn heads, I break necks. So ke, umona awuzokusa ndawo." I giggled. Lakhe: "we should go to the hospital tomorrow together. Bazozama a procedure to wake Sandile from his coma. I know he'd want to have you there for him." Me: "I'd love to come." just then his phone rang. He ignored it, kissing my nose. Me: "yand'cheatela ngoku?" Lakhe: "heheeee!!! Yoh!" he took off the blanket. Lakhe: "ndizonga ignore i-calls ngoku?" Me: "yiphendule tshi." he laughed taking the phone. Lakhe: "Phila?" Phila: "hi bhuti. Can you please make it to the hospital?"

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Chapter 57

We were at the hospital in record time after the call we received. All the time to the hospital I was panicking not knowing what was the problem. I had hope though. Andithi uyaxelelwa over the phone if someone has passed bakunike the time of death and tell you to see the body? Right? Or was I simply just hoping and praying it would be like that? As we waited for Phila, I saw my dad walking past us efunda i-file. He didn't see us. Lakhe: "Tata?" Khaya looked up and smiled. Khaya: "What a surprise! Molweni." Me: "hi dad." he came to us. Khaya: "nizothini apha? Is everything okay?" Lakhe: "Sandile was a bit sick. So siyobona yena." Khaya: "oh? I didn't know he was even here. Utheni?" Lakhe: "we're not sure yet. But I'm sure he's okay." Khaya: "okay, keep me posted, let me know if you need any help." Lakhe: "okay Ta." Khaya: "bye princess." he walked off to do his job. Me: "why did you lie?" Lakhe: "he would ask a lot of questions babes. I'm not ready for that right now." Phila came to us. Before we could even say a word: Phila: "He's awake. He wants to see you. Follow me please." we walked behind him very quickly. I half jogged because I had short legs bona bayakwazi kuba they're tall. Once we arrived at the private room. Sandile had his eyes open looking around. Sands: "so ndichama phi?" his voice was burnt out and very low. Lakhe: "zichamele mpa. You fucking scared me!" he smacked his shoulder. Sands: "ndiphakame net kule bhedi bra. Ndiyolishova inqindi you won't believe. Khazapha mntase,

show me some love." Me: "hey you." I hugged him. Sands: "khandigoduse please." Phila: "uzohamba ngomso. Still have to run some tests on you to make sure you don't relapse." Sands: "nim'fumene phi lo?" Phila: "if Lo bengafunyenwanga. You would've died. You lucky to have a sister like this one." Sands: "ndimthembile kaloku." he coughed. Sands: "I feel like I'm breathing fire." Phila: "uzokomelela." Sands: "ungu msoon kanene." I sat next to him. Me: "come, let's sit you up. Uzosela amanzi." I helped him up, he flinched in pain and screamed. Me: "almost done." I quickly fixed his pillows and put him back. Me: "nanga amanzi akho." I poured water into a glass and gave him a straw. He drank the water slowly. Sands: "enkosi mntase. Ndik'khumbulile yazi." Me: "undikhumbula njani ulele?" Sands: "bendiphupha ngawe kaloku." Lakhe: "heee." Sands: "unomona lo. Ngam'hoyi." Me: "kuddala ndim'hoyile wethu, he'll be fine. As long as we're getting you out of here. We miss you endlini. Lakhe ukutyile ukutya bendik'phekele kona." Sands: "uzokugabha myeke wena." Lakhe: "worse nindi-discusse ndikhona." Sands: "kamandi asik'hlebi. Phila khenze fondini ez'wey zentlungu." Phila: "Andifuni. Uzonyamezela kude kubek'sasa. I have other patients to get to." he walked out. Me: "wow, and then?" Sands: "ndamtyela ku fasti wakhe. Ngoku asivani ncam. But he's still my boy." Lakhe: "I would've let you die." Sands: "kaloku uyilento uyiyo wena, ingenalo negama. Nyosanja igama lakho." Lakhe: "what does that even mean?" Sands: "nyoka idibene nosatana ne nja. All in one." Lakhe: "Okay Sandile. Masimshiye mntuwam. Athethe yedwa apha." Sands: "hamba wedwa. Spho is not like you." Lakhe: "uyalibala ukuba Spho is my wife not your mom." Sands: "so you're on mute for a year. Spho, catch me up, what's been going on? How long was I out?" Me: "only 2 or 3 days. Nothing much has happened wethu, heee and There's a serial killer on the loose." Sands: "what! Where?" Lakhe: "There's no serial killer Spho. It was just one incident." Me: "before many others occur." Lakhe: "its not gonna happen." Sands: "what is happening guys?" he coughed again. Sands: "my throat is in flames. I keep losing my breath." Me: "sit still nawe. You can't start talking like us." Sands: "nindenze excited mos. What is this Serial killer thing? Wenzenton?" Lakhe: "Spho is over-imaginative." Me: "this guy cut off someone's head. Some 19 year old boy wethu and then dropped his body off

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kokwabo. Without the head." Sandile looked at Lakhe. Sands: "now why would he do something like that?" Lakhe: "he deserved it." Me: "yeah apparently he harassed girls and sold drugs." Sands: "hm. So are police searching for the suspect." Me: "probably." I took out my phone. Me: "its all over the news. Look There's another update." Sands: "ithini." Me: "still no trace of Sanders killer. No evidence. No witness. Its like the car that dropped off the

body vanished in thin air." Sands: "go figure." Me: "but who would cut off someone's head like that?" Sands: "boggles my mind. Why exactly." Lakhe: "I'm kind of hungry now." Sands: "me too. Lonto ndibawela something juicy. Like inyama." Me: "let me go to Woolworths ndinithengele full chicken guys. I'll be back." Lakhe: "thank you my love." Sands: "ungayilibali juice." Me: "I won't." I kissed Lakhe's cheek, took the keys and my bag ndaphuma, ndisiya kwa Woolworths.

Sandile stared at Lakhe. Sands: "are you out of your fucking mind?" he breathed. Lakhe: "before you jud-" Sands: "Don't. No. Do not make excuses. Do not compare me to you. What did I ask of you when we came here? One simple thing, control your self! You can't go around cutting peoples heads! You've got the whole province fucking scared and probably the entire country too!" Lakhe: "Sandile, this boy was gonna bring us trouble." Sands: "why not shoot him th-" he stopped and tried to breath. Sands: "please tell me this is the last. Just, stop. This isn't Durban." Lakhe: "I was avenging your life. This is how you thank me?" Sands: "I'm not fighting with you. I have your best interests at heart. I don't want these murders to follow you around." Lakhe looked away. Sands: "what did you find out." Lakhe: "frank was the one who ordered the hit on us. He wants me dead." Sands: "why wasn't his head cut off?" Lakhe: "still wanna dangle him. They think you're dead. So he's probably still shaking. You know Frank is a wuss. He'll never finish a job." Sands: "I hear. So what's next?" Lakhe: "we have to chill a bit. At least a few weeks." Sands: "have you ordered the next?" Lakhe: "not yet. I'm mourning remember?" Sands: "don't be so hard on Black. He's in way too deep but he's trying. He's the one that pulled me away when I got shot. Literally stopped and came back for me. I would've died there alone." Lakhe: "kanti ebephi uSibu?" Sands: "I told him to wait by the car to stock in the merchandise." Lakhe: "oh." Sands: "uzundicengele kuPhila andinike pilis yentlungu. I'm really battling here." Lakhe: "I'll ask tata ka Lihle akuphe something. You had food poisoning. Nothing else." Sands: "Hide that board then." Lakhe: "it already says food poisoning. Nobody is allowed in here." Sands: "lonto ninamaqhinga noPhilani. Thanks." Lakhe: "just come back home, get better." Sands: "sowundikhumbula ngoku? Haha." Lakhe: "no, I don't. But Spho does, she panics a lot xa ungekho...so yeah." Sands: "oh...ndizobuyela yena ke. Since you don't need me." he looked at his brother. Sands: "is everything okay?" Lakhe: "Ya. Ndigrand." Sands: "I know you. Yinton ingxaki?" Lakhe: "its nothing man. I'm fine." Sands: "dude I'm not dead, you can stop moping now." Lakhe: "mxim." Sands: "and I know you love me." Lakhe: "Stop it." Sands: "and I love you too-" Lakhe: "fine!! I want a son. Okay? There." Sands: "awww. That's so sweet. Ungatsho nje, isbeleko sam si-ready." Lakhe: "firstly not with you. Secondly,

usicholaphi isibeleko Sandile?" Sands: "thetha kaloku nomntu wakho mfo, umchazele ufuna umntana. You're about to marry. So it can't be that hard." Lakhe: "it is that hard. What if she's not ready? After what happened the last time. Andisayazi." Sands: "better to ask and talk about it." Lakhe: "its hard to even....you know...." Sands: "uhm....I don't know. And I don't want to. Look, you have a beautiful fiance. She's also understanding and cares about you. Thetha naye ungenzi ubudom. Trying to solve your problems ngosela utywala and running around with friends won't help your

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case. Umdala ngoku, you chose this. Stick with it. Because if you break Sphe's heart, I will find her a man that will marry her ndibeyi bestman and hang photos of their wedding in your house. You better act right." Lakhe: "wakufumana phi utatakho? You're a special case wena. They should've brought you with a finger tag." Sands: "Uphi khona utata? You didn't call him did you." Lakhe: "ndithini kengoku kuye? Perhaps as an explanation to why I let you get shot?" Sands: "tell Sibule to bring me my phone. Ndifun fownel utatam. He probably thinks I've replaced him." Lakhe: "for the second time? I don't think that's possible." he called Sibule. Lakhe: "ntwana. Khaze ne-phone ka Sands. Its in my bedroom...Sho." he hung up. Sands: "my head hurts. Awukwazi ucima esisbane?" Lakhe: "I suppose we can dim it down. You okay?" Sands: "tired..." Lakhe: "you got excited too quickly there. Time for you to rest." he took away the pillows and put him down on his back. Sands: "don't....go.." Lakhe: "I'm not going anywhere, ndizoty nyama yakho apha ecamkwakho." Sands: "mxim." Lakhe: "lala." Sands: "my body is in pain. How the hell am I supposed to sleep?" Lakhe: "sit still. Ndiyeza." Sands: "don't go." Lakhe: "I'll be back. Andithi ufuna pilis for intlungu?" Sands: "ok." Lakhe went out to look for Khaya in search of pain killers. Phila: "what are you looking for." Lakhe: "my father in law." Phila: "just missed him. He's in the O.R. Can I help you?" Lakhe: "look, I know you don't like Sandile-" Phila: "but I saved his life, what are you saying?" Lakhe: "you have a vendetta. You want to see him in pain. To tell you the honest truth, if he can manage to fuck your girl that means that girl wasn't yours in the first place. Women know how to treat themselves with respect. They know how to say no. He actually did you a favor, what would you do for the rest of your life living with someone who's willing to stab you in the back? I'm not saying forgive him, but cut him some slack." Phila rolled his eyes. Phila: "fine. He better not talk to me. I'll be there in a minute."

3 weeks later. I came home from work. Masilakhe had his usual monthly meeting at 7. I took off my shoes the minute I entered the door. Sandile was

sitting on the couch with Boogie and Sibulele. I was told to give them "the talk" when I got home. Lakhe was tired of coming home to noise and couch bums. He wanted ME to tell them to get jobs. Sandile already had the hotel responsibility which he sucked at because Lakhe had to do all the work. Sibulele ebephole inqayi. Dumi was the only one allowed to be lazy but instead he was working all day everyday, wheeling up and down the living room ethetha kwi phone. Becca was in the kitchen fixing dinner. Me: "hey guys." Sands: "hey." Sibulele: "hi sisi." Me: "I want to talk to you guys about something." Sands: "what's up." Me: "how's the hotel going?" he shrugged. Me: "that's the thing hun, you have to know. It's yours. Your responsibility. If you don't take care of it, it will die. Just like Boogie." he stared at me. Sands: "but ndizoyithini? I don't know what to do." Me: "firstly Attend the meetings. Secondly pay attention to your emails, to your staff, thirdly make sure akhonto ishotayo phaya, just conversate with the manager. He will guide you." I looked at Sibulele. He pretended not to see me. Me: "Sibulele." Sibulele: "yes Ma'am." he looked at me innocently. Me: "you need to get a job sweetie pie. You can't sit here and do nothing all day." he nodded. Me: "tomorrow ndicela ibekhona ke into eniza nayo that's solid in terms of moving forward. I don't want to have this conversation with you guys again." Sands: "yes ma'am." I rolled my eyes ndisiya eroomin. I changed into grey leggings and a grey tight sweater. I wore my slippers and walked to the garden outside. At least they fed the ducks and they looked healthy. I saw someone standing by the gate. Male. Tall. Babalo. Ufuna ntoni? Nxx. I went back to the house. Everyone was still watching TV, I answered the phone. Me: "yes?" Balo: "hi, can you please let me in?" Me: "your friend is not here." Balo: "uhm...okay. Well cela

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uzumxelele ndikhona. Just came home from Italy. I got you guys something. Also, my wife wanted to meet you." Me: "I'll tell you when he's home." Balo: "oh.." Me: "just come in." I opened the stupid gate. I felt guilty that I was rejecting his wife because of her vile husband. They walked in carrying gift bags. Sands: "who is it?" Me: "Mr Wet Pants." he laughed. Balo walked in. Balo: "molweni guys. This is my wife Hlumi." Me: "Hello Hlumi, how are you?" Hlumi: "I'm great thanks. You're Spho?" Me: "yes." Hlumi: "lovely to finally meet you. You look beautiful." Me: "oh thank you. You also look amazing." and now what.... Balo: "oh, I bought these for you." I took the bag. Me: "thank you Balo. This was kind of you." Balo: "aren't you gonna open it?" Now? I looked into the bag. It was a white and gold Louis Vuitton hand bag. Small and cute. Me: "this is lovely. Thank you." Balo: "Lena yeyaka Lakhe." Me: "he's in a meeting right now. He'll be back later." Sands: "is there anything for me?" Babalo stared at him. Balo: "No." Sands: "Oh. Must be nice." Hlumi: "we have to get going.

We're meeting my parents for dinner. It was lovely meeting you Spho." Me: "Likewise. We should hook up sometime when we're both free. Maybe nge weekend." Hlumi: "that would be great. Bye guys." they said their goodbyes. Except Sandile. Balo: "bye Spho." I walked them out the gate. Ubuya kwam I heard a hoot from the gate, when I was about to almost reach the front door. I turned around thinking nguLakhe being Lakhe. But nope. It was a big SUV. One that I've seen before. It hooted three more times ndiyijongile. This was one of the cars zak'lo Lakhe. Sandile walked out. Sands: "what's she doing here?" Me: "ambonxiba izihlangu Sandile. I'll open the gate." we both went inside the house ndavula gate yangena imoto. Stella walked in a few minutes later erhuqa suitcase. And something else. Something that made my blood boil. Stella: "evening. Where are my sons?" wathula uSandile staring at the TV. Me: "Lakhe is in a business meeting. He won't be back till late." she laughed. Stella: "business meeting? At this time? You poor thing." Dez was with her enxibe coat ebomvu ende and black stilettos. If I was a bitch, I would tell them to wait outside qha my parents didn't raise me that way. Me: "can I offer you anything to drink Stella?" Stella: "a glass of wine." Dez: "I'll just have juice thank you." Becca came to us. Becca: "ma'am. Can I help?" she was looking at me. I'd specifically told her never to call me ma'am. I don't know why she was doing this. Me: "one glass of wine and one juice please Beks." she walked back to the kitchen. Me: "Sandile." I hissed. He looked at me. Stella: "aren't you going to say hello to your mom?" Sands: "Molo mama." Stella: "who are they?" ebengathi unaar. Sands: "These are my friends. They live here. Dumi, Sibu, this is my mom." they greeted. She just replied with "hmm." I texted Lakhe: "Your mom just arrived with your ex." I waited and there was no response within the minute. I would have to handle this. Problem yam yeyoba we have nothing to talk about. They're mean and cruel, I'm the complete opposite. I can't treat people like dirt. Well, except Babalo. He is dirt. He doesn't count. Becca brought the beverages. I offered them a seat. Me: "can I book you into a hotel so long?" Stella: "hotel? I'm staying in my son's house." Me: "well, she isn't." ndajonga kuDez wasekunyeni. She unbuttoned her coat, revealing her small round belly. Dez: "I'm not going anywhere."

Chapter 58

Have you ever wished you could fly? Not just fly around the place. Like fly to disappear forever? I've always felt that way for most of my life and even with the means and resources I've realized that you can't fly away from your problems. What did she mean she wasn't going anywhere? Why was her belly round? Well stupid me, of course she's pregnant. Did Lakhe do this? How could he do that to me? Me: "This is my house. And you're not staying here."

Stella: "correction sweetheart, this is my son's house. This is also my son's baby. You are the one that won't be staying here." Me: "I think you're heavily mistaken there Mrs Sobukwe." Sands: "uyenza njani intwenje?" Stella: "don't talk to me like that! I am your mother-" Sands: "no mother of mine acts like a bitch. Is this what you're gonna do when I want to get married? What kind of woman are you? You don't even want to see your own child happy, no wonder all of us left that house the minute we could, its because of your vindictive ways and evil thoughts. And Spoho is not leaving this house, I swear to God if you say one more word to her, I'll drag the both of you out myself kicking that bastard child out of that tummy. Say one more thing." the house went dead quiet. Sandile looked back at his TV show, wavala umlomo wakhe. Dumi excused himself and went to his room. In a few minutes Wangena utata wekhaya. Stella: "oh!! My son." she ran to him. He stopped her immediately. Lakhe: "what the fuck is this?" Stella: "Masilakhe!" Lakhe: "hayi mama. Uzothin lo apha kwam?" Stella: "we have something to tell you." Lakhe: "are you trying to piss me off?" his hands were shaking. Sands: "bafuna ukhatywa banye boyi two." Me: "Sandile Hayi!" Dez: "babe...I thought this was what you wanted. For us to have a family." she stood up facing him. He stared at her. Lakhe: "I want the both of you.....to get out of my house. Before I do something that I will Not regret." Stella: "are you kicking the mother of your child out?" Lakhe: "that is not my child!!" Stella: "what do you think happens when you sleep with women Lakhe!! They get pregnant!" Lakhe: "mama, I'm not gonna explain myself to you. Just get the hell out of my house. Now." he took the suitcase and threw it outside. Me: "Lakhe." Lakhe: "mabaphume Sphosenkosi!! Mabafokofe apha!" Me: "Masilakhe ngumama wakho lo. You are not going to throw her out like a dog, just calm down uthethe kakuhle. Please?" Lakhe: "she can't just get here, drop this bomb, and then expect blue skies. She must get the fuck out. Njebe nje wena usamcingela, akakucingeli yena. She brought this person here, to hurt you. They're leaving. And they're leaving NOW." Stella was on the phone crying. Stella: "I don't know Rob, you need to come here, she's turned them against me! They're swearing me now. Calling me names and throwing me out. You need to come here now!!!" she sobbed. Lakhe: "you're still leaving this house. I don't care if you're sleeping outside. Just get out." Stella: "Lakhe how could you do this to your own mother!!!" Lakhe: "how could you do this to your son! You know how much Spoho means to me, yet you find ways to hurt her. I don't want you in my life if you don't want her in mine. Take your little friend and leave.." he showed them the door. Stella: "Masilakhe!" she cried. Lakhe: "I'm going to count to three. What happens after that would be your own fault. 1. 2." they hurried out the house, bayongena emotweni. The car drove out the yard. Masilakhe was fuming with anger. Bendimoyika gqithi xa enje. It was

very rare but when it happened, it was as though he wasn't even in his right mind. I knew to leave him alone. Sandile ebebukele TV ingathi akwenzeki niks. Sibule looked rattled but ethule ejonge kwi phone yakhe. Lakhe went to take a shower. Ndisamathe ndinjalo, I wanted him to explain what this was about and the elephant in the room needed direction. Did he sleep with Dez? My phone was ringing in my hand, ndayijonga. It was

Zingi. Right now, I was really in no mood for anything. I was frustrated yilento igqibo kwenzeka. Sands: "Spho." I looked at him. Sands: "uright?" Me: "yeah. I'm good." I went to the bedroom ndahlala ndalinda uLakhe. He came out the shower eyonxiba. Would I be nagging if I asked what was going on? I sat there and waited for him to come out. I knew uzophuma ngalamnyango to probably finish his meeting and come back late just to avoid my questions. It actually stung that I was not allowed to ask too many questions. I needed a bath and my bed now. As I got up to go to the bathroom. Lakhe: "baby?" Me: "I know you have to go back to your meeting." Lakhe: "no I don't." I looked at him. He was dressed in pajamas. Me: "okay, I'll be in the bath then." I went into the bathroom ndavulela amanzi kwi bath ndangena. I soaked myself for a while, ndavasa. Ugqiba kwam, when I was well and ready got out the bath. Back in the bedroom. Lakhe was sitting on the edge of the bed nervously. Lakhe: "I got your lotion right here." he had the bottle of Lux lotion in his hand. Lakhe: "can I?" I climbed on the bed and let him moisturize my legs. I was very quiet. Actually waiting for him to start the topic, because kaloku I'm Mrs 21 questions. Namhlanje ke ndizovala owam. He massaged my feet, then up my thighs. I turned around wandithambisa umqolo. Also giving me a massage. Lakhe: "mntuwam." Me: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "I'm sorry." Me: "what are you sorry for exactly?" Lakhe: "I'm sorry for putting you through this. I never intended for this to happen." Me: "okay." Lakhe: "baby please don't do this." Me: "don't do what? What am I doing?" Lakhe: "yell at me, scream, hit me. Just please don't ignore me." Me: "what's that going to help Masilakhe? Is it going to bring back my faithful fiance?" Lakhe: "Spho. That is not my baby, I swear." Me: "but you did sleep with her. Right?" he swallowed. I got under the covers. Lakhe: "it only happened once. I used protection, I made sure of it. She doesn't know that because ebenxilile and I was sober. Bekumnyama, kodwa ndiyinxibile mna condom. I know what I did was wrong, I regretted it immediately. It was the worst feeling I've ever felt. Till today, I still hate myself for it. I made a mistake Spho. If I was being dishonest, I wouldve slept with many girls till now. I went on a trip with friends kugcwele amantombi, I was not interested. I'd never do you like this ever again." Me: "so you slept with her." Lakhe: "yes." Me: "then I guess we're even. Goodnight." I could feel his

shock all the way from where he was sitting. Lakhe: "wha...what do you mean...by that?" his voice was shaky. Me: "I mean we're even. You fucked your ex when I wasn't there. I fucked Max when you weren't here. We're even." he inhaled and exhaled. Out of nowhere jumped up and stormed out the bedroom. Maybe I was too extreme. Was it so bad that I wanted to hurt him the way I was hurting? I had a lump in my throat. I didn't know what else to do. If he says he used a condom, should I trust him? After what he did? What if he's just trying to protect me? What if now he's going to live a double life and go see Dez and the baby behind my back? Am I going to be part of that now? Maybe I pushed too far by lying about Max. He's probably calling off the wedding and leaving me. The door opened again then closed. Footsteps to the bed. He got under the covers and pulled me to him. I was scared. Scared of pushing him away. Scared of losing him. Scared of being a stepmom. I was at the verge of tears. Lakhe: "I'm so sorry my baby. I didn't mean to hurt you." Me: "I don't know if I can trust you Lakhe. I'm not going to be able to be Snoopy. I'm already comfortable and I don't want to be Snoopy." Lakhe: "okay, ngubani uSnoopy." Me: "a woman who keeps tabs on her husbands and everything he does to make sure he's not cheating." Lakhe: "you don't have to babe. I'm going to do everything in my power to prove to you that's not my baby. Even the condom I used, I flushed down the toilet. There is absolutely no way, its my kid." Me: "I want to believe you." Lakhe: "you wouldn't be here if you didn't. Spho, ndiyayazi uyandithanda, I wouldn't

play with your heart. Cela undithembe. I fucked up by sleeping with her. I really did." Me: "you flushed it down the toilet ?" Lakhe: "Ewe." he looked me in the eye. Me: "the problem is, if I were the one who cheate-" Lakhe: "he'd be dead already. And we would be cuddling, kungekho ne-topic yakhe." Me: "I'm serious." Lakhe: "so am I." Me: "Max is still alive....is he?" Lakhe: "I don't know Max, Sandile says he's harmless and you would never go there." Me: "you thought I did?" Lakhe: "you were so calm when you said it, it scared me. Sundiphathisa ngentliziyo Spho. You know I'm old." I turned around ndajonga kwelinye icala. Lakhe: "would it be pushing it if I asked to kiss you?" Me: "yes." Lakhe: "let's have our dinner ke my love. I'll bring the food vha." he got up and went to the kitchen. His phone buzzed a notification. From TrueCaller. Missed call. The number was blocked. Saved as umamakhe. I didn't want Lakhe to be on bad terms with his mother. I really hated uhlobo things turned out. Why can't she just be reasonable? Khona ndimenze ntoni mna? Lakhe came back with the tray that had both our plates. Lakhe: "dinner in bed." he placed the tray on the bed wahlala naye. Lakhe: "cimela." I closed my eyes.

Lakhe: "May God bless our food, and my family. May the Almighty be here, to protect our matrimony and guide us into a better spiritual future. Amen." Me: "Amen." I looked at him. Lakhe: "that was my second prayer. In my whole life." Me: "when was the first?" Lakhe: "when my mom died." he tasted the food. Lakhe: "ayisemandi Le mash." he dug his spoon into mine and ate. Me: "its the same." Lakhe: "hmm....much better from your side." Me: "so nditye phi mna." Lakhe: "xolo baby." we ate our dinner. Uggqiba kwam ndabeka plate ecaleni. So did he. Me: "hun.." Lakhe: "hm...." Me: "why don't you sit down with your moth-" Lakhe: "I'm not doing that. Ndimxelele enough times, Nguwe umntu endizomtshata. Ndimxelele enough times, ndithanda wena. Ndimxelele enough times, ayeke uzisa uDez kwindawo endikuyo. She refuses to listen, that means I have to cut her off." Me: "you can't cut your mother off Lakhe. Not because of mna." Lakhe: "its not because of you, its because of me. You're MY happiness. If she doesn't want me to be happy kutheni funeke acengwe ndim? Uzozibona ba makathini nala Dez wakhe." he looked through the drawer. Lakhe: "funny how we never use this TV, now I can't find remote yayo." Me: "hayi babe. Ndiyilala mna." Lakhe: "sundishiya kaloku." he came back to cuddle me. Lakhe: "goodnight my heart." Me: "goodnight."

The next morning, I opened my eyes and found him staring at me. Me: "wenzani?" Lakhe: "ndibuka umntu wam." I stretched and yawned. Lakhe: "I made you breakfast." Me: "what time is it?" Lakhe: "something past 6." Me: "I need to get to work." Lakhe: "babe?" I stopped and looked at him. Lakhe: "I should've told you this before. I was just.....not sure how. After the whole incident izolo, and a lot of thinking, I've gained the confidence to ask." Me: "ask what?" Lakhe: "since about a month ago...I've wanted to have a son... I know I said before that ndifuna sitshate kqala. But I really want one." Me: "umgxothile nje uDez." he laughed. Lakhe: "u-funny yazi? Usibonile esasusu? Even if I didn't use i-condom, I saw her like 3 months ago, and that looks at least 4 to 5 months. Kodwa ndiserious baby." I looked at him. Lakhe: "please?" Me: "so you want us to start now?" Lakhe: "yes." he looked excited. Me: "that's not gonna happen. I'll go to the doctor and check my ovulation dates. Then we can try." Lakhe: "nyani Spho? You'd do this for me?" Me: "don't make me change my mind." he hugged me and kissed my cheek. Lakhe: "I love you so much." Me: "on the other hand. Sizoyithini lento kamamakho noDez." Lakhe: "sizoya kwa gqirha, to check the baby's month. Then ndimnike calendar. They'll never see it coming." Me: "mandiyovasa." Lakhe: "ubuye uzotyaka ke." I went to take a long shower. God, I love Lakhe so much. I can't

even believe izinto zase stratweni. He is just so much in my heart. Me: "I pray that God reveals this truth and sets my husband free from this mess." after my shower, I went to get dressed. Lakhe wasn't in the bedroom, but my breakfast

was waiting for me on the bed. I first sat in bed ndatya ndasela juice, checking my emails and I stopped eating. Ndaske ndahluthi. I had a lot of work to do today. I went to the closet ndiyokhangela outfit for the day ndakhe ndahlala phantsi to catch my breath. Lakhe: "babe?" Me: "I'm in here." he came in. Lakhe: "you barely ate." Me: "yeah, I've got work. A lot of it. I can't even find something decent to wear." Lakhe: "its a bit cold phandle." Me: "this navy suit makes me look like I work in the airport." Lakhe: "but its cute. Nxiba ke pajama yakho, ungene ezinguben." Me: "nope. I have a big meeting today. With the Telkom directors." I took out a black dress and my grey knee long coat. Lakhe: "baby..." Me: "hm." Lakhe: "when are you going to book the doctor's appointment?" Me: "when I get to work my love." Lakhe: "utata ufikile. He's so mad. Umama switched off her phone." Me: "why would she do that?" Lakhe: "trying to teach him a lesson probably. Ndimazelaphi umama nemikhwa yakhe." Me: "maybe you guys should check if she's okay." Lakhe: "Nah. I'm good." I was done getting dressed ndathatha izihlangu zam. Me: "I keep running out of breath." Lakhe: "udiniwe Sphosenkosi. You never rest." Me: "just this one meeting. I'll rest after." I wore my shoes. I took my work bag and cell phone. Lakhe: "wait for me. We'll take one car, try eating some more." I went to sit on the bed and waited for him wayongena kwi shower. Let me just lay my head to get rid of this dizziness. I yawned and lay on my side closing my eyes for a second. A second turned into at least an hour when I woke up I looked around. My shoes were off. Me: "Lakhe!!!" how could he let me sleep like this!! Me: "Masilakhe!!!" I jumped up and looked for my shoes. My bag was nowhere to be found. I went out to the lounge. Me: "Masilakhe!" Sands: "hi mntase. He left. Told me to keep you inside the house." Me: "he wants to hijack my meeting. Oh my Goodness. I should've seen this coming!! Molo Tata, Unjani?" I was actually panicking inside. Rob: "I'm fine my angel. What meeting?" Me: "I had a meeting with Telkom today, and he.....he hijacked it! Sandile, please borrow me your car." Sands: "you're not even wearing shoes." Sibu: "andd....your hair sisi." Me: "just get the car ready." I ran to the bedroom and fixed myself. Ndathatha izihlangu. Rob: "masambe mntanam. Bayeke aba." we got into the car and he drove. I directed him to the office. Rob: "so wena no Lakhe niright? I hope you are. UStella noDez just try to by all means to make you upset." Me: "si-right tata. Lakhe explained what happened. He says its not his baby." Rob: "even if it is, don't leave uLakhe. You're his strength. Engekathi kuwe suka ecamkwakhe, don't ever leave his side. He loves you. And will do right by you. No matter what it takes. A good wife does not leave her husband's side. Ndiyayazi lento ndiyithethayo." Me: "ewe tata." that piece of "even if it is." bothered me a little. Kodwa ke Lakhe was sure and I trusted him. Me: "nimfumene umamu Stella ukuba Uphi." Rob: "uzoziveza ngexesha lakhe lothanda. I don't have the

time to run around chasing her." I kept quiet. As for a good wife never leaving her husband's side. We arrived at the office. I walked inside the building straight to the boardroom. There he was. Standing in my place. Presenting. MY proposal. Ooohhh he's gonna get it. He looked at me and smiled sweetly then sat down. Rob: "what's wrong?" Me: "he stole my work. He literally stole my entire work." Rob chuckled. Rob: "nizi goals yazi nina nobabini." Lakhe: "and I owe the credit to my beautiful wife. The woman who created this entire project. Sphosenkosi, please enter my love." I'm still going to yell at you. I walked into the room, where the board of directors clapped their hands. After the meeting I went to Lakhe's office and waited for him. He came in. Lakhe: "I can explain-" Me: "No You Can't!! You took

my work!!" Lakhe: "baby. You were tired. You fell asleep before I started showering." Me: "I wasn't sleepy. I was dizzy. Lakhe, did you drug me?" Lakhe: "that is just ridiculous! Ndizoyenziswa yinton lonto? The proposal is in your name. The credit was given to you. Mna bendisi speaker sakho. Love, ubungaphilanga, what was I supposed to do?" Me: "you have a smirk on your face." Lakhe: "I'm just glad to see you." Me: "thetha inyani Lakhe. What did you do." Rob: "he doesn't want you in the big projects because he wants you to get pregnant and work on less stressful things." he walked in. Lakhe: "Dad!" Rob: "Khange kuthiwe mandingayithethi." Me: "why didn't you just say so then!" Lakhe: "because u-stubborn. You're gonna try and prove to me that you can handle it and overload yourself with too much work. Spho, I want what's best for you. I don't want us to lose another baby. Can you please just do this for me?" Me: "I'm not even pregnant yet. You can't just make these decisions for me Lakhe!" Lakhe: "uxolo sthandwasam. I thought I was doing it for us. I want you to know ndizohlala ndikhona to be your support system. Like today, I'll always have your back." Me: "so what did they say? Did they like it?" Lakhe: "like? They loved it!" Sacrifices. Sacrifices. Good wife. Sacrifices. Me: "okay. You can take the project." Lakhe: "or.....we could assign a team to work with you." Good husband. Me: "and the pregnancy?" Lakhe: "you're right baby, you're not pregnant yet. I shouldn't be making decisions for you. I just panicked. I'm nervous." Me: "why u-nervous? There's nothing to worry about. If it gets too much, I'm handing it back to you." Rob's phone rang. Rob: "yes? Nguwe kaloku umntu ebevale i-phone. Inguwe ke phof othe kum mandize apha. I don't see what the fuss was about. Ufike Wenza izinto eziphantsi endlini ka Lakhe beku suppose Utheni kuwe?Ayik'funi naleyo. Awuyi ndlini ka Masilakhe Nokwakha, You've caused enough problems, lento nizama ukuyenza kunye nalontombi is not going to work. Stay away from that house. Undivile?" he looked at his phone. She Probably hung up on him. Rob: "son, I want to talk to you about something." Me: "I have to check on my

emails. I'm waiting for someone." Rob: "I'm going to ask Stella for a divorce." now I couldn't leave. Lakhe: "uhm....well tata, I can't ask why because we all know umama Unjani. Kodwa what made you decide this after all these years?" Rob: "Masilakhe, I'm not happy. I want to be happy. I turned 65 months ago, and I haven't been happy since you and your siblings left that house. My retirement fund paid out. I transferred the billion to Sandile. He's keeping it in a foreign account for me until the whole thing is finalized. I just need one of you to give my company to. She can't get all my hardwork when all she did was hurt me. Ndiyanicela bantwana bam. The last years that I have, I'm going to travel the world. I'm going to find someone out there even though akandithandi uzotyia imali as long as endivisa kamandi qha. I really don't care." my heart ached for him. These are the years you spend with your loved one and travel with them around the world. My God, a billion for retirement? What was this man earning? Gold bars? Phof STILL earning kuba une investment company that is still generating millions. Bethuna bayadlala abanye oosisi. Ndine worry ye-tax. I hope it doesn't chop hey. But siyamazi ke owethu umongameli xa edibene noSars. Lakhe: "you can sign the shares over to me tata. I'll put them aside for you until ugqibe le divorce. Uzomshiyela indlu at least? And a car?" Rob: "yes of course, both estates are in her name. Our holiday house in Italy also. The SUV is hers. And our savings together will be split." Me: "but tata won't the court want to know why ungena retirement or your company in your name?" Rob: "I'll tell them I want to start over. I want nothing that is going to bind me to her." Lakhe: "uzohlala Phi? During the process?" Rob: "I don't know yet." Dude you have a billion Rands. I would buy an island shame. Lakhe: "I have plenty of space. I want you to be safe, ndiyamthanda umama even though she drives me

crazy at times, kodwa There's no telling what one can do next in these situations." Me: "yeah. I agree." do you know how many people would kill just for R100 000 imagine a billion kengoku. Like 9 zeros. Number ye ex yakho fondini as your bank balance kuthiwe ambom'bulala. Lol. This is madness. Rob: "okay, let me get going. I'll see you guys at home." Me: "bye tata. And thank you." Rob: "its a pleasure my daughter." waphuma. Lakhe closed the door. Me: "a billion? What does your father do? I want his career." Lakhe: "its just a retirement fund babe. He started it when he was just 18. Saved at least R10 a month. He worked part time. Wafunda also. Started his first company when he was 22. From R10 a month to R20. Each year increased it with R10 until he was 30. Waqalisa ubhatala kengoku some heavy money. You must remember kwa R10 kdala was a lot. He managed to triple his savings, opened company number 2. Invested in company number 3. Which is owned by one of his best friends. Inintsi wethu lanto ka tata. He loves telling

that story, uzumbuze." Me: "plus he was a boxer." Lakhe: "that was his part time job kaloku." Me: "why don't you like mentioning that he was a professional boxer?" Lakhe: "urrgg..." Me: "you're jealous?" Lakhe: "I'm not jealous." Me: "can you even box?" Lakhe: "no. I can't. That's Sandile's talent." Me: "I would buy an island if I had a billion Rand." Lakhe: "I'd invest it and make it x 10. Probably buy a country." I laughed. Me: "You'd need like a trillion for that. 12 zeros." he laughed. Lakhe: "so close... Come here." he held my hands. Lakhe: "its about time we set a date. My dad is leaving soon as his divorce is final. I want us to be married before that. So that he can be happy and enjoy his life after." Me: "getting married while your parents are divorcing? Hayi Lakhe." Lakhe: "utatam won't mind ndik'xelele." Me: "your mom already hates me." Lakhe: "which means akazi emtshatweni wethu. Sorted.....we're not having a big wedding. Just something small and intimate qha. We've been postponing it for months now." Me: "you're right but I'd like for us to discuss it with your dad first." Lakhe: "great. Now my heart, its time for you to rest. I've got a surprise lined up for you." Me: "but I'm not done with work." Lakhe: "I'm the boss and I say you're done. Iza." he held my hand out the office building to the car. Me: "where are you taking me?" Lakhe: "ndiyokuthengisa. Khandik'xelele ba ndidikiwe nguwe?" I looked at him. Lakhe: "I'm kidding. Its a surprise baby." Me: "hun..." Lakhe: "what up." Me: "what if we adopted a baby first before we have our own?" he kept quiet. Me: "both me and you, plus your siblings, we know what its like to grow up kabuhlungu. We all got better lives. I want another child to experience it too. The better life that is." he was still quietly focusing on the road. Then turned into a driveway. Shambala Wellness Spa. Lakhe: "surprise." he drove in and parked the car. Me: "are you going to answer me?" Lakhe: "answer what?" Me: "what I just said to you. I suggested we adopt a child. Its like you zoned out that whole time." Lakhe: "I didn't zone out." Me: "so you heard what I said." Lakhe: "I.....did." Me: "what did I say?" Lakhe: "that we must adopt a baby." Me: "why?" he looked at me and smiled. Lakhe: "you look so beautiful. I think its a great idea." Me: "you didn't hear me at all, did you?" Lakhe: "I heard what you said baby. Masingene." we went in for our Couple connection massage.

Later that evening once we were finally home. I was in the kitchen preparing supper. Sands: "mntase." he walked into the kitchen. Me: "hey." Sands: "Unjani? You seem more relaxed." Me: "I am. Ndiphilile Sands, what are you looking for?" Sands: "my parents are here. They came with Desiree. They're going to discuss lento ye-pregnancy. I don't want you to feel awkward or left out because nam bendingayazi even Lakhe. Ndifunde i-situation quick bengekangeni emnyango. So I want you to be okay." I nodded. Me: "I

prepared enough supper for everyone so-" I heard yelling from the lounge. Lakhe's voice. Sands: "I think I should get back to put out the fire before the Dragon burns this house down." he dashed out the kitchen. I took out the special plates, ndazisula and carried them to the dining table. Putting one plate in front of each chair. I was actually eavesdropping, so I was moving very slowly but undetected. Lakhe: "kengoku mna ufuna ndithini ?" Stella: "son, you have to take responsibility for your actions-" Lakhe: "mama do you want to see my actions? U-sure?" Stella: "Rob, speak to your son." Rob: "and say what? If he denies this then what am I to do? Ndandiphi? Hayi wethu Nokwakha." Stella: "what the hell is going on here! Is it that skank of yours? She must be using muti on you to turn your back on your own family." now she was pissing me off. Rob: "uyithetha njani into enjalo Nokwakha!" Stella: "Masilakhe has never been like this! She's changed him! Esebenzisa umuthi! Uyathakatha!" ndava ngempama eshushu ingena emntwini. Lakhe: "get the fuck out of my house." Stella screamed. Stella: "Robert!!!!!!" Rob: "U N D I Y E K E mfazi ndini. I'm done!!! I am fucking done with you!" Stella: "WHAT!!! You can't be done Robert! You of all people!!? I have been struggling by myself to hold this marriage together while you were out on endless business trips with your whores!! I was the one who kept that house standing. Wena Masilakhe? You of all people!! I've been through hell and back raising you and taking you to doctors! This is how you thank me!!" Lakhe left the lounge esiya eroomini. Robert followed him. Sands: "mama." Stella: "ndiyeke Sandile!" she sobbed. Sands: "kodwa nawe mama u-unfair. How did you expect him to react uthetha lento uyithethayo? You didn't even give his fiance a chance, all you ever did was push her out of the way and make room for your agenda. Where do you get off calling other women names? Uyalibala mama. Lento uyenzayo is not fair and now You've taken it too far. All by yourself." he walked out. Now I was left alone with these two women. To be truly honest I felt sorry for Stella, why? Because I would never do this to my own mother. Sikhuliswe differently, and mna personally, this I did not approve of noba undiphethe kakubi kanjani lomama. Only God has the power to take, give and punish. Me: "ndingakwenzela i-tea mama?" she had covered her face with her hands ekhala. Dez: "I'll make it." I led her to the kitchen and showed her the cups, sugar and tea bags. Ndaphuma ndamshiya apho to make the tea. I went to the bedroom where Lakhe was with his dad. Rob: "Masilakhe, I don't care if I have to drag you back there, you're going there and apologizing to your mother qha. Andikhathali mna uziva njani. Ngunyoko lowa and andizok'vumela uphakamise isandla kumntu obhinqileyo. Ungayiqala kumamakho kucacile uzokwazi mos ubetha uSphosenkosi." Lakhe: "tata, uSphosenkosi will never disrespect me like this! You know she has my best interests at heart." Rob: "Ewe ndiyakuva nyana. Kodwa ke, funekile

uhloniphe unyoko." Lakhe: "uxolo tata." Rob: "andinamabele ke mna." Me: "your father is right Lakhe, what you did there not only hurt your mother but it hurt me. I can't let you disrespect umamakho naphi na. I would never do that to my mother. Nobody said agree with her, kodwa There's a respectful way of doing things. Your anger isn't cute Lakhe, izoqalisa ukuba yi-problem and andizomelana nalonto ke mna." Rob: "we're on your side here my boy" Lakhe: "andiyo boy mna tata." Rob: "ncoooh. My little baby boy." he hugged him. Rob: "uyathand ucengwa man. I wonder ufuze bani." Lakhe: "cela undiyeke torho tata." Rob: "hamba ke. Iya kumama." Lakhe breathed. Lakhe: "if I do this, you gonn tell them to leave." Rob: "deal." they marched together to the lounge. I followed shortly after them, not even half way through the passage I could already hear screaming.....

Chapter 59

I literally turned around and went back to the bedroom. Nobody has got the time for this. I had work to do. I took my iPad and went through my emails, I started looking through the changes that the director had made. My first task was to implement them onto my proposal and begin working on it. I took my laptop and started. An hour later, Lakhe came into the bedroom. Me: "how did it go?" Lakhe: "I said my piece. It was dad who got the beating." he sat next to me. Lakhe: "wenzantoni?" Me: "work." Lakhe: "you're already starting on this project? Baby, we agreed to appoint a team though." Me: "and we will, but I had a few ideas along with the ones that were emailed to me. I'm just going to rough draft it up quick qha." he sighed and looked the other way. Me: "don't be like that. This isn't even stressful. I'm calm." Lakhe: "you're working Spho. On our leisure time, wena you're working. While we have family problems, you're working. Ufuna ndithini?" Me: "babe, andiyithandi la fight yakho nomamakho. It bothers me. I cannot be around that." Lakhe: "I'm sorry Spho. It was rude of me. I shouldn't have done that, I just got so pissed off. How dare she call umfazi wam a witch? Phambikwam? Hayi naye she was begging for it suka. Its like cutting yourself and diving into the ocean, of course a shark is gonna fucking bite you." Me: "still. It was uncalled for. It was unacceptable and ayizophinda yenzeke lonto leyo. Uyandiva Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "yes ma'am." I saved my work on my computer and shut it off. Me: "sebemnkile?" Lakhe: "yes." Me: "senityile?" Lakhe: "no." Me: "why?" Lakhe: "Khangе usiphakele." he sulked. Me: "oh wow. In the middle of being insulted mna ndiyaphaka? If that's not witch behavior, I don't know what is." I laughed very hard at my own joke. Lakhe: "you think this is funny?" I shut my trap. Lakhe: "wena iyahlekisa kuwe. Yidyubhadyubha, its nice." Me: "but babes, we all know I'm not a witch, therefore andiboni reason yoqumba ndirhuqe umlomo." Lakhe: "mnxim." Me: "really? You're mad at me now?" Lakhe: "I don't

know why unje!" Me: "ndinjani?" Lakhe: "how do you let people treat you badly and still feel sorry for them! Its sick. Uyagula wena." Me: "I'm not even going to explain myself to you right now. Balambile abanye abantwana." I walked to the kitchen ndafika Sandile engaphakathi embizeni. Me: "Wenzanton?" he looked at me. Sands: "I was re-heating for you." Me: "really? With gravy on your chin?" Sands: "cela undiyeke wethu Spho. I'm stressed." he walked out of the kitchen. Me: "ni-special nina." ndiye ndakhuphela ukutya onto large bowls and took them to the dining room. Everyone came to sit. Everyone being Sandile, Rob, Dumi and Sibub. They had reappeared after the drama. I went to call Lakhe in the bedroom. Sabuya sazotya. Lakhe kept staring at his phone. Rob: "this is delicious ntombi yam." Me: "enkosi tata." Rob: "don't you think, son?" Lakhe: "hm? Yes, very. Enkosi baby." Sands: "can I get another plate please." Me: "sowugqibile?" Sands: "bendilambile." I dished up for him. Me: "Sibub, Dumi? Still okay?" Dumi: "yeah...I just have a tummy ache." Me: "Uphi uRebecca?" Dumi: "she went to fetch some of my supplies." Me: "ndikuphe iyeza lesusu?" he shook his head. Me: "why?" Dumi: "Spho, in case you haven't noticed, I'm in a wheelchair. It is a complete James Bond movie for me to go to the toilet, now ufuna ndihambise and make poopoo on myself? No. And I'm not wearing no diaper neither." Sandile was in stitches of laughter uSibub eziba ecaleni yena kusehla inyembezi. Dumi: "I'm glad some of us find it funny." Me: "Sandile! Stop it!" Sands: "I can't" he crawled out his chair and sat on the floor ephelile yintsini. Rob: "mnxim. Sandile. You're being an idiot." Sandile wasn't even trying to stop laughing, tears were streaming down his face. Sands: "I. Can't. Fucking. Breath." he cried. Dumi: "Fucking die." Sibub gave up and laughed out loud joining Sandile on the floor. Rob: "ni-childish bonanje." Lakhe: "what

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happened? What's the joke?" Me: "what joke?" Lakhe: "heee, everyone is dead laughing. What did I miss?" Me: "maybe your iPhone recorded it, why don't you check it babe." Lakhe: "really?" Rob: "khaniphakame nina nobabini!" Dumi: "Spho, can you please prepare all my meals from now on, I don't trust those two, apparently I'm their live broadcast of Comedy Central. Only God knows what they'd do to me just for a laugh." Me: "Sandile khayeke lento uyenzayo man." Sandile breathed with his eyes closed uthe wovula amehlo and looked at Dumi waqala ekqaleni. This time he got up waye roomin yakhe. Me: "don't worry about them abasoze bakwenze nto. Sibub, did you do what I asked of you izolo?" he stopped laughing. Sibub: "no ma'am." Me: "why?" Sibub: "bendinceda uDumi. Since Beks wasn't home." Lakhe: "Sibulelele, you need to start taking responsibility now! Sort yourself out. Make a decision ufuna ubaphi kakhle kakhle." Sibub: "I want to be here bhuti. I feel at

home apha, like a real family. If I go back to Durban I'm going to be miserable. I love being here." Lakhe: "then go get the rest of your things from Durban, and start clean apha. Stop lingering in between. Uxelele la tshomi yakho to attend his meeting tomorrow at 8am. Wena I'm booking you a plane back to Durban to sort out your affairs. Akhomntu uzohlala aphole inqiniba endlinam. My wife is the only one allowed to do that." Sibú: "yes sir." I collected the plates from the table ndazisa kwi dish washer. Me: "can I get you a drink tata?" Rob: "please mntanam. Double shot of whiskey, no ice." Me: "okay, Lakhe?" Lakhe: "Cognac. Same." Me: "Dumz?" Dumí: "just water please." Me: "Sibú?" Sibú: "I'll have a beer sisi." Me: "alright." I went to fetch their beverages, putting them on a tray ndazisa kubo. I went to my bedroom after ndakhulula ndayongena kwi shower. I wanted cold water to touch my skin. I stood under the shower head and it sprayed me with cold water from head to feet. I washed my body, rinsed and washed again. Ndaphuma ndingcangcazela taking the towel from the rack ndasula. I dried my hair with the towel ndakhupha hair dryer. I blow dried it thoroughly. Ugqiba kwam ndaya ezingubeni. Ndazithambisa ndangena under my blankets. The electric blanket was on and lightly heating my sleeping space so ubuthongo sebusiza. I heard the door opening. "Spho." I opened my eyes. Me: "hm?" he closed the door and walked to bed. Lakhe: "ulele baby?" Me: "trying to." Lakhe: "benihleka ntoni noSandile?" Me: "I wasn't laughing." Lakhe: "yeah but behleka ntoni?" Me: "I have no idea what was so funny kuye." Lakhe: "but nam ndifun uhleka." he got in next to me. Me: "I honestly don't think anything was funny. Dumí uthe kum uphethwe sisusu, so I asked if he wants me to give him something for isusu, then he said, that he's in a wheelchair and its already a James Bond movie for him to get to the toilet and now if uyahambisa he's going to make a poopoo on himself plus he doesn't want to wear diapers." Lakhe giggled. Me: "don't start." Lakhe: "poopoo." he laughed. Me: "you guys are childish." Lakhe: "I love this family. I just love all of you here. With Sibú, Dumí and my dad even. Then kubekho uMother Hen who makes sure everyone is fed and happy. You're amazing." Me: "thank you." Lakhe: "I think we should go for the adoption. I want my boy to grow up in a happy place like this." Me: "boy? No, ndifuna intombi mna." Lakhe: "hayi ke sisi, intombazana yile izophuma apha kuwe." I smiled. Me: "masilale." Lakhe: "no..." Me: "what do you mean no?" Lakhe: "ndigqibele kdala Uhlala nomntu wam ndimvise kamandi and just be happy." Me: "is that so?" Lakhe: "yes..." he kissed my neck tracing my shoulder with his lips. He came up and kissed my lips, him tasting like the Hennessy he was drinking and hint of cigar. He got on top of me, looking me in the eye. Lakhe: "I love you." Me: "nyani? I thought we agreed not to get attached." Lakhe: "ungandiqheli sisi please." I kissed his lips again. He slid down slowly to kiss my breast, sucking slowly on the nipple.

His tongue twirled around the nipple and his hand reaching in between my thighs. He fiddled his fingers on my pussy lips

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and finally found a way in, slowly pushing his middle finger inside. My eyes flustered closed letting him take me to a world of clouds and candy. He traced his kisses down my stomach and kissed my inner thigh. He pulled out his finger and licked it then placed his lips on me. His tongue danced on my clitoris electrifying me awake. I gasped for air to breath. His entered a finger again while sucking on me. Me: "baby...." I muttered. Me: "please take me" he stopped and kneeled on the bed. Stared at me in the half darkness. He came to kiss me on the lips and without me being ready penetrated his erection deep inside me. I squirmed under him like I was under a spell. He moved in and out holding my left leg up. After a few gentle strokes, he put my leg over so I lay on my side. Me: "Masilakhe...." I moaned. He drilled inside me with his eyes closed. Lakhe: " baby wam...." he breathed. I held onto the pillow and listened to his steady rhythmic strokes as he picked up pace. Me: "babbyyy...." I could feel my climax reaching. Lakhe: "Shhh...." Me: "slow down baby.....I'm.....gonn.....oooohhh." he held my thigh and stopped. Lakhe: "baby.....you gonna make me come wena...." Me: "baby don't stop kaloku." I flipped onto my stomach, lifting my ass north. Lakhe: "OOOOHH. Shhhhhhit!" he continued as slowly as possible. Me: "faster daddy." he went faster. Me: "right there.....yesss....yeesss!" Lakhe: "Spho.." Me: "baby!!!" Lakhe: "Oh fuck....." Me: "baby! Baby! Ohhhhh!!!!" Lakhe: "Spho..." he went harder. Me: "keep going daddy..." deeper. Faster.... My body was shaking uncontrollably. Me: "Lakhe!!" Lakhe: "yim.....bab....." I finally climaxed, cascading into an internal waterfall. He lay on top of me and held me tight, releasing everything. He sighed in relief. Lakhe: "my.....goodness." I was feeling more lighter even with him on my back. Me: "thank you baby." Lakhe: "thank me? Damn.....I almost died. Yuuuh. Andikwazi nophakama, I promise you." Me: "so you want to suffocate me?" Lakhe: "not my queen." he pulled himself out massaging my back with kisses and caresses. Lakhe: "I love this ass. I think its gonna send me to my grave." Me: "hahaaa!" Lakhe: "I was about to say something insensitive. Ndiyicinge just before iphume emlonyeni wam." Me: "thetha..." Lakhe: "no. Its not nice." Me: "at least you acknowledge its not a nice thing to say but now You've got me interested." Lakhe: "you have a big ass babe." Me: "that's not insensitive." Lakhe: "it isn't. I was going to compare it to a certain mountain." Me: "Ohhhh. Ndiyakuva kengoku. Unyansile. Get up, ima get you some water." Lakhe: "khaze nala bofile ye Hennessy man baby. Not the regular, I want The Paradis one please. Its curvy-" Me: "I know what Paradis looks like babe. Uzoyi'dash'a nganton?" he looked at me as if I was crazy. Lakhe: "what

is that?" Me: "mix. What will you mix it with?" Lakhe: "hayi akhonto ndizoyifak imix mna. I want to taste my alcohol as raw as my woman. Iza ne glass mntu wam nala ice bucket." I went to the bathroom to clean myself up ndathatha gown and slippers walking to the bar. There was nobody around the living area. Abanoba sebelele at this time? Its not even 9pm. I took the bottle, ice bucket and glasses then went to the room. Me: "baphi abanye?" Lakhe: "abekho elounge?" I shook my head. Lakhe: "they probably went out. Its Friday anyway." Me: "why doesn't it feel like a Friday to me." Lakhe: "because uzenza umakhulu. Take this." he gave me a double shot. Lakhe: "bottoms up bhabha." I drank the contents feeling the burn in my throat. Lakhe: "there we go. My turn." he drank his double shot. Lakhe: "do you want to go out?" Me: "with you? No." I laughed. Lakhe: "why?" Me: "uyathanda uqumba xa unxilile wena. You're not friendly at all." Lakhe: "I'm very friendly." Me: "no you're not." Lakhe: "hm." Me: "ufuna uphuma wena?" Lakhe: "not with you. No." Me: "why not?" Lakhe: "have you seen yourself? Kuzofuneka ndicimane nemililo ngenxa yakho. I'm not in the mood to fight." Me: "There's one place I know we can have an endless party." Lakhe: "oh? Where? Don't tell me

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Cubana." I switched on the music system in our bedroom. He lay on the bed and watched me do my dance endihleka. Lakhe: "awukwazi tu shame bab-" the song started and I became serious. Lakhe: "wow...okay." he sat up. I did DJ Bongz' Gwaragwara dance nditshintshe ebusweni ke phof. Lakhe: "tshesa baby. Woza!" ndaske ndatyhafa and laughed. Me: "what are you doing?" Lakhe: "ndiyi cheer leader yakho nje. Khazapha. I want you to do this on top of me." Me: "you are nasty yazi." Lakhe: "khonwabise umntu wakho wethu. Akhose Cubana apha." I got on top of him facing the other direction. Me: "like this ?" I twerked on him. Lakhe: "Yes.... lthi kancinci..." he placed his erection up. Lakhe: "Betha ke baby." Me: "awusengcole." I laughed. Lakhe: "hayi baby kudala undivimba tshi. I have to come up with tricks. Bounce my love." I slipped in deep. Lakhe: "oh....babbby." I looked back at him. He had his glass of Hennessy in his hand. I picked my ass up a little and pushed it back down then started a rhythmic pace. Lakhe: "ahhhh....my love...." he swallowed. I bounced faster on him, he held my waist. Lakhe: "baby.....woah...ima kaloku..." I stopped. Then started to grind on him in circles. Lakhe: "babyyy kaloku...." his voice sounding so merciful warming my insides. I could feel him getting more restless inside. I started bouncing up and down again. Lakhe: "Spho!" I went faster. Lakhe: "Sphose....nk...." I just needed to orgasm again, I could feel it coming ...so much better when I was quiet and just listened to my body. Lakhe: "Sphosenk....osi.." his hands digging into the sheets. Me: "oooohh!!!!" my body stiffened into a long happy climax.

Me: "damn..." I finally stopped and opened my eyes. I got up. Lakhe: "don't step on the floor. I broke my glass." I flopped onto the bed. Me: "that was so amazing." he kept quiet and just looked at me. Me: "what?" Lakhe: "you just fucked me like I was a little bitch." Me: "but you enjoyed every second." Lakhe: "my ego is bruised." Me: "you deserve to be spoiled and pampered like a little bitch. Being fucked and loved. Stop complaining." Lakhe: "cela undiphinde ke maybe ndizoyiqhela." I laughed. Me: "you're so sneaky." he kissed me. Lakhe: "I'm not going to stop until I see the sun bonanje. Uzolala ksasa shame. We should have more of these date nights." Me: "a date night is actually going outside. Awufun undisa eCubana wena." Lakhe: "nantsi Cubana nje ukuyo. Here's your Henny, nantsiya dance floor, ndim lo ndine vibe, There's music." Me: "une vibe ne baby?" Lakhe: "ewe ndine vibe. Ndi-vibey." Me: "hamba Bhut wase Cubana one-vibe." I went to fetch the towel. And so the night went on. Playing and dancing together like little kids...

I woke up the next morning. My head slightly throbbing nothing too much. Lakhe was snoring ecamkwam ude watipa shame. I got out of bed and walked to the bathroom to brush my teeth and wash my face. Ugqiba kwam I went back to bed, I really needed another nap. I didn't have any plans kakade for today. I cuddled my fiance and closed my eyes. Lakhe: "hm.hm...vuka sisi. We need to go to Bay West." he mumbled. Me: "its too early." Lakhe: "2 hours ke.." Me: "fine." I fell back asleep. Waking up over 3 hours later. Lakhe was on his iPad. Me: "morning baby." Lakhe: "you mean afternoon?" Me: "serious?" Lakhe: "its 12. Awulambanga? Come here." he kissed my forehead. Me: "I am.....or not. My tummy is feeling funny." Lakhe: "you're hungover. I'm gonn make you something. Iza." Me: "let me shower." Lakhe: "okay you'll find me in the swimming pool, unxibe costume." I went to shower ndabuya segqibile ukondlula ibhedi. I wore my bikini, took my towel ndaphuma phandle. Me: "Where's everyone else?" he shrugged. Lakhe: "made you breakfast. First sela this for bhabhalaza." Me: "it smells disgusting." I got into the warm pool. Lakhe: "just drink it. I'm fetching your food." I drank the nauseating beverage ndayigqiba. It made my tummy even worse. Lakhe: "ina ke baby." he placed the tray on

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the table. Lakhe: "come eat." Me: "I feel like ndizohambisa. This drink is horrid." Lakhe: "okay, you're being dramatic. Its not that bad." I got out the pool. Me: "I'm feeling worse than before. I just need bed. I'm tired." Lakhe: "okay. Ndizoza ne tray. I'm right behind you." I dried my feet and walked into the lounge. Sandile had finally reappeared. Me: "hey Sands." Sands: "hey. Why you looking at the ceiling uhamba?" Lakhe: "she's sick. Une bhabhalaza from

last night." Sands: "please do not remind me of last night." Me: "what happened last night." Lakhe: "nothing baby. He was drunk. Keep it moving." I walked to my bed, dried myself ndakhulula bikini ndakhwela phezkwayo ibhedi yam. Lakhe: "try a little nibble ubenokwazi ulala with something in your tummy. Okay?" I nodded. I nibbled on my food kancinci and finally had enough. Lakhe: "awufun amanzi?" I shook my head. He put the tray on the dresser and came to bed pulling me into his arms. Lakhe: "you're never like this nje baby xa ubusela ngezolo." Me: "its been a while." Lakhe: "that's true. Uxolo sthandwasam. I should've never made you drink like that." Me: "its okay baby. Just need nap now." he kissed my head. I fell back asleep in minutes waking up feeling a little better but it was late afternoon. Almost 5pm. Lakhe wasn't in bed. Instead there was a note on it stating he was at the mall and he would be back soon. I sat in bed for a little while. Why do people drink xa bezovuka and waste an entire day being sick? What's so fun about it? Oh wait...the fun is the drinking part, laughing and dancing.....feeling free. That was definitely fun. Lakhe: "my queen." he walked in. Me: "hey you." Lakhe: "feeling better?" Me: "yeah.." Lakhe: "perfect. I'm gonn make us a quick supper. Utata ufuna simse airport, he has a flight to East London uyolanda some of his things." I got dressed in my soft pink leggings and top. Me: "okay." he held my hand and walked me to the lounge. Dumi: " you okay?" Lakhe: "usele wagqiba Paradis wam by herself." Sands: "and she's still alive?" Lakhe: "MY wife. Not you." Sibu: "what's Paradis?" Sands: "Hennessy. Awuyibawel qadidi mntase? You'll feel much better." I shook my head. Lakhe: "yeka umntuwam Sandile. Uphi utata?" Sands: "he's on the phone outside." Me: "Rebecca?" Sands: "she's giving Boogie a bath. He was playing with the ducklings today, it was so cute, I have to take him for swimming lessons." Lakhe: "oh? Dogs get swimming lessons and my friends get pushed into the pool?" Sands: "YOUR friends. Not mine." Lakhe: "mnxim." he went to prepare supper. I sat on the couch ndibukele TV. Rob came inside and sat next to me. Rob: "I've cancelled my trip, I'm leaving on Monday." Sands: "great, so we can go to our thing ngomso?" Rob: "okay nyana. We'll go to the thing. Nontombi, uright? I didn't see you today." Me: "I'm okay tata. Just tired." Rob: "oh." he took out his S6 Edge. Rob: "I want you to do something for me." he whispered. Me: "sure tata. What is it?" Rob: "its between you and me." Me: "of course." Rob: "good, because ndifuna undenzele lanto ine pictures like uSandile." Sands: "I heard my name." Me: "eyiphi into tata ene pictures?" Rob: "like an account where I put my pictures on. He said it wasuhm...inst...something with a kilogram at the end." Me: "oh instagram?" Rob: "uyichanile mntanam. Khandifakele." I wanted to laugh but I didn't want it to seem as though There's something wrong. He actually skipped Facebook wafuna straight ulnsta. Number 1 tata. Lol. He gave me his phone and I

downloaded it then set up an account for him. Me: "there. Now you ready to roll. Take a picture, put a filter if you like, write your caption, and post it. You can follow me here." Rob: "nice. Uphi yena uLakhe?" Me: "he doesn't have any social network." Rob: "wow." Me: "nanku noSandile. Follow him." he clicked on follow. Me: "ungabuka ne pictures zakhe." Rob: "ndiyambona nanku. Hehehee." Sands: "tata." Rob looked at him. Sands: "did you just follow me on instagram?" Rob: "ewe tshi." Dumi: "he has instagram?" Sands: "Ewe! Nanku engu Robbie. Dad stop this." Rob: "hehee!" Sands: "I'm blocking you mna. Next thing you gonn learn how

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to commen- Really dad?" Rob: "khome wethu, uyabora ngoku. Sibuy what's your account name?" Sands: "its called a handle." Sibuy: "I don't have instagram tata." Sands: "I'm deactivating mine now." Rob: "mnoxim. I'm gonn find myself friends." I showed him how to upload pictures again. Lakhe: "nenzantoni?" Me: "instagram pictures." Lakhe: "andibizwa ngoba?" Rob: "Uphi owakho instagram ulindele ubizwa?" Lakhe: "owam ngulo ka Spho kaloku. We share our stuff." Rob: "but azikho pictures zakho." Lakhe: "I don't have pictures." Rob: "then you don't have instagram." Lakhe: "I'm not going to argue with you further about an app." Rob: "Awunayo kaloku." Lakhe: "babe, cela uzondinceda torho." Me: "alright." I walked after him to the kitchen. Lakhe: "dad's lawyer is drafting the divorce settlement. Meaning this thing could be done in about 3 weeks. If not a month." Me: "so quick though?" Lakhe: "my dad has connections everywhere. If he could be divorced by ngomso, he would be. But ke that's impossible, this the best his lawyer can do." Me: "okay ke." Lakhe: "I want us to get married Spho. Please." Me: "I already said yes baby." Lakhe: "next Saturday." I stared at him. Lakhe: "you can have the week off to plan what you need. We're doing small and simple remember? Maximum of 30 people." Me: "are we still doing it overseas?" Lakhe: "no babe. We don't have time. Inoske ibeyi honeymoon leyo. For now we can focus on our intimate wedding." Me: "and the traditional?" Lakhe: "No." Me: "we're not having a traditional wedding?" Lakhe: "hehake Sphosenkosi. I barely know anyone beyond my brother, sister and father. Kunye nomama. My uncle is an exception. I don't want a traditional wedding yet." Me: "but I do." Lakhe: "okay. Babes, we will do the traditional wedding later. Is that okay?" Me: "no Lakhe. Its not okay. If we're getting married. Sizotshata sigqibe qha. That's it." Lakhe: "okay fine. I don't know how you're going to manage to plan two weddings in one week. Your choice though." Me: "you're going to plan the first one." Lakhe: "Me? I just said-" Me: "You're marrying me. You're going to help me." he sighed. Lakhe: "can't we hire someone? I have work to do." Me: "uh huh. Of course. I can also hire you a

wife if you like. Two for the price of one." Lakhe: "Wow. Ndikwazelaphi ukwenza umtshato mna?" Me: "I know you're smart you'll figure it out. I have to call ma. Please tell your dad so that he can tell your family." I went to my bedroom to call my mother. After a lengthy conversation about our plans, Lakhe walked in. Me: "okay mama I have to go. We'll meet in the morning. Okay. Love you too." I hung up. Me: "hey babe." Lakhe: "uhm...I have good news and bad news." Me: "bad news first." Lakhe: "my father isn't on good terms with the rest of his family. Except utanci obviously. So bad that, he doesn't even want to talk about them." Me: "and the good news?" Lakhe: "he's going to try and talk to his sister. Everything is up to her now. If she agrees, then we can go ahead siyotshata ekhaya." Me: "okay. At least. So for now I'm going with mom siyokhangela a dress. Then, get a venue." Lakhe: "alright. Sibulele will fix the entertainment and Sandile will sort out the invitations." Me: "we're only having 30 people." Lakhe: "that's why its Sandile's job." Me: "catering." Lakhe: "I'll look through my list. I have a few companies that cater for my events. On Tuesday, get the decorations in order. Uhm....beverages as well." Me: "the priest. I'll ask my mom to sort that out, but you know what that means." Lakhe: "uhm....no." Me: "we have to sit with him for counseling for a few days." Lakhe: "I'm not doing that. I don't need counseling. Marrying you is not that traumatic." Me: "we're doing this the right way. We're inviting God into our family." Lakhe: "can we go eat?" Me: "baby? Please? Can we just do this the right way?" Lakhe: "I don't need counseling. I don't need to be fixed." Me: "fine Masilakhe." I walked out the room to go eat.

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2 days later, Tuesday afternoon. I was with my mom and Zintle shopping for the wedding. Its been 2 days since Lakhe and I had a proper conversation. His dad went to East London on Monday, which was yesterday and was due back today. I wasn't really in the mood for anything. I don't know if I even wanted to get married. Mama: "honey. Are you okay?" Me: "no.." Mama: "what's wrong?" Me: "I don't know if this is the right thing to do." Mama: "what?" Me: "Lakhe doesn't want to talk to umfundisi. He says he doesn't need counseling yena he doesn't need to be fixed." Mama: "love, its normal to disagree kwezinye izinto but its your job to make your husband feel comfortable. Assure him its not being spoken down to or being advised. Tell him its just spiritual guidance to help you both on your journey." Me: "Lakhe is stubborn mama. I can't." Mama: "you're stubborn. You're getting married in 4 days. Talk to him. This isn't healthy." Me: "ubungadikwa ngutata wena before you got married?" Mama: "definitely not. We couldn't keep our hands off each other. Spoke on the phone if we were apart for more than 20 minutes."

Me: "okay mama." Mama: "these dresses are gorgeous." Me: "pink mama? I'm not having pink at our wedding. Might as well just wear black and pretend someone's fashion sense just...." she stared at me. Mama: "you're pregnant." Me: "no. I'm just tired." Mama: "you're glowing. You're moody. You've been eating Lays all day." Me: "that's because you didn't let me have breakfast mama. I'm hungry. Plus I use the egg mixture you gave me for my face. I'm not pregnant." Mama: "is that why you moved the wedding sooner?" Me: "mama, utata ka Lakhe is getting divorced. It will be finalized in a few weeks and immediately after that he's jetting off to travel the world. Lakhe wants his father to be happy, but also wants him there on his wedding day. That's the only reason." Mama: "but why is he divorcing?" Me: "Andiyazi mama torho. My back is starting to hurt now. Can we go home?" Mama: "only after we choose dresses for your bridesmaid." Me: "just take the pink. We can go." she looked to the cashier. Mama: "we'll take the lilac dresses please. Two medium sizes." as she took out her wallet. I sat on the couch. Oko ndivuke izolo at 6, ran around till 8 ebsuku. Woke up again today, I've been on my feet all day. I was allowed to be tired. We finally left the store and caught up with Zintle ehamba noZingi. Me: "hey babe." Zingi: "hi sweetie uright?" Me: "I'm.....fine. Are you going tonevermind." I don't know how it slipped my mind that Zingi was pregnant and now her 5 month old tummy was poking out. HOW. HOW. How will she be my bridesmaid? Zingi: "I understand tshomi. Why don't you ask Lakhe's sister?" Me: "oh yes... Uyamazi?" Zingi: "yeah. Sandile told me about her." planning a wedding was stressful. I should've hired someone like Lakhe suggested but instead I was being stubborn. Proving to everyone that I could do it when in actual fact, I couldn't. Mama: "love, why don't you go home and relax ndigqibezele mna?" Me: "no mama, I want to help you." my phone rang. It was the groom. Me: "Hi." Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "yes?" Lakhe: "can you please fetch my dad. He's at the airport and andimva ncam ba Uthini." Me: "right now?" Lakhe: "yes. He just landed." Me: "ok." Lakhe: "thank you." I hung up. Me: "I have to go to the airport to fetch daddy in law." Mama: "you girls go, I'll finish up. Uyophekela utata mfazi. Go." Me: "okay mama. I'll call you later." Mama: "alright my angel." I went to the car and drove with the girls to the airport. The whole time bencokola kuhlekwa. It was funny how I was now missing my groom. I wanted his hug, I wanted to smell him. At the airport I found Rob waiting for me with a small suitcase. I was disappointed because I thought ukuya kwakhe eMonti uyolanda izinto zakhe. He came to the car wakhwela. Rob: "molweni." he smiles. Zintle: "molo tata." Zingi: "hello tata." Rob: "thank you my angel for picking me up. They're bring in my cars next week." Me: "its okay tata, I don't mind. How was East London?" Rob: "well...the same way I left it. Except this time my house is a ghost town. I had to let Vicky go." Me:

"oh no tata. Umntana wakhe is supposed to go to varsity in 4 months." Rob: "I've already said I'd take care of the schooling and supporting them. Vicky is taking a business course, I'm helping her start her own supermarket." Me: "oh? That's lovely tata." Rob: "yeah." he couldn't have just given her a lump sum? Either Mr Sobz senior was too generous or was guilty of something. We arrived at our house to my surprise uMasilakhe K. Sobukwe was home. Rob: "my sons." he went to the boys. Zintle: "tshomi. Khangе utsho uSibu ukhona!" Me: "I didn't? Why is he here khona?" Zintle: "don't act stupid!" Me: "no seriously, he was Durban. Maybe usandobuya." then there was Sandile and Dumi. Now thaaat was awkward. Well, for Zingi. Funny enough, the two guys were talking and laughing over some video on Dumi's ipad totally oblivious to us. Me: "anyone hungry?" Sands: "ubhuti made us food." ubhuti? I'm as confused, do not ask me. He finally looked up. Sands: "but I'm hungry again. Only your food makes me full mntase." Me: "I'm sure ubhuti has some left." Sands: "it wasn't even that nice-" Lakhe: "you licked the plate." Sands: "first of all, I don't lick plates. My tongue is strictly for pussy, food and talking. Secon-" Rob: "Thank You Sandile. We get the point." I went back to my friends. Me: "Zingi, you okay?" Zingi: "not really tshomi." Zintle: "yep me too. Sibu likes me, I do not want a relationship with him and I don't wanna be rude. I'll call us an Uber, is that okay?" Me: "I don't mind driving you guys home." Zingi: "babe. You're tired you're stressed. We understand. Just relax, drink some wine." Zintle: "yeah, we'll go check Fez at work and update him. Don't worry." Me: "okay." she contacted an Uber vehicle. I poured some juice in the mean time basela until the cab arrived. Me: "thank you guys for today." Zingi: "pleasure love. I'll see you tomorrow for the fitting of your dress. Then siyobona venue." Me: "okay. Don't forget teaching uZimi her steps please." Zingi: "definitely." Me: "Zintle uyaphangela?" Zintle: "yes babe. We'll meet each other Thursday for hair and nails.. Also the make up rehearsal." I hugged them goodbye and they left. I went straight to my room and flopped on my bed. I just needed a few minutes to myself and I spoke too soon because the door opened and closed. Lakhe: "you okay?" Me: "no. I'm tired. Back is aching." I was sleeping on my tummy. He sat next to me and massaged my back. Lakhe: "should probably take it slow." Me: "hm..." we kept quiet.....as usual. Things got like this ke. Just silent. Mnxim. Lakhe: "I'm sorry I acted like a jerk. I know how much this wedding means to you and you want it to be perfect. Its not going to be perfect, not in the slightest. Kodwa I'm going to do right by you, stand by you, support you and respect you. So the priest can counsel me on how to do all that." I blushed. Lakhe: "please don't tell me You've fallen asleep again. This is what you did when I tried talking to you last night." Me: "I'm awake. Come

here papi." I hugged him. Me: "thank you my love." Lakhe: "Te amo con todo mi corazón." Me: "what is that." Lakhe: "I love you with all my heart." he kissed my head. Lakhe: "have you eaten?" Me: "no, mama made me eat Lays all day and said I was pregnant." Lakhe: "hahaha!" me: "hleka." Lakhe: "xolo baby, So usister ka tata has confirmed. She and her daughters will be attending the wedding. There's only one issue." Me: "what?" Lakhe: "the traditional wedding is in East London." Me: "at your parents' house." Lakhe: "ya." Me: "I need more of that massage." he started massaging my back again. Lakhe: "dad will sort everything out. Everyone is driving to East London Saturday afternoon after our intimate wedding in the morning. Then Sunday senze ke the traditional." Me: "can't I fly? I don't think I can handle driving for hours." Lakhe: "me neither, I'll book us a flight." he lay his head on my pillow. Lakhe: "let's practice again making a baby." Me: "no. We'll practice when we're married." Lakhe: "hayi ke ngoku. Ndiyavinjwa again?" Me: "awuvinjwa niks." he stared at me. Lakhe: "awusengcole." Me: "have you heard from your mom?" Lakhe: "why would I hear from her?"

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Yinton endidibanisa naye?" Me: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "uxolo baby." Me: "she's going to be at her house obviously and how will that work for us? What if she refuses to let us marry pha?" Lakhe: "firstly that is my dad's house and he will sort it out. Besides, I doubt umama uzobakhona pha. Akavani nosister ka tata." his phone rang. Lakhe: "I wonder ngubani kengoku lo." he stared at the number. Me: "maybe its one of your other girlfriends." Lakhe: "ewe nhe? Maybe ushota nge tuition fees." Me: "phendula omnye umntana." Lakhe: "ndihleli nomfazi wam njena." Me: "who's about to strangle the shit out of you if you don't answer that call." he laughed. Me: "phendula." he answered the call. Lakhe: "Masilakhe Sobukwe speaking." he listened to the caller. Lakhe: "who am I talking to?" another pause. Lakhe: "what!!" I looked at him. Lakhe: "who told you this?!" Me: "what is it?" he hung up the phone and closed his eyes. Me: "what's wrong?" Lakhe: "I am going to kill her!!!" he roared. Me: "who? Why? Uthetha ngabani? What happened?" Lakhe: "some fucking newspaper is asking why I'm abusing the mother of my child! This bitch went to the fucking papers endazi ukuba I hate publicity!! I hate igama lam emaphepheni! She's going to bloody pay for this with her life so help me God!" Me: "bab-" Lakhe: "Don't." he got up and stormed out.

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Chapter 60

I ran after him down the passage only catching up at the lounge. Me: "Lakhe, calm down." Sands: "what's happening?" he stood up and pulled his brother. Me: "someone from the newspapers called asking about Dez's pregnancy." Rob: "what?" Lakhe: "khandiyeke man Sandile. Just let go of me." Me: "Lakhe, this is what she wants from you. A reaction. This Reaction is the one that will get the press talking. You need to think!" Lakhe: "are you saying I'm stupid Spho?" Me: "I said no such thing." Lakhe: "khandiyeke Sandile." Sands: "I can't. You going to have to go back to your bedroom and listen to your wife. This behavior isn't going to get you anywhere." he let go of him. Lakhe: "how could she do this?" Dumisani: "you could use it to your advantage though. Nobody knows you, therefore if you go out there you need to be the opposite of what she interprets you to be." Rob: "that's exactly true. So calm down. The next call to come through your phone yiphendule. Uthethe kakuhle." Lakhe: "I hate attention tata." Rob: "I know you do nyana. Kodwa you're going to have to be strong now. Its time for the world to understand how soft and considerate of a man you are." Sands: "soft?" Dumisani: "considerate?" Lakhe: "I'm none of that." Rob: "not with these two, but with Spho. Can we just admit that with her in your life You've opened up a bit?" Sands: "Yes. I agree." Me: "come...we'll deal with this in the morning. Right now you need to relax. If you're all over the place shoving your anger towards the media, you'll be giving her the win. Masibaphoxe for once babes." Lakhe: "I'll be in my room." he went to the bedroom. Me: "thank you." Rob: "just make sure he doesn't do anything stupid. Lakhe xa enomsindo is like a bull. Right now he needs to be tamed. The last thing we need is a scandal." I nodded and went to the bedroom. Lakhe was in the shower and it was on full blast, no doubt cold water because I couldn't see a trace of steam. I waited for about 10 minutes which is when he got out the shower. He dripped of water walking in the bedroom. Me: "my love." Lakhe: "you don't need to babysit me. I'm not a baboon." Me: "I wasn't babysitting. I just want my man back next to me. Besincokola kamandi apha. Why does Dez and her tricks have to come between me and you?" Lakhe: "I just don't like what she did. I'm allowed to be pissed off." Me: "yes...and I'm allowed to make you feel better. Come here." he sat on the bed. Me: "can I sing to President penis?" he smiled. Lakhe: "stop trying to seduce me. Andikagqibi nohlamba." Me: "you just got out the shower." Lakhe: "andikathambisi. So andikagqibi." Me: "I'll get your lotion and massage you nhe." Lakhe: "no I got it." Me: "can you please let me take care of you?" Lakhe: "No. You know I appreciate you with everything you do for me. I just don't feel like being taken care of. I want a little bit of me only, with you next to me." Me: "you're confusing me." Lakhe: "let me carry on doing me. Don't fuss. I'll be fine." he went into the closet eyothambisa wanxiba pajama yakhe and came to bed. I needed to go eat

something before I fainted. Me: "do you want anything? Sandwich? Juice?" Lakhe: "no baby. I'm fine." I went to the kitchen. Rebecca was cooking supper. I made myself a sandwich. Frying an egg first ndabeka pha esonkeni. With a leaf of lettuce, tomato, avocado, fried a patty. Becca: "I'll be done soon." I completely ignored her. Bendilambile and she was lying to me. I closed my sandwich ndazigalelela ijuice. I took my food to the bedroom ndahlala on top of the bed. He stared at me. Me: "what?" I chewed. Lakhe: "nothing baby." Me: "why undijonge olohlobo." Lakhe: "you're beautiful. Ndiyakubuka qha. How are you feeling?" Me: "much better now." Lakhe: "khandiphe. This looks appetizing." Me: "bite." he bit my sandwich. Lakhe: "why ungandenzeli mna?" Me: "I asked you specifically. You said no." Lakhe: "Khangе utsho ukuba uzokwenza into emnandi. You weren't specific." Me: "sandwich is being specific."

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Lakhe: "the ingredients weren't mentioned. The taste. Bendicimba mna uyokwenza peanut butter and jam sandwich." Me: "Wow." he ate my food ndashiyeka ndingenanto mna. Lakhe: "uxolo mntu wam. Ndizokwenzela enye." Me: "andiyifuni enye." I sulked. Lakhe: "ungade ukhale. Ufuna ntoni baby? Ice cream? Yogurt? A car?" Me: "khandiyеke wethu. Uthe uRebecca uzondiphakela." Lakhe: "bekunini ngoko ephaka. Let me check on her, hlala apha." he took the plate and went out to the kitchen. His phone rang ndayikroba. It was Babalo. I let it ring till it stopped ndayifaka ku silent. I put the phone in the drawer ndayivalela. The reason why I did that is because I know uBabalo. He wanted to go somewhere and drag uLakhe. I didn't want Lakhe to go anywhere. He needed to be inside this house to keep sane. He came in the room with the full plate. Lakhe: "nantsi ke baby." Me: "enkosi." I started eating. Sands: "bhuti!" he yelled from the passage. Lakhe: "what does he want now?" Sands: "bhuti. Your ugly friend is here." Are you fucking kidding me? Sometimes I forget he lives just next door. Lakhe: "I wonder ufunani ke yena." I kept quiet. He walked out the room. Again I took the phone and put it back on ringer ndayibeka on the dresser. Babalo can be so stupid. Lakhe came back in. Lakhe: "ufuna ndimkhaphe uya eJeffreys Bay." Me: "hm." he sat down. Me: "uhleleli ntoni kengoku." Lakhe: "I'm not going to Jeffreys bay. I'm tired kakade and not in the mood for them." my heart jumped in joy. Yena wonke athi hayi kwi friends? Its a brand new day shame. Me: "alright." Lakhe: "didn't you hear my phone ring?" Me: "I did." Lakhe: "kwathin ungaphenduli baby?" Me: "I have two answers for you. The first one is because asiphendulelani phone. We never agreed on that. Secondly, even if we did, I would never answer Babalo's call." Lakhe: "he bought you a cute bag though." Me: "his wife did that." Lakhe: "kodwa bab-" Me: "no Lakhe. I don't

like him and I never will. Just like you don't like Fez." Lakhe: "I never said I didn't like him. We just don't vibe." Me: "hm-kay." he took a bite off my chicken. Me: "are you having a bachelor party?" Lakhe: "as if I have a choice. Sandile won't hear none of it, inguye noDumi." Me: "they're lonely kaloku." Lakhe: "behlala kangaka kunye? Bathanda nje umosha abaya. Khona Uphu uKhanya?" Me: "I have no idea. Have you asked him?" Lakhe: "he almost chopped my head off when I did. I don't know why I even bother. He's not one for commitment. His relationships last a month tops." Me: "why is that?" Lakhe: "I shouldn't be telling you this, matter of fact I'm not telling you anything." Me: "khawuthethe wethu. Ndihleli ndikuphathela i-fillet." Lakhe: "hayi baby. Ugqibele kdala mos." Me: "undivalela kulendlu kaloku. Khathethe man." Lakhe: "fine. He has commitment issues because his girlfriend cheated on him." Me: "That's it?" Lakhe: "it was painful. They'd been together since high school. He was even thinking of marrying her." Me: "then what happened?" Lakhe: "the worst. Her parents arranged for her to be married to some guy. Sandile offered to marry her as well. Her family didn't accept him. Zange bamthande even before the whole thing. This girl ended up marrying the dude and unfortunately she was pregnant." Me: "with who's baby?" Lakhe: "the dude." Me: "so that's why she was getting married in the first place?" Lakhe: "ya." Me: "damn...that is hectic." Lakhe: "he couldn't sleep for months, got admitted to hospital twice for depression. He was beyond broken. I doubt he'll ever go back to that Sandile. He just doesn't have the heart anymore." Me: "but that doesn't mean all girls do that." Lakhe: "of course not. Kodwa ke." Me: "shame man." Lakhe: "but karma has a way of presenting itself. Akonwaba kungoku lamntana in her marriage. I see that dude most of the time and uyasithanda istrato namacherrie amancinci." Me: "well obviously, watshatiswa engekagqibi estratweni." Lakhe: "yeah well." he took his phone. Lakhe: "I've got a meeting tomo- I mean we...we have a meeting with a Telkom representative." Me: "so you can show him the progress I've made? Underline I'VE."

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Lakhe: "subanjalo. You're obviously invited-" Me: "to my own meeting? Presenting my own work? I'm invited? Really? Thanks love. Remind me to RSVP." Lakhe: "okay. The only thing that should go with your sarcasm is a shot of cognac. Would you like some?" Me: "only if it has my hard work sweat in it. On the rocks." Lakhe: "I'll take that as a no." Me: "admit that you want to steal my contract." he looked me dead in the eye. Lakhe: "I want to steal your contract." now what? I didn't expect him to really admit it. I thought we'd argue a bit! Why does he always change my dialogue! Me: "why!!" Lakhe: "because I want something challenging and fighting with you is challenging."

Hence contract theft. Its a huge deal." Me: "but its MINE." Lakhe: "Ours." Me: "you're trying to get me mad. I see what you're doing. I got you. I saw you looking at your phone receiving a text! You received a text! You want me to be angry so that I can argue with you, sixabane and you can walk out and go have fun with your stupid friends! You planned this. I know you." Lakhe: "are you done?" Me: "just go! I see that I'm depressing you. Hamba netshomi yakho! I don't care." Lakhe: "are you done?" Me: "I'm done!! Go." Lakhe: "first of all, uyandichaza because you don't even know why you're mad. You're just putting things together in your head and convince yourself you got it. My love, you don't. Firstly, you own part of my company, I keep telling you to sign those papers, awufuni, not my problem. Secondly, if OUR company signs a contract, it belongs to the both of us and our team. Not just one individual. Thirdly, we are getting married in three days. You need to believe in sharing your things, you need to stop being selfish and throwing your toys out when you want to make a point. Fourthly, if that's even a word, I didn't receive a text. I received an email. And last, but definitely not least, its from the jewelry company that is carving our rings yesterday I got a sample of your finger print to be carved on mine, and mine on yours. They will be ready by Thursday. Is there any comment you have reserved?" Me: "I'm sorry." Lakhe: "pardon me? I didn't get that." Me: "I said I'm Sorry Lakhe. I was wrong. I don't know what's wrong with me today. I just get so frustrated. I yelled at mom, I wanted to sleep. I can't sleep but I'm tired. You make me so mad and I hate your friend and everyone is getting on my nerves!" I cried. Lakhe: "I'm sorry baby, I didn't mean to make you cry. Please don't cry. Shhh." he hugged me. Me: "I don't want to cry! Its the tears that keep coming out." I wailed. Lakhe: "love, I'm serious. Please stop crying. Uyamazi utata uzongena apha and think something is wrong. You know him. Thula baby." Me: "okay." I wiped my tears. Lakhe: "I'm sorry mntuwam. I didn't mean to make you cry." Me: "its not you. You're right. I'm selfish. I don't know why all of a sudden. I've always shared my things." Lakhe: "well I don't blame you. The last time you shared your things, someone betrayed you. I understand that." Me: "I think I want to sleep now." Lakhe: "masilale." he put the plate on the table and we got into bed..

Thursday morning, I had lots to do. My hair, my nails plus our spa treatment. The dresses were ready. The venue was booked. Pastor was briefed, yesterday we had gone to the church after Lakhe's big meeting. The catering company was coming to our house later on to show us and let us taste the dishes we asked for. Mama fetched the decorations. Me: "mama. Awunayo grandpa? My head is spinning." Mama: "sela amanzi. Andinayo grandpa." Me: "you always have grandpa mama." Mama: "utatakho told me to stop using it." Me: "any headache pills?" Mama: "nope." Zintle: "I think I hav-"

Mama: "the water will be just fine. Sela." I took the water and drank. We were at the salon kwaqalwa ngomama since she had to go do final arrangements. She only did her nails intloko ezoyiyenza ngomso. Zintle did her hair so long. Nosi already had hers done in Cape Town. I didn't want to change mine,

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just washed and dried it. Zingi was at Lulo's school for a meeting. I did my nails noZintle and we finally headed out for the spa. My mother went her own way for the arrangements. At the spa, Zintle ordered herself champagne I had water because even nangoku I was still dizzy. We had our massages. Zintle: "did I do something wrong tshomi? Umamakho wandixhaya sana hehaa!" Me: "you did nothing wrong babe." Zingi arrived. Zingi: "girls..." Me: "hey hun. Unjani?" I tickled her tummy. Zingi: "hungry and tired." she sat on the chair wakhupha pie watya. Zintle: "kodwa tshomi ndiphoxelweni?" Me: "to cut a long story short, she thinks I'm pregnant." Zintle: "well, are you?" Me: "no." Zingi: "why no? Awulali noLakhe Dan?" Me: "I do." Zintle: "you use a condom?" Me: "no." Zingi: "are you on contraceptives?" Me: "no." Zintle: "then how can you Not be pregnant?" Me: "I just know." Zintle: "have you ever been pregnant before?" Me: "that's not even the point." Zingi: "you should take a test." Zintle: "yeah. Your boobs look bigger." Me: "you're a perv. I'm going to take a test and prove to you both that I know my body. I am just exhausted." Zingi: "as long as you take the test. I'm cool." Me: "can anyone give me a headache pill?" Zingi: "not until You've tested." Me: "mxim." after our massage. We had foot rubs and pedicures. Zingi: "so sizokwenza ntoni ngomso guys?" Me: "nothing too wild please." Zintle: "nothing too wild? Do you realize that your husband will be covered in strippers wena you're talking about nothing too wild?" Me: "actually I overheard uSandile and Sibuy talking. They're just having a braai at the house. Lakhe said he didn't want anything out of order." Zintle: "Lakhe is too strict. He should've been a priest." Zingi: "so that means we can't have strippers?" Me: "why would we want strippers?" Zintle: "You've never been to a strip club before?" Me: "to do what? That place is for lonely men." Zintle: "lonely rich men. We're going to a strip club." Me: "what?" Zingi: "yaayii!!!" Me: "erh....hold on." Zintle: "love, accept it. Unless you want us to kidnap you." Me: "I wasn't raised like this." Zingi: "none of us were. We're just born this way. You'll love it hun. Promise." heee ndizothi ndiyaphi kumama bendikhe ndamva ethetha izinto ze kitchen party nje? After our treatments, I went to drop the girls off. Then drove home. There was a white Polo Vivo parked in the driveway. Endaweni yemoto yam. This, this very this, made me extremely agitated. I can't. I just can't. I switched off the engine ndayongena endlini. Rob: "oh there she is." "umakoti ngowethu. Siyavumaaa!!!" this lady

sang and sang and saaang until my ears vibrated. I just stood there with half a smile and half a frown. Could she just move her car please? That's the only thing I'm asking for. Lakhe: "love. Are you alright?" I looked at him. He could tell there was something wrong. He touched my forehead. Lakhe: "haibo Spho. You're burning." Me: "I'm fine. Molo ma." this lady came to hug me and a younger version of her came too. Rob: "this is my sister, Nomfundo and her daughter, Vuyiseka." Nomfundo: "hello sisi. Awusemhle sanqa. You are so much beautiful." exactly the way it sounds in your head is how she said it. With a twang. Me: "enkosi mama. Mna ndingu Sphosenkosi." Nomfundo: "ndivile sanaz." Vuyiseka: "ngeyipi le bonding." she touched my hair. I moved away from her. Me: "its a Peruvian weave. Mandiyopheka ma-" Nomfundo: "sephekile uVuyiseka my love. Come in the sit with me. Ndifuna ukwazi." I looked at Lakhe, he held in giggles. I went to sit with my aunt in law wandincokolela ke telling me about herself. Vuyiseka was oddly quiet behind me. Okay, firstly what was she doing behind me? I turned around ndabambeka ngenwele. Oh my God. She was playing with my hair! Me: "what are you doing?" Vuyiseka: "zintle ezinwele." that was not the question. Nomfundo: "hayi man Vuyiseka yeka inwele zomnye umntana!" Me: "no its fine mama. Awufuni uyokwenza eyakho intloko?" she beamed at me. She was really beautiful with big brown eyes and white straight teeth. I checked my time, it was still early. Me: "okay masambeni mama." Nomfundo: "ithi Dubs

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wethu mfazi. Uske Ube formality wena." I chuckled. We got in the car and drove to the salon. So they weren't so bad. My irritation had gone away and I'd reserved my selfishness for people who deserved it. These two ladies definitely didn't. Me: "unangaphi mavuyi?" Vuyi: "ndina 18 sisi." Me: "18..... Wenza ntoni kulonyaka?" Vuyi: "ndisahleli sisi." Dubs: "ugqibe ufunda kulonyaka upheleleyo. Wafumana ke ezo piece job apha naphaya. Besando apply'a for i-intention for January." Intention? To do what? I was a little confused. Me: "intention?" Vuyi: "ewe. Ndizoba yi intern." Oh she meant an internship? Me: "Ohhh! That's lovely. For eyiphi company?" Vuyi: "Jason & Kyle Inc." Me: "iphi lo company?" Vuyi: "ise monti." I had a question... Me: "dubs. If I'm not mistaken, i-family ka tata ka Lakhe is in Durban?" Dubs: "ewe mntanam." Me: "ngabezulu." Dubs: "Defs." Me: "but, wena notata nithetha isixhosa." Dubs: "ndemnka ekhaya emveni koba ubhuti emnkile. Ndazohlala apha ebhayi for few years, then ndaya eKapa, ndaya eMonti after 6 years. Oko ke ndihlala khona. Family yethu is very too much complications. Ngelinye ixesha kubetter uziqalele eyakho into. Ukhubone?" there was too many secrets with the Sobukwe household. Me: "I see." I stopped the car at the salon entrance. Me: "at least basavulile." we went inside. Me: "so

nizokwenza ntoni entloko." Dubs: "ndifuna ibob ene highlighting engathi iblond. Not exactly blond. Something like gold but not too gold." she had a light complexion. So, I was convinced it would suit her. Me: "Sharly, can she get a highlighted bob? With frontal closure." Sharly: "sure." Me: "Vuyi wena uzofakela ntoni?" she shrugged. I know she was being shy because uyaqala undibona but she wanted my hair. Me: "16 inch Peruvian lace. Straight." Sharly: "same grade?" Me: "yeah." they did their hair while I waited on the couch. Bendinayo nendawo eyozelayo. So I took a young nap. Sharly woke me up when they were done. Young nap huh? I paid and got up. Me: "thank you so much Sharly. Anisebahle. Do you like your hair Vuyi?" she nodded. Me: "awusemhle dubs. Ingathi uzovela kwi TV." Dubs: "enkosi mntanam wethu ngosi spoiler kangaka." Me: "its a pleasure dubs. I'm just glad that ukhona. With all the drama that's been happening, at least There's someone from family ka Lakhe that I can talk to." Dubs: "idrama? Yantoni ngoku?" Me: "umama ka Lakhe. She hates me badly." Dubs: "ooooh. Ungandixeleli ngoNyela mna. Elagqwirha libhabha ngomtshayelo emini. Us'hlangu. Matshayela, istokhwe socitha. Sies. Undenza naar lantombazana tshongo mlomo ingathi lisele. Yeses. Ndatsho ndakhonyuluka." Me: "Wenza izimanga man. Ubizana noDez i-ex ka Lakhe endlin xandikhoyo. Now uze naye apha ebhayi last week caba unontombi umithi kuthiwa kumntana ka Lakhe." Dubs: "limenemene lamfazi. Unezigigaba after zigagarbs yena." I giggled. Dubs: "khajikele apha kwa Spar love. Ndifuna uthengela uVuyi i-pads." I stopped at Spar sayongena sonke. I took a glimpse of the pregnancy test. Then took it ndakhawleza Uyibhatala and shoved it in a plastic bag. I waited by the door innocently. I just didn't want anyone's hopes up. This was to prove a point. Nobody had to know endlini. Dubs: "done." When we arrived at home, everyone was in the lounge kuncokolwa. My parents were here too. I ran to my daddy and hugged him. I'd missed him so much. Khaya: "hello my baby." Me: "hi tata. I missed you. Umsebenzi wakho uyandishiya ngoku." Khaya: "Never. Ndishiywe nguwe. You got yourself a new dad." Me: "still miss you." I took a long whiff of his scent. Rob: "daddy's little girl." Khaya: "forever and always." he smiled. Rob: "abam abantwana literally can't wait to be out of my sight. Ndithi ndifika ndibuzwe ndihamba nini." Khaya: "you should've just had one. Azokwazi ubane sthukthezi akukhumbule." they laughed. Lakhe: "Spho..." Khaya: "ahh..There's my second one." Lakhe: "molo tata." Khaya: "what's wrong?" Lakhe: "we forgot to do the step." Me: "its Thursday." Khaya: "kuzofuneka niqale tonight and do the whole of tomorrow. Practicing. Its a small ceremony. With a small venue. Its not much of

a big deal. Ningazihluphi kakhulu." Me: "I'll call Fez to come over asincede."
Lakhe: "really? Why him?" Me: "he's a good dancer. And he's free." Lakhe: "I don't mind paying." Me: "I meant free tonight and tomorrow. Of course you'll be paying." Lakhe: "Oh." I looked at the door. Wow. Look what the donkey dragged in. Stella. On another note, Nosi had arrived. Me: "hi Nosi!" she came to me and we hugged. I don't understand why Stella keeps popping up like toast. Rob: "what do you want?" Stella: "I came to drop off my daughter. I see the little family has finally reunited. Was this what you wanted Robert?" Rob: "Stella, can we talk outside please?" Stella: "outside?? Hell no! Since we're all a family. We should all be talking inside! Right?" Lakhe: "what's happening?" Rob: "Stella please..." Lakhe: "tata? Kwenzeka ntoni?" Stella: "you forgot to tell your son? Or chose not to?" Rob: "Nokwakha ndiyakucela. This is not the time." Stella: "when is the time? Give me a date or email me. So I can clear up my diary." Rob was clearly nervous and Stella knew this. She was playing into it. Tormenting him every way possible. Why was Dubs quiet? Letting her brother be emotionally abused like this? Rob: "I just want us to talk....please?" Stella: "Robert. I've kept so much of your secrets. And yazi, right now, I've actually come to realize, you're a dirty old man. You've been dirty. Your money. Your estates. Your companies. D I R T Y. Just like you. No matter what you do, no matter how many expensive clothes you buy, colognes you put on, shampoo you use. You can be Versace all day long and Givenchy yourself at night, but you're still gonna stay dirty." he moved closer to her. Stella: "don't you dare touch me." Lakhe: "mama, ndicela uphume endlini yam. Please. You're making everyone uncomfortable apha because Uhleli uvisa wonke umntu kabhlungu. Please leave." Stella: "will you tell him or should I?" Rob: "Nokwakha...ufuna ntoni? Name it." Stella: "cancel that divorce." Rob: "can we please talk outside?" Stella: "no." Lakhe: "TATA!!" Rob: "What!!" the look on his face was scary...anger.... Or frustration? Did Stella find out about the billion? About the company? How? Lakhe: "what is she talking about?" Rob: "nothing!" he walked to Stella and grabbed her arm. She pushed him away. My father held Rob. Khaya: "its not worth it." Rob: "Nokwakha please listen to me-" Stella: "when I met your dad. Masilakhe Sobukwe." she chuckled. Stella: "quite funny actually. Do you know the story he told you about his family is a lie?" Rob: "Nokwakha! Khayeke lento uyenzayo!!" Stella: "he didn't have a misunderstanding with them. He betrayed them." Rob: "Stella please." Stella: "Robert left home, 19 years ago." everyone in the house was dead quiet. Stella: "nobody gets it? No? Wow. With plus minus 15 degrees and diplomas in one room." Lakhe: "mama. What relevance is dad leaving home got to do with us? Sithini thina?" Stella: "my sweet beautiful boy. Your father was kicked out by his family because he slept with his younger sister. Nomfundo. Your beloved aunt. I'm sure this one

wasn't expected." she stared at Vuyiseka. I felt light headed. Something was weighing me down. Khaya: "princess?" I could slowly feel my body dissolving to the floor then closed my eyes.

Chapter 61

I woke up and looked around me. Lakhe was next to me and uDubs. I suddenly remembered what had just happened. Except why I landed in bed. Me: "I collapsed again didn't I?" Lakhe just stared at me. Dubs: "ewe sisi." Lakhe: "is there something I should know?" Me: "like what?" Lakhe: "I don't know. You tell me." he knew something and was waiting for me to lie. Luckily Rob and Khaya came inside the room. Rob: "Unjani nontombi?" Me: "I'm fine tata. Wena uright?" Rob: "I'm fine." Lakhe: "tata, what is umama

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talking about? Is this true?" Rob: "yes. Ndicela siyeni elounge sonke so I can explain myself." Lakhe: "yes. Please. Because I'm very confused now." we all went to the lounge. Sandile, my mother, Sibuyi, Dumi, Vuyiseka, and Nosi were sitting there quietly. Rebecca was in the kitchen. Sahlala phantsi. Mama: "uright Spho?" Me: "I'm okay mama. Just the headache again. Uphi uStella?" Khaya: "she's gone." Sands: "tata kum andicacelwanga yilento ugqibo kwenzeka. Ndicela for 20 marks undi explain'ele." Lakhe: "tata, you said to me you left home at an early age. How come ngoku early age is 46 years? How?" Sands: "and tata uyenza njani lento? Endlini kokwenu? I mean your sister? Really tata?" Rob: "I left home young like I said. I had my boxing career, ndigqibo funda also. I went to live eMonti with ubrother ka tata to focus more on the boxing. I'd never met uNomfundo before, she was my father's daughter and ebehlala klo mamakhe. All this time I thought it was only me and ubrother wam kutata. Qho xandisiya endlini sometimes ndifike utata engekho or ezohamba. Engafuni ubuzwa uyaphi. Anyway. Yahamba iminyaka, I had my companies. I was focused. I had uLakhe and uSandile. Often out on business trips and I met uNomfundo. We got involved for a few weeks then she disappeared on me." he kept quiet. Sonke phof we were quiet. Rob: "I'd fallen in love with her." he whispered. Rob: "I was ready to lose everything I had. I just couldn't find her." Sands: "awkwaaard..." he muttered. Rob: "I went back ekhaya a couple of months later ndiyoxelela utata. I needed his advice. I told him everything at first utata wasn't surprised that I wanted to leave my wife. Kodwa he didn't know for who. Or didn't realize ndithetha ngalomntu amaziyo. After spending a few days ekhaya utata andixelele that he's expecting a child. So mna ndicinge ukuba umama is pregnant. Which was a little impossible but nonetheless I congratulate him, thinking maybe he's taking a second wife. The next day, the child arrived

ephethe izinto zakhe. It was her. I can't begin to explain the pain that I felt. Utata put two and two together waqala uyiqonda and threw me out. He disowned me because of his faults. Had I known I had a sister, I would probably have looked for her. That was 19 years ago and I'm not allowed ekhaya." Sands: "so do you still have feelings for uDubs?" Rob: "not in that way. No." Lakhe: "so then how does umama know all this?" Rob: "when I went back to my house obviously I couldn't pretend anymore. Bendinomsindo and didn't want anything." Lakhe: "I remember that time. I was in grade 9. You never attended any of my sporting events. Always claimed you were busy or sick." Rob: "ndiyaxolisa nyana...your mother called ekhaya and they told her that I'm a disgrace to the family and betrayed them and so forth. She was beyond angry." Lakhe: "why didn't she leave?" Rob shrugged his shoulders. Rob: "who knows what happens in Stella's head?" Sands: "so Dubs you never knew about utata?" Dubs: "bendiyazi ukuba owam utata unabo abanye abantwana. Wathi ndizobabona xa ixesha livumile. He never call Rob ngeligama silaziyo. After ndibone uRobert kokwabo wagxothwa bendiyazi nam ndizolandela kuba ndisandoziqonda ukuba ndimithi umntana wakhe. Ndingafunanga uxabanisa usapho lwabo and ndabe sendixelelwe kuba utshatile, ndathatha okwam ndayoziqalela ubomi obutsha." Me: "you never told him you were pregnant?" she shook her head. Dubs: "bendi 4 months pregnant and bendingafuni umkhupha umntanam. Ndahlala ke ndodwa ndisenza piece job until ndabeleka. Kukho omnye usisi obendincisedisa ngomntana ndihlala naye. Wa-mover waya ejoburg mna ndathi Andifuni ndaya ekapa, izinto azandihambela kakuhle ndabuyela eMonti wafunda pha umntanam wagqiba." Sands: "so kengoku tata uziva njani unomntana? Your own blood." Rob: "all of you are my blood Sandile. I'm also happy that I finally got to meet her even though bendingazi ukuba ukho. Why didn't you tell me?" Dubs: "hayi kengoku. Bingeyo good idea lonto. Fact remained that siyazalana. Wena buzofuna ubayi family and bingasoze

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isebenze lonto." Rob: "at least I would've been happy." he got up and walked out. Khaya: "we all make mistakes in life akhomntu uzalwa perfect. There's nothing wrong. Sonke siseyi family and none of this should make us feel any different." Me: "I'm not feeling well." I got up and went outside to Rob. He was standing in the garden alone. I could tell that he was really ashamed of what he had done. Me: "its okay tata. We all understand. You don't have to be feel bad about it. It was 19 years ago." Rob: "it feels like it was yesterday Sphosenkosi. I despise myself. Ingathi ndibulele. How could I do this to my own blood? Its as though I forced her. I can't forgive myself." I hugged his arm. Me: "its okay. People have done worse things in life. The only way they

could cope was if they faced it head on instead of hiding away from the world. You're a strong, brave man tata. It took guts to sit there and tell the truth when you don't have to explain yourself to anyone. You're honest. You're apologetic and that makes it forgivable in my eyes. Anyone who judges you is nothing short of a devil themselves." he chuckled. Rob: "you're a great daughter. I wish I'd just had one of you and stopped. My life would've been 10 times better." Me: "thank you tata. You're also a great dad. Abantwana bakho appreciate you and love you just the way you are. There's nothing to be afraid of, the whole family has your back here." he wiped his eye. Me: "don't cry." Rob: "I'm not crying. Just an eyelash stuck in my eye." Me: "tata. You barely have eyelash hair. Come. Stop fibbing. Let's have our lovely dinner and plan your son's wedding." Rob: "speaking of wedding. Any chance you guys could speed up grand daddy time?" Me: "you're still young tata. You've got enough time. Come." I pulled him back into the house. Everyone was busy with the setting up and carrying on as normal. Me: "see? All forgotten. You have a new daughter you need to get to know." Rob: "thank you my princess." I smiled. Princess has two daddies. :D

Lakhe stood behind drinking his cognac. He was in a bad mood. I could Feel it. Me: "hey baby." Lakhe: "what did you say to him?" Me: "he just needed some support. Nothing much." Lakhe: "oh? Support? I need a little support understanding whether I call this girl my cousin or my sister. Dad said he couldn't have kids. Now all of a sudden he has his own blood child." he emptied his glass down his throat and stared at them viciously. Me: "baby....I understand why you're mad but your father loves you very much. You're his first son an-" Lakhe: "your little pep talk might work on him. I'm not stupid, he is over the moon that he had a child with the love of his life." Me: "but they can never be together. He knows this-" Lakhe: "but they have a child. Its not just a child. Its a love child. His blood." Me: "so you're jealous?" Lakhe: "I'm not fucking jealous." I scanned the room for Sandile and I found him walking over to us also with a glass in his hand. He stood next to his brother looking equally unhappy. Sands: "so what now? We're just garbage." Nosi: "look at her squirming and giggling at his jokes." Lakhe: "he's not even funny." Sands: "sometimes." Nosi: "so I'm not his little girl anymore." Lakhe: "we're nothing of his." Sands: "replaced like dish washing liquid." Me: "guys-" Sands: "don't give that 'He loves you very much' speech. We're not him." Me: "you know what? Fuck all of you. If you have a problem with your father, TELL HIM!!!!!!" I screamed. Everyone in the house stared at me. Lakhe: "it looks like you're the one with the problem. Why are you yelling?" Rob: "what's wrong?" Sands: "nothing dad. Sikuphazamisile? Leisure time?" Rob: "what are talking about?" Lakhe: "we didn't mean to interrupt you and your love child." Rob: "my What?"

Nosi: "yeah dad. We apologize." Rob: "okay, I see we have a problem now."
Sands: "a problem? Where?" Lakhe: "Spho the one with a problem. Maybe, you know, MAYBE you could huddle up in a corner and whisper about it and hug and advise each other to shut the rest of us out of your lives.

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Our perfect Daddy Daughter couple." Rob: "Masilakhe, are you drunk?"
Lakhe: "andinxilanga tata mna." Me: "so I have a theory this anger is 70% directed to me." Lakhe: "You couldn't have been more wrong. Why would I be mad at you? Huh? You're perfect. Daddy's little girl along with love child. Rhymes like Drake's verses on a hit single." he took his keys and walked out.
Sands: "70% of that is you." Rob: "Sandile. Get your brother back in the house."
Sands: "why? So you could try and butter us like bread? No thanks dad. You can spend as much time as you like with your baby girl. I'm out." he walked out too.
Nosi: "don't even try me. I'm not here for you." she took out her iPhone and started clicking on it. Me: "ignore them. Sooner or later they'll come crawling back to you. Go to Vuyi. She hasn't had a dad for all her life, your focus should be on her. These 3 are my babies for the night, I'll fix them."
Rob: "enkosi mntanam." I went to the kitchen for a snack. Rebecca was taking the food to the lounge. After eating our dinner, the two men weren't back home. Both phones were off and I was starting to worry. Rob: "they're not in the same place." he wasn't just worried he looked scared. Khaya: "but they left together." Rob: "in different cars. One likes to drink his sorrows away, the other one smashes things. You can't really do that in the same place."
Khaya: "so who's the drinker? If we find him we might find the smasher." Rob: "Sandile obviously. Well.....finding Sandile is a bit.... How do I put this in regular words?" Me: "its hard dad. Its difficult finding Sandile because he is invisible."
Mama: "doesn't his car have a tracker?" Me: "he's driving the BMW. Which was given to him by ubhuti wakhe, so if I can find the tracking company."
Rob: "we all use the same one. Nantsi number yabo." I made the call. Me: "Hi? This is Spho speaking. I'm Masilakhe Sobukwe's wife. Listen, my husband has been missing for a few days, do you mind checking where his car might be because his phone is off and I'm worried now. He never does this." she shuffled about telling me about policy and and and... Me: "okay, Stacy, you said? Listen my dear and carefully. Should I find my husband was hijacked and killed, I Will personally send the police to you so they can take you to jail instead of the suspect." she went on and on. Me: "Its a great thing that I'm being recorded so that your boss can have a reference for when you lose your job. Bye Stacy." I hung up. Nosi: "why did you do that!!" Me: "wait for it."
Khaya: "I don't understand. Spho, you were supposed-" Me: "anytime now."
Rob: "I'm not sure about this." my phone rang. Me: "Spho speaking, hello."

Caller: "Hi. Am I speaking to Mrs Sobukwe?" Me: "yes you are." Caller: "great. You're talking to Greg. I'm sorry ma'am for earlier. Which car would you like for us to track?" Me: "the BMW i8...." he jotted it down with all our other information. Caller: "should we find the car ma'am do you want us to alert the police first-" Me: "No Greg. You can call me on this number. The detective is with me here at home. I'll wait on your progress." I hung up. Rob: "impressive!!" Khaya: "that cannot be taught. It is a gift." a cheating ex boyfriend will do that to you. Turn you into an FBI agent without the qualification. In a few minutes the phone rang. So quick? I put it on speaker. Me: "hello?" Caller: "Mrs Sobukwe....I'm afraid...I don't have good news." Me: "what's wrong?" Caller: "the car is off the grid." Me: "what do you mean?" Caller: "it seems as though...the tracker installed in the car was either removed or somehow damaged which I doubt. So I can't find the car. Is there anything else I can do to help?" Me: "Greg, can you trace the Audi then?" Caller: "let me try.." I heard clicking. A lot of clicking. Then a pause. And a whisper. Caller: "what the hell is going on here." Me: "what's wrong?" Caller: "ma'am. Both the cars can't be found." Me: "is it possible that the trackers are damaged?" Caller: "he renewed them a few months ago. Its impossible." Me: "can you see where my car is? Its the Mercedes." Caller: "just a sec." clicking..... Caller: "yep, here it is. I believe in your yard. This is your address right.." I

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confirmed. So both their cars, didn't have trackers. Me: "thanks Greg. Bye." I hung up. Rob: "they can be a pain xabethanda abantwana babini!!!" Sibuhle: "maybe I should go look for them." Me: "you know what guys, they're grown men. They did this on purpose. Sibuhle, you're staying here. Thina we should focus on the important reason why we're here. We're practicing. Welcome Fez noZintle. Would you like a glass of wine." Fez: "please hun. With the day I've had I would consider drinking iparaffin." Zintle: "yes please." I went to the kitchen and poured them their wine. Zintle: "is everyone okay?" Me: "yes. Just that the two important men have decided its a great time to disappear of the face of the earth." they took a sip. Zintle: "aren't you having?" Me: "maybe later." Zintle: "did you do it?" Me: "no. I didn't have time. Ndithe ndifika kwenzeka idrama, ithe yophela leyo noLakhe waza neyakhe idrama. Its a mess." Zintle: "you know this deep in your heart that's why ungafun usela ngoku." Me: "my parents are in the dining room." Zintle: "your parents let you have a glass of wine." Fez: "kwenzeka nton?" Zintle: "she's pregnant." Fez: "that's fantastic!!! Uzobangu mama?" Me: "NO!!!! Keep it down!!! And get out there and help those ladies practice!" Fez: "well damn girl." we walked to the dining room. My dad and Rob moved away the furniture so we could have space. The intercom rang. I went to answer. Balo: "hi Spho. Its me Babalo."

Me: "I can see you. I have a camera outside." Balo: "lovely. Can you open?"
Me: "your friend isn't here." Balo: "do we have to go through this again? I'm here for the wedding rehearsal." Me: "what wedding rehearsal?" Balo: "uhm....I'm one of the groom's men. Remember?" Me: "I don't remember because I don't -" want you here. Is what I wanted to say. Instead, I don't remember because I don't plan my own wedding. This piece flew over my head. Lakhe did not tell me. On purpose. How am I suppose to see Balo's ugly face on my favorite day? Balo: "so are you gonna open?" I opened the damn gate. He came in with his wife whom I was embarrassed that I didn't invite. I'd forgotten. Honest mistake. Or was it? Me: "hi Hlumi." Hlumi: "hey..I heard you were getting married." Me: "I am. Yep. Saturday. If I find my groom." Balo: "where is he?" Me: "if I knew..." slow down Spho. Me: "I don't know. He left." Balo: "hm.. Hi Dumz." Dumz: "we're not friends." Balo: "alright then." Siby: "want a beer?" Balo: "are we friends?" Siby: "Nope." Balo: "I'll have a beer." we started practicing our entrance. Actually abakhaphi. My part hadn't arrived yet. And its been two hours. Fez: "okay, okay. Take it from the top ladies. And a one, and a two... Naomi Campbell!!" the ladies strutted three dramatic steps forwarded. They were in a single file and their left hand on their hip. The right hand freely roamed about. Fez: "okay, I need to see a little bit of beyonce here. Flex your hips Nosi. I want a bit of attitude Zee. Again. From the top, one and a two. Beyonce!! Naomi!! Stop!" he placed his hands on his forehead. Fez: "I can't do this. I can't." he was in tears all of a sudden. I couldn't help but giggle. Fez was such a perfectionist, when he saw failure he literally cried. Everytime. Real tears. Mama: "awww sorry dear. Let's try again. Come girls. Again." Fez: "how could it be so hard? To mix a Naomi Campbell walk and Beyonce strut face? How? Tell me how??" he sobbed. Dabawo was a little confused. Fez: "one more time. From the top. Remember ladies, you're single. Spho is allowed to flop because her man will be marrying her. You on the hand, better Naomi walk and Beyonce look your grooms. From the top. And a one, and a two! Beyonce!! Naomi! Yes!!! Aaaaand stop. Look dramatically behind you in a slow motion. Perfect. Groomsmen. Take your places. Walk in... Trey Songz, hey, look at me. This isn't a bank queue. You're not at the ATM." I almost dropped my phone laughing. I was trying to make a video. Balo: "I'm Trey Songz?" Fez: "sweetie pie. Start over. and a one and a two. Walk, walk. What the hell are you doing?" Balo: "I'm walking." Fez: "No you're not. You're like a penguin paddling back to sea." I

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couldn't stop laughing. In fact, everyone inside the house was in tears. Balo: "should I Naomi Campbell too?" Fez: "Michael Ealy your lazy self inside. Again!!" they started over. Fez: "better. Now, as for your face. Try looking more

dreamy. Right now you look like-" Balo: "I get it!!" Rob: "please let him finish." he clutched his stomach laughing. Khaya: "sungcola." he chuckled. Fez: "from the top boys!" Nosi: "my neck is getting stiff." Fez looked at her. Fez: "awww. And a one and a two! Walk, Michael. Walk. There we go! Ladies, here are your men! Men, kneel...hand over the flowers." the guys knelt and handed over. Fez: "2 seconds and stand, swirl your woman around and step, step. One and two. That's it! From the top!" Zintle: "we've been at the top for 2 hours!" Fez: "we'll be at the top till midnight cupcake. Brace yourself." Sibuyi: "I need water." Fez: "5 minute break guys! My elbows are sweating." he fanned himself to the chair. Rob: "I wish I had rehearsals everyday." Khaya: "he's quite a character." Rob: "from the top!" they laughed. 3 minutes later. Fez: "Break's over. Girls! Take position. Men. We're starting from the top." I could hear groaning all the way from the kitchen.

Later that evening, when I'd made sure everyone got to bed properly and were full. Fez had taken a cab home with Zintle. Babalo and his wife had left just before midnight. Dubs went to bed with Vuyi. My dad and Rob went to Newton park, dad's house. My mom went to the spare room here and the rest of my residents were in their holes. I showered and went to bed, my iPhone and iPad were synced so I watched the videos I'd made on my iPad. I started laughing all over again. Especially when it came to my part. (Fez: "Sphe, you're being Queen Elizabeth all over again, stop being stiff. Do you want a whiskey?" Khaya: "No!" Fez: "oh sweet pony Jesus. Why do I even bother. Again! Put some music on Sbu! Let me hear you say Heeeey Mrs Sobzi!" Sbu put on Beyonce's Partition. Fez: "gimme some!! Strut! Strut! There we go!" Me: "shouldn't we do a more simple one? I'm literally walking down the isle not into a club." Fez: "Do I look simple to you? Does my work look simple? Are you tryna say I'm a simple man?" Balo: "you're a man!!???" Fez: "I saw you staring at my dadoink dadoink." he dipped his bum to the floor. Balo: "that is disgusting. I didn't do that." Fez: "my butt distracts you Trey Songz. Admit it." Balo: "your butt isn't distracting." Fez: "so you were staring?" Balo: "I'm not gay." Fez: "then why were you staring-" Balo: "I wasn't." Me: "can we get back to my problem now. Please." Fez: "if you want to walk down the isle like you're doing grocery shopping then so be it. I am not part of it." he sat down and patted his eyes with tissue.) I paused the video and laughed out loud again. Fez can be so dramatic at times. I pressed play ndisahleka. My bedroom door opened. Lakhe walked in. He closed the door taking off his t shirt. His hands had blood and his t shirt. I was worried but wasn't going to move an inch. Tatakhe betshilo that he liked smashing things when he was mad. He went to the bathroom ndava nge shower. When he was done, went to the closet then came back to the bed wrapping bandages around his

hands. He got in bed and under blankets. I was still laughing at my crazy family. Ndiyamazi mos mna ukhawuleza abene FOMO (fear of missing out) yena akakwazi uphoswa at all. Lakhe: "kumnandi caba when the outsiders leave." he mumbled. Me: "you know you're being a big baby right? Squabbling for attention like a toddler." Lakhe: "when will I be graduating to teenager-" Me: "the minute you stormed out the door and switched off your phone wanting us to worry. You're being childish Masilakhe. You're in your mid 30's. Your father raised and loved you with all his might. He waited until you were a grown MAN and had found yourself someone you love, and loves you back equally! He wasn't selfish, he never left you to fend for yourself! He was there and sucked up his pain just for

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you! Even today utatakho still puts you first! Because when you walked out that door, he wanted you back in this house! Umdala umngaka Masilakhe? Are you fucking serious? Vuyiseka has Never had a father figure in her life, she's not trying to take away yours! Why are you so selfish? You shared him most your life. Vuyiseka is your sister just like uNosiphiwo is. And you're going to love her! And you're going to accept her and swallow your stupid jealousy! There is no love child. You're all his favorites. So stop this nonsense!" I looked back at my iPad. The room was quiet for a while. Only the video played. It wasn't even funny anymore I was pissed off. All this anger had been put on hold when I was out there with the family. Lakhe: "I'm sorry." Me: "you should be apologizing to your father. And your sister. Not mna. Ndikwenze ntoni khona? What was that daddy daughter couple all about? You never had a problem with me chatting to your dad, why now?" Lakhe: "that's not why I'm mad." Me: "you're still mad? For what!!" he opened the bottom drawer and took out a spar plastic. Lakhe: "for this." he threw it on the bed. Shit. It was the pregnancy test. Me: "why does this make you mad again?" Lakhe: "because you were hiding it." Me: "I was not." Lakhe: "you tell me every single detail about your life. Why not this?" Me: "because it was a bet with the girls. Since mom thinks-" Lakhe: "WHY. NOT. THIS." Me: "I don't think I like your tone." Lakhe: "I don't think I like your dishonesty Sphosenkosi. When were you going to tell me? When the child turns 18?" Me: "I'm not even pregnant!" Lakhe: "did you take the test?" Me: "No! Because I'm not pregnant. I took a test, 6 months ago when we were in joburg or had come back. I don't remember kodwa it was negative." Lakhe: "between then and now. We have beeeen fucking. Unless you're on the pill. Are you?" Me: "no." Lakhe: "I don't even know if that's not a lie." Me: "why are we fighting about this? Its stupid." Lakhe: "because you lied to me." Me: "I did not lie Masilakhe." Lakhe: "you kept it away from me. You didn't tell me. You were going to do it and throw it away. And never tell me.

Lord knows what You'd do to my baby ndlela le ungandifuni ngayo." my eyes were welling up with tears. I couldn't cry in front of him again. I grabbed the plastic and went to the bathroom. Taking out the pregnancy stick from its box. I followed the instruction and pee'd on the piece I had to pee on. I was expecting him to come stand in the bathroom but he didn't move a bit from the bed. I finished my process and stared at the stick for the required minutes to see my result.....

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I stared at the stick. I can't lie. There was a little hint of disappointment. All I did was stare at it. I think for too long also because Lakhe came in the bathroom. Lakhe: "how long does this thing take? You've been here for 10 minutes." I gave it to him. Lakhe: "what does this mean?" Me: "I'm not pregnant." he threw it in the bin. Lakhe: "its okay baby. We're going to keep trying. Its no big deal. Its just been a few months mos." Me: "I didn't want a baby, but when I sat down I was waiting for a positive result. How stupid is that?" Lakhe: "its not stupid my love. You do want a baby. Both of us do, but izokwenzeka when the time is right. We're not rushing anywhere. We should enjoy this time together alone for now. Come here." he pulled up my panty and walked me to bed. Lakhe: "you know I love you." we got into bed. Me: "love you too." I covered myself. Lakhe: "don't worry yourself too much about babies right now." Me: "what if there is a problem?" Lakhe: "we can go to the doctor and check ngomso." Me: "you have a suit fitting ngomso and me a dress fitting. Also rehearsals with Fez are a nightmare. I don't think you'll make your bachelor party." Lakhe: "I really don't care about that bachelor thing. We can move the fittings to 11 and get to the doctor at 8." Me: "do you really want to be there?" Lakhe: "Yes. You're my wife. Besides, you went alone the last time." Me: "okay." Lakhe: "awufuni ndibekhona?" Me: "I didn't say that. Don't want to disappoint you." Lakhe: "you don't disappoint me baby. I'm not worried at all because I love spending time with you alone. If kukho umntana uzothatha attention yakho yonke and I'm not sure I'm going to like it. I'm a big baby remember?" Me: "yeah you are." Lakhe: "come. Give me a hug and a kiss." I hugged him. Me: "thank you my love." Lakhe: "anything for my queen. I'll always be by your side no matter what." Me: "I've got stomach cramps. I think my period is coming." Lakhe: "when last did you have a period?" Me: "I can't remember. Its on and off." Lakhe: "oh...you were spotting last month. I bought you the tampons. Remember we were in my office, you said you weren't well. We took the day off." Me: "oh yes. Lasted two days only." Lakhe: "hm..." Me: "masilale. Long day ahead..." Lakhe: "still want my kiss." I kissed his nose. Me: "sleep." ...

The next morning I woke up just before 8. I looked next to me. Lakhe was still dead asleep. Me: "Masilakhe!" I sat up. Lakhe: "babe?" Me: "its ten to 8." Lakhe: "xoka baby. Ngu 6." Me: "Masilakhe. Get up." I went to brush my teeth and shower. He came into the bathroom to brush his teeth. He walked into the shower and washed himself. Me: "sizomfumana phi ugqirha without an appointment?" Lakhe: "I'll call in a favor. Mbonxiba my sweet." I went to the closet to look for something comfortable to wear. I looked for my plain jeans and a white umbrella top with thin straps. I wore a gold watch and my black Adidas sneakers. Which means I have to find another top because this one was too fancy. I found my white baggy vest and wore it. Lakhe: "done?" I brushed my hair straight and back then fitted a plain black cap. Me: "yep." he quickly slipped on his tight fitting jeans and all black Adidas Yeezy 950's. The boot. I already knew he'd wear a plain black t shirt since he didn't own any other casual t shirt that had any type of writing. Everything plain. Lakhe: "done. Let's go." he'd taken the white plain and was now carrying a black cap. Me: "uh-uh. No. You have to change. Wear the black t shirt. We look like toddler twins in church. No." Lakhe: "I'm not going to change. I had this in my mind before I even woke up. This is my Friday look. You change." Me: "I got dressed first." Lakhe: "then let's go." Me: "this looks very childish Lakhe." Lakhe: "we look cute. Masambe." I did the bed and we walked out. Only my mom and Dubs were at the table having breakfast. Mama: "awww anisebahle my

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loves." Lakhe: "see? Enkosi mama. Spheo thinks its childish." Dubs: "nonsense. Nibahle. Ni-cute." Lakhe: "exactly my point. Siyabuya kune ndawo esileqa kuyo quick." Dubs: "ibrakfesi yona?" Lakhe: "later Dubs. Sizoba late. Enjoy." Me: "bye bye." we went to the car and he drove off making the call. After he hung up, he looked at me. Lakhe: "what's wrong?" Me: "I'm hungry." Lakhe: "nam yazi. Maybe we could have breakfast first. Anyway our appointment is at 10. That was the doctor. Mugg n Bean uright?" Me: "yes." we stopped at the robot and I saw a young man holding a cardboard written his qualifications and phone number. Me: "babe." Lakhe: "hm?" Me: "jonga. He does marketing." Lakhe: "he doesn't do marketing. He has a degree in marketing." Me: "you're not gonna help him?" Lakhe: "you believe in saving the whole world, don't you?" Me: "no...but jonga ixesha? How long is he gonna stand there? he's dedicated." I wrote down the number. Lakhe: "okay. Fine! I'll call him later. Uyifumene number?" Me: "yes. Has he had breakfast?" Lakhe stared at me. Lakhe: "why unje Spheo? Why can't you mind your own business?" Mna? I can't mind my own business? Watch. I pressed down the window. Me: "Hi... Hello.... Unjani?" Lakhe: "the robots are going to turn green in a second." Guy: "ndiphilile sisi Unjani?" Me: "would you like to have coffee

with us?" Lakhe: "what!" the guy hesitated. Me: "don't worry. We have a CEO in the car. Come." I leaned over Lakhe and unlocked the door. Guy came in the backseat with his cardboard. Guy: "molweni bhuti." I could hear Lakhe mumble under his breath driving away. Me: "hi. I'm Spho." Guy: "Molo sisi. Ndingu Luyolo." Me: "this is Mr Sobukwe. Have you tried applying at G-Cell?" Luyolo: "yes ma'am. Twice. I just have no experience." Lakhe: "so what are you going to do about that?" he parked the car then looked at the rear view mirror. Luyolo: "I'm willing to work for a few months, helping out and learning more about my industry in the company even without a salary. Whether it be stapling papers or getting coffee." Lakhe: "the first rule in business, never sell yourself short. You have a degree, which is one step ahead of many other people. Your job isn't getting coffee for anyone but yourself. Uhlalaphi?" Luyolo: "ndihlala eNew Brighton bhuti." Lakhe: "how long have you been standing at those robots?" Luyolo: "its been two weeks. Ndfika ngo 8 ndigoduke ngo 4." Lakhe: "why did you start doing that?" Luyolo: "because I'm tir-" Lakhe: "you don't start a sentence with because." Luyolo: "I'm tired of living in poverty. I don't want to follow my friends into crime. I want to build myself up and raise my daughter with clean resources." Lakhe: "how old is your daughter?" Luyolo: "she's 5 sir." Lakhe: "I want you in my office with your CV on Monday morning 9am." Luyolo: "Yes sir. Thank you so much." Lakhe: "stop crying." Luyolo: "okay." he wiped his tears. Me: "let's have breakfast. I'm starving." we got out the car sayongena kwa Mugg n Bean. Masilakhe didn't stop interviewing Luyolo. Me: "baby, stop. He's eating. Nawe itya." Lakhe: "I'm full." Me: "then sip your coffee." after our breakfast we dropped him off at Terminus. We rushed to our appointment. Me: "yazi I'm really proud of you." Lakhe: "you forced me into this." Me: "no I didn't. I saw you looking at his board ngoku besimisa. You just didn't have the courage to say something. You wanted to help him kakade, its just that you like being macho for some odd reason. God will reward you and shower you with blessings. You're a great person babe." Lakhe: "its just that, uyambona he's dedicated? Actually out there and hustling himself a job not lying at home waiting for something to miraculously happen. He has a daughter and ucingela umntanakhe. He's a smart guy this one. I want to groom him." Me: "Why unje Spho? Why can't you mind your own business?" I imitated him. Lakhe: "hlelisa." I laughed. Lakhe: "we're here. Come." we walked in the building and he went to the reception desk. Lakhe: "come babe." just before I sat down. We went inside the doctor's office. Doc: "Mr Sobz." Lakhe: "what's up Paul. This is my wife, Spho." Why was he

friends with a doctor whom he's never mentioned to me at all? Doc: "hello Mrs. How can I help you today?" I looked at Lakhe. His phone rang. Lakhe: "Telkom. I have to take this. Qhubekeka baby. I'll be back." he walked out. Me: "I'm just not feeling well." Paul: "describe your systems." Me: "nausea. Being tired all the time. Sleeping. Fainting, that was yesterday. Unhealthy eating. Snapping at people. Everyone just seems to get on my nerves." Paul: "when last did you have your period?" Me: "last month I think." Paul: "let's check then." Me: "I took a pregnancy test last night. It was negative." Paul: "well....some tests aren't sensitive to accuracy. Especially at night or if its still early in a pregnancy. You want us to do an ultrasound first? Then if you're really not pregnant we can do tests to determine the problem." Me: "okay." he helped me up on top of the bed revealing my stomach. He tucked in a white cloth in my pants around my waist. He took a gel like cube. Paul: "this might be a little cold." he applied it on my abdomen then started the process. After a few moments of silence I started getting worried. Where was Lakhe? He said he'd be by my side. He always tries to anno- Paul: "Mrs Sobz." Me: "what is it? Is that my heart?" Paul: "nope. That's your baby." Me: "but I don't have a baby." I was about to cry again. Me: "how is tha..." Paul: "there it is." he pointed to the screen. Paul: "Perhaps your hcg levels were low. We'll take a few tests to check if everything is okay." Me: "is it bad?" Paul: "no. You have nothing to worry about hcg levels do not have effect to your developing baby. Unless they're dropping then you might miscarry. I'll check you and make sure everything is fine. Its a normal thing, don't worry. I'll give you some vitamins-" the door opened. Lakhe: "what's happening?" he looked at the screen. Lakhe: "Paul? What is that?" Paul: "that is your baby." Lakhe stared at the screen. Lakhe: "but....you said you weren't pregnant. The test was negative." Me: "how many months am I?" Paul: "you're 13 weeks." Me: "that's 3 months but I had a period. How is it possible?" Paul: "its normal. Most women have periods every month until they give birth." Lakhe: "heh man, I'm confused here. How did this happen? The test said she wasn't pregnant. Come, come, today she is. HOW." Paul: "like I've just mentioned to the Mrs, Hcg levels are usually responsible for negative test results. Its a good thing you both came to have tests done otherwise you'd never know you were expecting." Lakhe: "but is my baby okay Paul? Is she fine?" Paul: "the baby is perfectly fine." Lakhe: "is that her heartbeat?" Paul: "yes. Congratulations. You seem very adamant that its a girl, Do you want to confirm the sex of the baby?" Lakhe: "not really. I'mI'm okay." Me: "baby? What's wrong?" Lakhe: "nothing. I'm...just surprised." Me: "I thought you wanted a baby." the doctor wiped my stomach. Lakhe: "I did." Me: "did? Are you fucking serious?" Lakhe: "I mean I do...its just...its real." Me: "Masilakhe. You're scaring me." Lakhe: "I'm sorry baby." he fixed my top. Paul: "do you want a copy?" Me: "yes." Paul:

"sure." he went about his business. Me: "baby talk to me. What's wrong?" Lakhe: "nothing is wrong. I'm just" Me: "just what?!" Lakhe: "can we please just go?" after getting my medication and ultrasound I went to the car where Lakhe was waiting. This day literally turned upside down. Nothing we had expected at all. I was surprised. He was shocked. I was now scared maybe he didn't want a baby anymore. His phone rang again. He let it ring on and on and on. It was beginning to get on my nerves before I opened my mouth he switched it off. I don't know where we were off to but it was a freeway that was not going home or to the city. Within the hour, which felt like 7 hours. We drove into a small city. I was half sleepy. He stopped the car. Lakhe: "I'm scared." Me: "why are you scared?" Lakhe: "I kind of thought we had a few more months to be ready. I didn't expect this so soon. I have feelings of what happened all those months back when we lost our first. I didn't know it would hurt like this. I'm scared that we've been irresponsible lately and putting

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our child in danger." Me: "at least I'm in my second trimester and we know so we'll be more careful." Lakhe: "can we not tell anyone? For now...until you start showing. I don't want to harm my baby." Me: "definitely." he took off his seatbelt. Lakhe: "isn't she kicking already?" he touched my tummy. Me: "no. Its still early." Lakhe: "uzondixelela when she kicks? Please tell me." Me: "she? I thought you wanted a boy." Lakhe: "all embryos start as females then develop into their gender." I laughed. Me: "firstly this is no longer an embryo, and where did you hear that?" Lakhe: "mens health released an article." Me: "I don't think that is true." Lakhe: "I'll show you the article." he tickled my tummy. Lakhe: "hello my little peanut." Me: "pee? And nut? Really?" Lakhe: "you have a nasty mind. My baby is a peanut because umncinci not because of your mind." Me: "anyway, sizothini apha?" Lakhe: "I just wanted some time alone with umama ka peanut." Me: "what about our fittings Lakhe?" Lakhe: "they can wait. I just need a break." Me: "you do know Fez is going to kill us right?" Lakhe: "Fez is a little too much for me. I just want the three of us to spend time together." Me: "I think I'm hungry. Peanut ate my breakfast ksasa." Lakhe: "uright my baby. Itya mntanam ungak'linge utale. Ufuna ukutya ntoni sisi?" Me: "anything. Nankuya noSpar." Lakhe: "uzohlala Phi kwa Spar?" Me: "we're going to sit by the beach and have a picnic." Lakhe: "okay." we went to Spar. I took the small trolley and put in my two baskets. He walked to the dairy isle. I went after him. Nam bendiyibawela i-yogurt. I took the chocolate chip and he took the vanilla. We went to look for cooked food. Lakhe: "I think I want the macaroni and cheese." Me: "you eat take aways now?" Lakhe: "this is Spar. Not McDonald's. Uzoty ntoni?" I didn't want to be a copy cat so I took chicken pieces instead. We went to get buns,

some juice and snacks. A lot of snacks. Lakhe: "sigqibile ne? Masambe ke. Peanut yena akafuni nto?" liyandihlekisa eligama lika peanut bonanje. Me: "no, peanut chose the yogurt he's fine." Lakhe: "she." we paid for the items and went to our car, Spending some time at the beach, eating and laughing. Me: "our family is going to murder us." Lakhe: "because we disappeared? Hayi wethu." Me: "everything must happen today." Lakhe: "they'll cope without us man baby. Maybe we should show up in the morning." Me: "I'm not ready to die." Lakhe: "its our wedding anyway. I told you masiye court sitshate sithule. But noooo Miss Thang had to bring the entire squad. Uyadika bonanje." Me: "oh? As if you didn't bring the squad BFF aka Babalo. Fez roasted him clean izolo." Lakhe: "that's why I don't like this dude of yours. He thinks everything is funny. Angak'linge andiqale ke mna. Uyow'fokofa pha kude ngaphaya kwe gate." Me: "he's just playful." Lakhe: "I don't even see a need for dance mna. I wait for you at the alter, you walk to me. We get married, we walk out. We go to our reception. Our appointed speakers talk for a few minutes. We have lunch and catch our flights to East London. Others drive. This is so simple. Why do we need an entire choreography baby?" Me: "its supposed to look special." Lakhe: "for whom? All the people we invited were also at rehearsals right?" Me: "so we should cancel the dance?" Lakhe: "no baby. I just can't dance mna and you know I don't want to make a fool of myself phambi kwabantu." Me: "My love, making mistakes and not being good at everything is part of life. That's what makes you human. At our wedding, you'll be dancing for fun, not for competition. Its something that you're supposed to enjoy doing, for your spouse and peanut." Lakhe: "I'll be dancing for peanut then. Wena uzondihleka." Me: "dance for your peanut ke baby. Andicingi ndihleke." Lakhe: "the doctor said you were 13 weeks? Uzokhaba nini kanti umntanam?" Me: "cela umlinda torho. Maybe when my tummy gets bigger. Umama uzothi its the reason for the wedding." Lakhe: "I don't care what they think. As long as my family is healthy and strong." Me: "she already said this. I don't know how she knew I was pregnant." Lakhe: "awuziboni wena?" Me: "No. I look

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the same." Lakhe: "I thought I was imagining things when I was holding your boob wandisusa isandla ebsuku." Me: "so? I was trying to sleep mos." Lakhe: "you made a disapproving sound. Plus you eat like an elephant." Me: "I eat exactly what you eat." Lakhe: "times two." Me: "mxim. You're walking back to Port Elizabeth." I got up and walked to the car. Lakhe: "I'm kidding! Heeee. Baby, it was a joke." he ran after me. Me: "its a good thing you have a sense of humor, it'll keep you entertained kulendlela uzoyihamba." I got in the car and locked my doors. Lakhe: "babe. Don't be like this." Me: "bye." I started the

car. Lakhe: "haibo!! Spho!! Don't you dare leave me here. Sphosenkosi my phone is in there!!" Me: "Good." Lakhe: "Baby uxolo. I'm sorry okay? I didn't mean it. I swear I didn't." Me: "then why did you say it?" Lakhe: "because I have a runny mouth. Cela uvule umnyango babes. Please." I unlocked the door. He climbed into the passenger seat wafaka seat belt staring at me. Lakhe: "you were really going to leave me behind because of a silly comment?" Me: "its silly? I'm being silly now? I will throw you out of this car. Call me silly one more time!" Lakhe: "baby, the comment. What I said, that is silly. Not wena! We were fine a minute ago, what went wrong?" Me: "you called me an elephant Masilakhe." Lakhe: "I didn't say that." Me: "are you saying I'm lying kengoku?" Lakhe: "No. You're just over reacting." I hit the brakes. The car halted to a stop. Lakhe: "baby, you know I love you ne. Kodwa I didn't say you were an elephant, I said you ate like one, which was a joke but I am sorry it rubbed you the wrong way." Me: "do you realize how big an elephant is? Do you understand you're comparing me to a big animal?" I drove again. Lakhe: "baby, please don't cry. Iza ndiqhube. Please." Me: "I need to keep my mind busy." Lakhe: "you can play with my phone to keep busy. Please let me drive." Me: "fine." I stopped at the side of the road, we exchanged seats and he drove. Lakhe: "awufuni udlala a game?" Me: "No. I want to take a nap." Lakhe: "lala mntu wam." I lowered my seat and closed my eyes trying to sleep.

An hour later, we were in Port Elizabeth. Lakhe: "we're home." I checked the time, it was 1pm and boy were we in shit. The minute he parked the car in the driveway. His father walked out the house followed by mine and my mom and uDubs. Rob: "what the hell happened to you two!" Lakhe: "tata nditshilo kodwa siyabuya." Rob: "we were worried! Unable to find you both anywhere!" Lakhe: "uxolo tata." I got out the car. Mama: "iza ke mfazi, the dress is ready. Ukuba ayikulingani uyow'zibona." Me: "I'm sure its fine mama. Its not like I gained 10 kilos. Its just been two days." Mama: "nivelaphi?" Me: "just running some errands." Mama: "with phones off?" Me: "uxolo mama. We needed some time out qha. What's next now?" Mama: "silinde uFez. Okwangoku your make up artist ifikile to practice your look." Me: "why does she need to practice it mama?" Mama: "asiyazi what would suit you or what you like! Come." Me: "Uphi uVuyi?" Dubs: "bakwi practice noNosi noZintle." Me: "uNosi uyenzile ntloko?" Mama: "ewe. Ngoku ksasa." I sat down in my spare bedroom because nobody was allowed in me and Lakhe's room. It was rule that everyone obeyed silently. Kendra was setting up her equipment. Me: "Mama. Ndicela i-snack?" Mama: "okay my baby." she went to the kitchen. Dubs: "Inoba unovuyo, ndiyak'vuyela mntanam. Umhle, unembeko, uphinde ubene ntliziyo elungileyo. Uhlale unje ke sisi." Me: "enkosi Dabawo." my

mother came back with the platter of finger food. Mama: "bezize for the sampling." Me: "is my cake ready?" Mama: "izoba ready ksasa kaloku yona." I ate my food actually making Kendra's job a little more difficult. Me: "we met a man today, he was holding a board by the robots. Kubhalwe qualifications zakhe. Lakhe offered him a job. It felt so good helping umntu." Mama: "that's lovely mntanam, kodwa Ube careful ngonceda abantu gqithi. Kuba abanye bazoku destroyer from inside." Dubs: "unyansile umamakho. Ngelinye

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ixesha ubokhe ubuye umva kancinci, kodwa ilungile into oyenzileyo sisi." Me: "yeah...maybe I have a problem. Maybe, if I started something that helps the youth find employment. Using G.com as our head company. We invest in youth business and offer help with business plans-" Mama: "okay! Stop!! You're getting married ngomso! Stop worrying about umsebenzi. That is for next week. Thula ngoku." I shut my mouth but I couldn't shut my heart. I texted Lakhe. Me: "idea brewing." Him: "meet me at duck palace in 20 minutes." I smiled. My fiance always found the time to listen to me noba ndithanda ukhala. It was almost 15 minutes when I noticed Kendra u-slow, she valued her work, she was passionate kodwa upholile sana. Me: "hun, I really am running out of time. Please try to hurry." I was excited. Kendra: "okay." waqhubekela. This was too much make up for me. I wanted something simple and elegant. Not to look like my wedding cake. Me: "okay. Hold it right there. I'll be back." I rushed out before anyone could say a thing sneaking to the Ducklings palace. Lakhe was waiting for me there. Me: "hey." he stared at my face. Me: "I don't like it either. Listen, you remember Luyolo the guy we helped?" Lakhe: "yes." Me: "how about we start a campaign that helps the youth start their own businesses." Lakhe: "go on." Me: "well, we provide them with help starting from a business plan, we provide funding and a project that can get them started. Also, we could mentor them and teach them more about their business." Lakhe: "we can't just pick any Tom, Dick and Harry to start a business Spho." Me: "that's the thing, maybe we should first hold a starter pack program, this would be a month training on how to be an employer, business ethics, customer service, the laws about having your own then at the end of the program we test the learners, those that are competent, go on to the next level, njalo njalo. Up until we choose perhaps 4 candidates that will work together to start their company." Lakhe: "how do we benefit kuyo yonke lento ke? The government won't be involved, you know that." Me: "we own the small company. A certain percentage of shares belong to us, the rest is theirs. At the end of the day, it's our investment. Once they are able to, maybe a few years down the line, they could buy us out and carry on independently." Lakhe: "fucking amazing. I love it. I remember

there was a company in East London that did something similar. So when do we start?" Me: "as soon as the wedding is done. Everyone in that house thinks we're not interested kuyo." Lakhe: "are we..." he chuckled. Lakhe: "mna baby I like this idea. I'm gonn start with research and see which companies would be willing to join me. Nawe kwelakho icala, start putting this on paper. I want to have a proper proposal by Wednesday on my desk." Me: "Yes boss." Sands: "Again? Come on guys!!" he was standing by the corner. Sands: "why do you keep disappearing and having these private meetings? No man. Sinilindle kulandlu. Its as though we want to get married more than you two. Come!" we followed him inside the house. Khaya: "is there something you two want to tell us?" we looked at each other. Me: "hayi tata." Khaya: "then why do you keep running off together? Are you planning to elope after the wedding?" Me: "hayi tata." Rob: "then what could be the explanation?" Lakhe: "we were just discussing work." Mama: "Work? The day before your wedding?" Rob: "banjena ke. I am not surprised. Its like the hunger games when it comes to these two." Me: "uxolweni bazali. It won't happen again." Khaya: "damn right it won't. Say your goodbyes, you'll be next seeing each other tomorrow morning at that alter." Me: "hayi tata-" Khaya: "I mean it! Finish with your make up and pack your things nizohamba nomamakho niye kwi hotel yenu for the night. I'm not playing this hide and seek game with you." I hugged Lakhe goodbye. Me: "goodbye baby." Lakhe: "sukhala my intended. I'll facetime you for the rest of the day." Me: "okay. I love you." Lakhe: "I love you too." I let go of him and went to finish my make up. When we were about to leave, I

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heard a little commotion from the lounge. I finished packing all my things ndaphuma ne suitcase yam meeting everyone else in the lounge. Me: "what's happening?" Fez: "Apparently, I can't leave." Me: "why?" Sands: "all the girls know their stepping. We don't. Why must we be the ones looking like idiots?" Fez: "khandithi lahleka mna izolo. Had you been here like everyone else, you wouldn't have to look like an idiot, Idiot." Me: "okay, Fez, stay. Help them uzoza late." Fez: "njani sana ndishiyeke ndodwa apha noobhuti?" Lakhe: "kanti uyinton wena?" Fez: "hayi bhuti, ndingu sisikazi mna." Me: "Fez, calm down hun. It'll just be a few hours. Umxelele uBalo to stop staring at your bum." Fez: "yandifuna kaloku. Bye my sweet." he kissed my cheek. Fez: "okay ladies, from the top!" Sands: "andibon lady kemna apha. Uyay'funa impama yazi." I got into the car with the girls and my mom drove us to the Radisson. Me: "uhm...mama... So me and the girls were thinking of getting massages later." Ma: "that's lovely sthandwasam." Me: "so will you and uDubs be joining us?" Ma: "of course." now for the harder part. Me: "and they will throw me a little party afterwards." Ma: "okay. And you want us out of the way by then."

and she happens to be smarter than me. Again. As always. Me: "its not that mama." Ma: "just don't go to sleep too late. We have a long day tomorrow." Me: "okay mama." we went into our hotel and settled in. I finally fitted on my dress, it looked absolutely beautiful.....but tight. I couldn't exactly breath freely. Me: "maaama." Ma: "what is it?" Me: "is there a chance of making it looser? I can't breath." Ma: "benditshilo ke mna. Qha awuva!" she helped me out the dress. Ma: "I'll call the designer to loosen it up." I sat on the bed and waited for my next instruction. My phone rang. Facetime from the groom. I answered. Me: "hey baby." Lakhe: "hmmm...why are you naked xandingekhoyo..." he complained. Me: "was fitting on my dress. Wenzani?" Lakhe: "khahlise phone. I wanna see." Me: "nooo." Lakhe: "please? Just for a second?" ndahlisa i-phone. Lakhe: "down..." Me: "hayi mpa. Nanku mama. Bye." I hung up. She walked in. Ma: "uthetha nabani?" Me: "no one. I'm just singing." Ma: "okay she'll be here later. Baphi abanye?" Me: "in their rooms. Its almost time for our massages mama. Masambe." I got dressed. All my women went down to the spa and had our full bodies done. Afterwards had dinner. I was just anxious for my bachelorette party. Akhandive niks ibithethwa ngumama or uDubs. After dinner, I went to get dressed. Zintle and Zingi came to fetch me. Nosi and Vuyi were waiting in the car. While we walked down to the car... Zingi: "so...did you do it?" Me: "yep." Zintle: "and?" Me: "its negative. Like I said. Ndiyile though kwagqirha wathi I have ulcers. I can't do any acid or spirits. Anything can set it off kubenzima nophefumla." I lied my pants off. Lakhe had asked me not to say anything, and I respected that because both of us were scared to lose this one too. Hence, the secrecy. Zintle: "okay babe. Don't worry, you can just have water. Akho need usele. NoZingi akaseli. Its just gonna be me and the youngin's." Me: "banganxili please. They can't have ibhabhalaza tomorrow." Zintle: "don't worry. I have this got." Me: "okay, now you're starting to sound like Fez and I don't trust you." Zingi: "when is he coming?" Zintle: "he's not. Sandile said he'll keep him there until he turns straight." Zingi: "you do know that uSandile isn't kidding right?" Me: "we have to fetch Fez. He will die under Sandile's watch." Zintle: "you sure? Cuz when I called, he sounded like he was having fun." Me: "Sandile? Or Fez?" Zintle: "well..." Me: "drive!" she drove to the house. When we arrived, I ran inside and found Fez laying on the floor. Me: "SANDILE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" I screamed. Sands: "Damn! Spho I'm right here dude! What the hell!" Fez: "iyhoooo! Hayi mfazi." Sands: "haaa! You lose! Get up!" Fez: "she was screaming!" Sands: "you were suppose to be frozen." Fez: "andiyo mixed veg Sandile." Sands: "just get up." Me: "what is happening?" Sands: "we're playing a game. Sapha 100 Rand yam Fezile. What are you doing here? You supposed to be

at the hotel." Me: "I came to fetch Fez. We're going somewhere." Sands: "oh a party? He said he's staying with us. We're playing a game." Me: "what kind of stupid game is this?" Sands: "you choose a position where you will be able sit still. If anyone talks, they pay 100 Rand. If they move, its 500 Rand." Me: "that's beyond stupid. Who keeps track of movement?" Sands: "me obviously." Me: "I'm gonna keep track, move. Let's start over. We gonn put on music, everyone will start dancing. When I press pause, you freeze in the stance you're in." Sibu: "that's more tricky." Me: "its not supposed to be easy." Sands: "I got moneyyyyyy. I'm in." Dummi: "so nobody stops to think about me?" Sands: "you can roll around on the floor." Dummi: "mxim. I'll be in control of the music. All of you in the dance floor." he went to the music player and switched it on. Me: "Uphi uLakhe?" Sands: "he went to have a hair cut with his dads." Dummi connected his phone and played Work by Rihanna. Fez: "whoooooo!" he started dancing. Sands: "are you serious?" Dummi: "twerk Sandile." Sands: "ndizok'fumana." the girls came in. Zintle: "what's happening?" everyone was dancing then Dummi hit pause. We stopped. Zingi: "I am so confused." Dummi: "walk in between them and stare into their eyes while they're frozen." he laughed. Sands: "this is fucking crazy. My game was better." Dummi: "lose. My 500 please." Sands: "do you take African American express?" Dummi: "as long as ikhupha 500 yam." he pressed play. Robert came into the house wama emnyango. Followed by Khaya and Lakhe. Dummi paused the music. Dummi: "it was Spho's idea." Me: "Sandile." Sands: "ngubani uSandile?" Khaya: "ndincamile mna." Lakhe: "what are you guys doing here?" Me: "we came to fetch Fez but they were playing a game so we played...too." Zingi: "Fez sikushiye?" Fez: "ewe. Bye girls!" Lakhe held my arm. Lakhe: "niyaphi? You're all dressed up." Me: "just having a little party then go back to the hotel." Lakhe: "okay. Ungabuyeli late ke. I'll call you when I sleep." Me: "okay babe." I kissed him and left with the girls. Lakhe: "Sandile." Sands walked to him. Sands: "what's wrong?" Lakhe: "Black is bringing in another shipment. He didn't tell anyone because of what happened the last time and he's trying to make up for it. Sepua just contacted me and says its from him. So its legit." Sands: "when is it landing?" Lakhe: "in an hour. We have to leave now." Sands: "let me handle this. You know these things take all night. Funeke u-focus on your wedding." Lakhe: "after what happened the last time I let you go alone? No. I'm coming with you. I'll be back in time for the wedding." Sands: "Lakhe this is risky. What if something goes wrong?" Lakhe: "like what? How can anything go wrong ingaziwa ngumntu. Biza uSibulele. I'll be in the car." Sands: "and the others?" Lakhe: "don't tell a single soul. This one is for the four of us. We have to pay back Fernandez by the end of this month to clear our shit from him." Sands: "what are we gonna do about Frank?" Lakhe: "we'll give him a visit

later tonight. His day has come. Uzondifumana emotweni." he walked out to the car.

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Chapter 63

I was woken up by what felt like the middle of the night. I'd come home earlier than everyone because I was feeling really sick. When I opened my eyes, I saw my mother standing by the bed. Me: "mama?" Ma: "phakama sisi." Me: "its the middle of the night mama." Ma: "no its not. Ngu 6 and you need to get ready for your wedding day." I dragged myself up and went to take a shower. Mama: "Spho. Baphi abanye?" Me: "Inoba basalele. I came back early mna. Bendingaziva right." Ma: "uright ngoku?" Not really but. Me: "ewe mama. I'm fine." she walked out the room. I sat on the chair in my gown. I tied my hair in a very low pony tail, Kendra came in to start with my make up. Me: "Ken, can you please just tone it down a bit, I want a very simple look with as little attention as possible." Kendra: "sure thing." my mom came in. Ma: "Spho, they're not answering their door. Is it possible Khange babuye?" Me: "no mama. I'm sure they're just sleeping." I wasn't in the mood. I just wanted to be in bed. My mother was on the phone half the time. I wonder what time she woke up. She really put in all her effort for my big day. I was so grateful to her. After this whole madness I'm gonna have to make her something nice. Ma: "No, no, no!! What!!" uDubs came in. She was already dressed. Dubs: "uright mntanam? Ingathi awuphilanga." Me: "I'm just tired. Ndileli early kodwa ndisadiniwe." Dubs: "ibinde leveki sthandwa. Uzoba right wena, ima ndikuphathele amanzi." she went to fetch me water. Me: "mama? What's wrong?" Ma: "the venue was double booked." I gasped. Me: "what does that mean?" Ma: "the other couple's wedding is an hour before yours, so bayithathile and bebe bookishe kqala." Just great! Me: "we can't get a venue in a few hours!" Dubs: "maybe we can." Me: "Phi Dubs?" Dubs: "ninendlu enkulu ene yard ingathi kuse Eden. Kutheni ningasebenzisi yona? Kamandi mos yi-family yodwa ezayo." Ma: "that's perfect. Kuzofuneka ndihambe ke mna and move the decorations, chairs, tables to the house." Dubs: "ndizokuncedisa." Me: "yima mama, ndizoshiyeka nabani apha?" Ma: "abakhaphi bakho love. Find them." they both left. I tried calling Zintle, her phone was off. I tried Zingi, she answered. Zingi: "hey babe. Ndisendleleni ezayo." Me: "please tell me ooZintle bakunye nawe." Zingi: "no, I left after you." Me: "okay. Please hurry." Zingi: "alright." I hung up. Now I was beginning to panic. My phone rang again. Lakhe. Me: "hi." I answered. Lakhe: "good morning my intended." Me: "that sounds a bit creepy. Baby, did you hear about the venue?" Lakhe: "itheni venue?" Me: "it was double booked, mama

uyolungisa lonto ngoku." Lakhe: " well...baby... Don't worry. I'm sure our parents will handle it." Me: "but its our wedd-" Lakhe: "can you just relax? Don't stress yourself. I love you. Whatever happens today, will soon be over." Me: "that just gives me more time to panic." Lakhe: "don't panic sthandwasam. It will go well. I'll keep you in touch with what's happening this side, get some juice and relax." Me: "okay." I hung up. In a few minutes, I was done with my make up and Zingi arrived. Zingi: "Zintle hasn't shown up?" Me: "No. I'm trying very hard not to be angry. Its like everything is going to go wrong today, already we don't have a venue, now we have to move the ceremony to our front yard!" Zingi: "but you have a beautiful front yard. Plus its a sunny day, the weather is absolutely perfect. It will be amazing." Me: "I have to go find these 3." I wore a tracksuit and walked down to reception to ask for a second key to their room. Since I booked it, they gave it to me. I went to open it and yes, it was empty. Just like my heart. I went back to my room. Me: "they're not there. Its going to be a disaster." Zingi: "don't cry, you'll ruin your make up and it looks absolutely stunning." Me: "I can't not cry!!" Zingi: "bhabha...you don't have to be this emotional. Its going to be okay." I nodded and controlled my tears. My phone rang. Mom. Me: "hello

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mama?" Ma: "hun, do you have an idea of maybe where your groom is?" Me: "he's right there in the house." Ma: "no. I've checked the entire house, he's not here. Nobody knows where he is." Me: "mama, I spoke to him on the phone less than 30 minutes ago. What do you mean he's not in the house?" Ma: "the last time anyone saw him was yesterday, when he left with uSandile kunye noSibulele." Me: "No..." Ma: "aziphumeli phone zabo. Try calling him again." she hung up. Me: "Lakhe is missing. With two of his groomsmen." Zingi: "what?! Maybe they'll be back soon, andithi ubuthetha naye efownin?" Me: "but he was distant a bit and told me not to worry and that he loved me. What if that is his way of telling me he can't do this?" Zingi: "okay, you're thinking too much. Stop. Lakhe loves you! He will never let you go through an entire week of exhaustion and pay so much money then leave you. He's not that petty! He's going to reappear soon. Stop over reacting." Me: "I should've woken up later. Can't I take a nap?" Zingi: "No. You're going to put on your big girl panties and cope." I ordered some juice. Zingi attended to the knock on the door. Kwangena uZintle, Nosi and Vuyi. Me: "I thought something bad happened to you three!! Why ningalelanga apha? And where do you come from?" Zintle: "chill granny. We were at my place. Ikude gqithi lendawo." Me: "can you guys please shower and get ready? Before I lose my mind." Nosi: "what's wrong Spho?" Me: "nothing. Its just a little jitters." I tried Lakhe's phone. It hit voicemail. Me: "I have this bad feeling." Zintle: "its just nerves Spho. Calm

down." Me: "please get ready." I tried Sandile and Sibu. Also off. Great. Just great. I guess I'll be marrying myself today. My mom called again. Ma: "Spho, awukabafumani?" Me: "No. The phones are off." Ma: "okay, don't worry yourself angel." she hung up. Me: "something is wrong and they're hiding it. First the venue, now Lakhe is missing. You need to go there Zingi. Find out what's going on." Zingi: "No. I trust your mom. She has everything under control. Stop it!" I sat for an agonizing two hours. All of us were ready. I just didn't want to get into my dress. I was so upset, I didn't even have a groom. Zintle: "Spho, you need to put on your dress babe." my phone rang. Me: "its him!" I answered. Me: "where are you!" Lakhe: "I'm at home. Why is my lawn filled with chairs?" Me: "Masilakhe kudala ufunwa endlini. Where did you go!" Lakhe: "just some business I needed to take care of. What is happening in my yard?" Me: "the venue was booked. Remember?" Lakhe: "Oh. Ufika nini?" Me: "about an hour and a half to go." Lakhe: "perfect. I can't wait to see you. Yoh nanku utata esiza. I'm gonn get yelled at. I'll call you back." he hung up. Me: "so he's alive and still loves me." Nosi: "awww." Zintle: "you're crazy. Iza. Nxiba." I wore my wedding dress ndalinda with the girls while chatting and taking selfies. We had a laugh and prayed together. Finally. My mom called. It was time for us to go. Zingi: "so...you're getting married." I took a deep breath. Me: "it was a tricky morning. So yes. I'm finally getting married." we went to the car that was parked in the basement.

Zintle drove to the house as slow as possible. Zingi drove her car with the bridesmaid. The hooter was making my ears hurt and frustrating me even more. Almost 45 minutes later, we arrived at our house. The noise must've alerted everyone inside because they were standing up looking at the gate. My bridesmaid were the first to get off. I watched them from the car doing their step with the groomsmen to the altar. This was it. My dad came to the car. Khaya: "what's the problem princess?" Me: "nothing." Khaya: "look hun, I know this wasn't your dream wedding. Today's events made it a bit difficult and its not your fault. Today is about you getting married to the man you love. You're in your most comfortable space and most importantly with all your closest friends and family. This is better than anything. Right now, focus on the reason for this day. Not the obstacles.

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Okay?" I nodded. Me: "thank you dad." Khaya: "come, let's go. Before he panics." he helped me out the car walking to the beginning of the most beautiful ceremony I've ever seen. There was a red carpet leading all the way to the altar. The chairs were decorated with white cloth. On the carpet were white petals sprinkled by Zimi and at the end of that carpet, stood my

future husband in front of a white wedding arch. My intended. He smiled nervously looking at me. I wanted to cry but I couldn't take another lecture of ruining making. A soft melody played in the background while my father walked me down the aisle, my arm in his. We reached the end and he handed me to Lakhe with a firm handshake. I stood beside my fiancée. Priest: "We have come together at the invitation of Siphosenkosi Ngudla and Masilakh'khaya Sobukwe. to celebrate the uniting in Christian love, their hearts and lives. This is possible because of the love God has created in them, through Jesus Christ." he turned to his Bible. Priest: "Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." This abundant life, for many people, is an impossible dream, yet God wants us all to have this abundant life and proved His love for us by giving His Son. Another way that God provides for this "full" life is creating those who will love us. Masilakhe has found such a one in Sphosenkosi, hearts and spirits were drawn together before today by the Lord of all creation. Two lives are not united by ceremony, but only in the power, love, and grace of God. Siphosenkosi and Masilakhe will publicly declare their love, because of the love, Jesus Christ our Lord has shown us, they too, can truly love one another. The same way God demonstrated to us the love He has for us by giving His only son. These two will demonstrate this God given love by giving themselves to one another and for each other. Neither of them have reached this place alone. Each has been given life by their parents. These, that gave them life and love, are and always will be vital in their continued lives together." after the entire speech, I could feel my knees weakening. Lakhe held my hand. Then looked at me. The priest stopped talking. Me: "it's too hot." I whispered. Priest: "we're half way through." I nodded. Priest: "No other human ties are more tender, no other vows are more sacred than these you are about to assume. You are entering into that holy estate which is the deepest mystery of experience, and which is the very sacrament of divine love." he faced Lakhe. Priest: "Masilakhe, do you take Sphosenkosi as your lawfully wedded wife. To live as one after God's ordinance the holy estate of matrimony. To have and to hold, through sickness and through health, for better and for worse. Will you love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, forsaking all others, keeping yourself only for her as long as you both shall live?" Lakhe: "I Will." Priest: "Sphosenkosi, will you take Masilakhe as your lawfully wedded husband. To live as one after God's ordinance the holy estate of matrimony. To have and to hold, through sickness and through health, for better and for worse. Will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, forsaking all others, keeping yourself only for him as long as you both shall live?" Me: "I Will." Priest: "Masilakhe, do you have additional vows or would you like to repeat?" Lakhe turned to look at me. Lakhe: "Spho... Not only will I have and hold you

but will forever protect you. I vow to always love you like I have since the first day I met you. I will comfort you the way you do to me when I'm at my worst. I will honor you, in your presence and when you're not near me. Forsaking all others isn't difficult at all, you're all the woman I need. I want to publicly declare that not only have you entered my life but also opened my eyes to things I've been blind to. Through you, I learnt about God. You taught me prayer. You give me strength on a daily basis and you're my motivation. I love you sthandwasam. I keep saying this, If it were possible, I'd actually cut open my chest to show you that this heart only beats for one woman. And that's you." I let tears roll down. I

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couldn't hold it in anymore. I didn't even know what to say. Priest: "Sphosenkosi, do you have additional vows or would you like to repeat?" Me: "Masilakhe. As you know, I'm already used to yelling and bullying you." he laughed. Me: "you're an amazing man. After God and dad, you came into my life and didn't take control but helped me steer my ship. You've always been here for me as you always promise. You never complain about my attitude, you aren't afraid to communicate to me, well anymore... You have a respectful way of addressing me and that may sound ordinary to some but to me its great. This is why I fell for you, you made it so easy for me to love again. You let me into your life and carried my pain for me until it was no longer there. You're not just an ordinary guy, you're my superhero. My husband, the father of my kids and my life partner. I will always cherish you and love you. I will respect you and listen to you with an open heart. I will honor you in and out of your presence till the very end of my days. I promise to keep and obey to these vows. I love you." I was not ready for none of that, it may have sucked but I got a sparkle out his eye. That was enough for me. The rings were brought forward. Priest: "Please remember, a ring is more than a symbol of your marriage. It is a seal of the vow you have made to one another. The circle of the ring is, as far as human eye can see, a perfect circle, with no beginning or end, so God too, has perfect love for you and wants you to love one another in His grace, never, never ending. This ring is made of precious metal. You also are precious in God's sight and now in the life of Masilakhe. When you are absent one from another, the presence of the ring reminds you to be faithful and to fulfill your vows to Masilakhe. You may now place the ring in your spouse's finger Masilakhe." Lakhe put the ring on my finger. Priest: "Masilakhe, this ring is a seal of Sphosenkosi's vow to you. She presents this to you as a token of her submission to you in Jesus Christ. This is a symbol of leadership. God has placed you as head of the family, You must lead in worship, works and fellowship. As the weaker vessel she depends

upon you for strength. Spho, you may place the ring on your groom's finger." I slid the ring into Lakhe's finger. Priest: "for as much as Masilakhe and Sphosenkosi, have consented in holy wedlock, and have thereto confirmed the same by giving and receiving each one a ring; by the authority committed unto me as a minister of the Church of Jesus Christ, I now declare you husband and wife. You may now, kiss your bride." Finally. He pulled me to him and kissed me. Our families and friends cheered and sang around us. Lakhe: "Mrs Sobz. Thank you for accepting to be my wife." Me: "it is a pleasure."

We sat at our table as newly weds. Since the ceremony was small and intimate, we decided to have both ceremony and reception here in the garden. It was a wonderful day but I felt really hot and sweaty. Me: "baby, sihamba nini. I can't wait ukukhulula lelokhwe." Lakhe: "I can't wait to take it off you either baby." Me: "can you stop being nasty? Kushushu. For real though, when is our flight?" Lakhe: "its at four." Me: "good, ngu one ngoku. Did you tell the family we're flying?" Lakhe: "no. Otherwise I'd have to book an entire plane and I'm not going to do that. I only booked for Dumi, Sands, your mom, Vuyi and Dubs. Dumi can't be on the road for a long time. Sandile found out and forced me to book his too, Vuyi noDubs have never been on a plane before, I'd like to treat them. Plus umamakho won't have anyone to chat with because my dad and yours want to drive down together." Me: "I feel bad that everyone else is driving." Lakhe: "they'll be fine. Sela nanga amanzi. How's my peanut doing in there?" Me: "he's fine. He makes me thirsty a lot though." Lakhe: "sela sisi. Unganxaniswa umntanam." I drank the bottle of water. Me: "thank you for making me feel like your baby making machine." he chuckled. Lakhe: "nam

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mos ndiyi verbal punching bag yakho. So we're even." Me: "Shhh...they're starting the speech." Lakhe: "did we agree on Sandile being the speaker? My goodness." Sands: "Hi everyone." he waved. Everyone: "Hi Sandile." Sands: "so...my dad asked me to come up and say a few words because he was emotional." Rob: "that was not what I said." Sands: "it sounded like it. Anyway..... I want to congratulate my big brother for the long difficult hurdle he has overcome today. Most of our lives, we've tried to figure him out. He never showed emotion. Its always been difficult for him to love or be happy, the day I met Spho, his wife, I saw it in him that something had changed forever. He has become more open, more considerate but throughout his tough and hardness he has always been the best brother I could've ever asked for. Spho, you finally took my place. I never thought anyone could. I

accept it though because you're my sister too, so you're lucky. I wish you two the best life has to offer. Plenty of happiness. A lot of kids. At least one of them being Sands Jr. I love you both, and I'm happy that I'm part of this extraordinary family. To the bride and groom." we lifted our glasses. I had apple juice. Lakhe: "so that went well." Me: "it was sweet of him." Zingi was up next. Zingi: "Good afternoon to everyone who has joined us here today. My friend, you're a true pearl and precious gift. You are an amazing person inside and out. Masilakhe is a very lucky man to have a strong woman like you by his side. Many have tried to break you, but you stood firm and kept marching on. Spho, You're my light. I know that whatever I go through, I can always count on you. I wish you well in the journey you have entered with your husband and true happiness throughout it. All in God's name. I love you my friend." everyone clapped. I blew her a kiss. Sibuh helped her to her seat. Lakhe: "I hope she's okay. Kutheni engathi uzowa nje?" Me: "I told you it was hot here." the rest of the speeches were quite short because of the tight schedule we had. Lakhe and I had to go pack for tomorrow and Monday. Plus our flight was soon. Lakhe: "we're supposed to leave in the next hour." Me: "same flight as Sands?" Lakhe: "unfortunately. I was hoping to take a nap." Me: "Me too. And I want to take off this make up now. I'm sweaty. The photographer is done for the day." Lakhe: "please eat something love." Me: "not in front of everyone. I'll eat when I'm packing. You already say I eat like an elephant. Imagine what anyone else would think. A whale? Please." Lakhe: "uxolo mntu wam." we finally finished up and went to our bedroom. I washed my face thoroughly. Lakhe wore his casual clothes and helped unzip my dress. I took off the dress ndanxiba a white maxi dress that I got specifically for this instance. I packed our bags and we went to our car. Our dads were already leaving. The flight people were also ready. The others were driving down later on after the house was clean and secure. Lakhe drove me, my mom and Dubs. Sandile took the other car, not his two seater. To load Dumi, his wheelchair and Vuyi. We all drove to the airport arriving just a few minutes before boarding time. Lakhe walked phambili. Me: "baby, uyaphi? That is where you check in." Lakhe: "well....not us. Come." Me: "I'm so confused." we went through a private gate where a lady spoke briefly to Lakhe and he signed something. I was still a bit confused. Don't we need to take out our tickets or something? She scanned our bags and our bodies, hopping over to another side. Then we walked down a short private passage which led outside. A younger version of what I expected was in front of me. Me: "Lakhe, what's this?" Lakhe: "uhm.....surprise?" Me: "this is a private jet." Lakhe: "it is." Me: "where does it come from?" I walked closer to it. I've never seen one in real life. I wanted to hug it. Lakhe: "I rented it from a friend of mine." Me: "Why?" it looked so pretty. And dangerous. Lakhe: "you're my first

and only wife, you won't just be looking baby, you'll be flying in a private jet. Its time to board our flight."

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Chapter 64

We arrived in East London and two cars were waiting on the runway. We were driven to our hotel. Lakhe and I had decided to disappear together because sobabini besizozela and that meant couple napping. There was no way I was going to keep face with everyone tonight, I had to sleep. My mom went shopping for the presents I had asked for to present to family ka Sobukwe and dubs went home with Vuyi. Sandile and Dumi were somewhere together. Don't know. Don't care. I undressed and got into bed, so did Lakhe. Me: "you know we're not supposed to be doing this." Lakhe: "bazobona ba mabathini. I'm tired. I haven't slept." Me: "do you have any idea what's going to happen tomorrow?" Lakhe: "utata said its not going to be a big thing, I'm supposed to meet your family halfway our house, ndizokufaka endlini, introduce you to our small little family, then the pastor will bless us, bless our marriage and formally welcome you into the Sobukwe clan. Our families will then join us and afterwards have some dinner." Me: "this is so different. Not like a traditional wedding I had in mind. I thought I was gonna see umqombhothi, ndiseliswe amasi and whatever, ndinxityiswe the new attire from your fam." Lakhe: "ayikho necessary yonke lento babe. My father thinks its best oluhlobo. He never liked rituals anyway, the best way to secure uthando lwethu for him was through prayer, and I agree. He doesn't want to involve people that have disowned him and he doesn't know to mess up our union. If they can't accept him, what makes us think they'll accept our marriage." Me: "what happened to your uncle? Why didn't he come?" Lakhe: "he said he was busy. Our wedding was last minute." Me: "you don't seem as though you believe that." Lakhe: "I don't even care. Xa engafunanga ukuza andingeni ndawo mna. I'm happily married now. That's all I wanted." Me: "its only been a few hours bhuti." Lakhe: "feels like forever and ndiyayithanda le feeling." my phone rang. Me: "Oh gosh. Ngumama." Lakhe: "phendula tshi, tell her ulele and you don't know where I am." I answered. Me: "mama." Ma: "hello pumpkin. Unjani? You were tired when you got off the plane." Me: "I'm taking a young nap mama. Kodwa I'm okay." Ma: "baby?" Me: "yes mama?" Ma: "where is your husband?" Me: "I don't know ma. He said he'd be back a little later, he's sorting some things out." Ma: "okay, good. I want to talk to you alone." I looked at Lakhe, he looked back at me. Me: "about what mama?" Ma: "about you. Ikhona into ofuna undixelela yona my love?" Me: "no mama." Ma: "you do know that tomorrow is going to be a long day right?"

Me: "Yes..." Ma: "and you're going to have to work right through it unyamezele because uzobe usemzini." Me: "I understand mama." Ma: "okay ke mntanam. As long as you can manage. Use roomini yakho?" Me: "ewe ma. Wena you are still shopping?" Ma: "yes, later on uvuka kwakho ke funeke uzokwenza fitting for the last time. Ndizok'xelela xa sisiza." Me: "okay. Enkosi mama. Ndizova ngawe." Ma: "okay my angel." I hung up. Lakhe: "you think she suspects?" Me: "I've been acting funny. Oko ndingekho right. So maybe." Lakhe: "at least sifike naku 20 weeks baby before we say something." Me: "I'll be big as a whale by then." Lakhe: "you'll be a gorgeous whale." Me: "we'll have to be in hiding for a few weeks then. If I tell umama, uzoxelela utata, yena axelele owakho, who in return will tell uDubs, ozoxelela uVuyi, Vuyi axelele uNosi, its already all over town. We'll host a dinner and debut our pregnancy next month." Lakhe: "Wow. Debut? Ingathi yi album? Shame upeanut wam bethuna." he held my tummy. Lakhe: "awuzoba yi album ka mandoza my princess. You're daddy's precious milk." Me: "please don't say that. Please." Lakhe: "but-" Me: "No." Lakhe: "Xolo ke. Ndiyalala mna, I don't know about you. I'm really tired." Me: "my feet are aching." Lakhe: "There's a spa babe." Me: "but baaabby." Lakhe: "what?" Me: "can't you do it?" Lakhe: "uyi bully kodwa wena. I'm

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only doing this because I got you pregnant not because I love you so much." Me: "love you too babe." he got up on his knees and massaged my feet. Lakhe: "awukatyi." Me: "I did. I had a snack on the plane." Lakhe: "that doesn't count as eating. Paul emailed me a few diets that you can try out suitable for pregnant ladies and their babies. Jonga." I pushed away his phone. Me: "I know how to eat properly. I'm not stupid." Lakhe: "itya kaloku." Me: "I will." Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "okay. I'll eat." Lakhe: "order something ngoku please. We can start the diet tomorrow." I took the phone and called reception, I waited to be transferred then ordered my food at a restaurant. I hung up the phone. Lakhe: "kutheni ungafuni ukutya?" Me: "so that you can tell me I'm an elephant?" Lakhe: "baby you know I'm playing xandisitsho nje. I love that you're eating more because there's two of you now. I don't mind." Me: "maybe I'm scared too." Lakhe: "I'll be here babe. All the time. I'll help you with anything. If only you could stop yelling at me all the time." Me: "I never yell." Lakhe: "lately..... Inoba ndinqandelwa ngumntanam." I rolled my eyes. Me: "ndicela at least one more month where I can be the centre of your attention? Just one more." Lakhe: "you are. Along with peanut." Me: "there. That's the issue right there. Everything from now on is involving the baby, I just feel like, awundiboni all of a sudden. Nothing gets past me without mentioning peanut." he stopped and stared at me. Me: "I'm sorry...I sound

ungrateful." he still kept quiet. Now I'd pushed too far. I loved that he was excited about the baby, but every single second? For the rest of our lives, our child will be our focus and attention, I'm just asking for one last month. Just one. Lakhe: "you know a year ago, if someone had said to me I'd marry a woman that I truly love and admire and she'd carry my baby. I would simply have stared at them just like this." I didn't know what this meant. Lakhe: "you'll always be the centre of my attention. Kuqala wena before anything in my life. Why don't you believe me when I tell you this? I am so excited and happy to be your husband. Our baby means the world to me, and reason ndisithi you'll still be centre of my attention is because we're going to be doing this together. I know the hormones are playing with your emotions and making you crazy, yilento ndiske ndikuyeke ke ngoku because awuzenzi shame. Don't worry about anything, I got you. Uyeva?" Me: "I'm gonna cry again." Lakhe: "please don't. Uyayazi nam uzondikhalisa. Just stop. Come here." we cuddled together. Lakhe: "let me sleep baby ne. Just 3 hours qha." Me: "vasa izandla kqala." he went to the bathroom to wash his hands and came back. Lakhe: "awuzokwazi ulala kaloku sisi, you have to wait for your food." Me: "but I'm sleepy." Lakhe: "all I'm saying is when I wake up, that food better be in this room and half eaten. You'll eat the rest xandihleli." Me: "fine." he got into bed and started snoring. Me: "you cannot be serious. Lakhe!" cwaka umntu.

It was just after 7pm when I woke up. My phone was ringing, I looked at it. Me: "mama." I answered. Ma: "usalele mntanam?" Me: "yes ma." Ma: "love, we need to make sure izinto zakho ziyakulingana kakuhle. I'll be 10 minutes. I promise." Me: "okay mama. I'll be there just now." Ma: "thank you mntanam." I hung up. Lakhe: "hey...you barely ate. Baby, you're starting to worry me now." Me: "I'm just not hungry. This food looks disgusting and andifuni ughabha." Lakhe: "Spho, you ordered this food. How can it be disgusting? Uzolamba kude kuthini?" Me: "andilambanga." Lakhe: "don't lie to me. You are still bothered by that stupid comment I made as a joke now you're making my child suffer ngenxa yalonto!!" Me: "not everything is about umntanakho Masilakhe! I do not want to eat!!" Lakhe: "give me one reason why!" Me: "I don't have to explain myself to you!" Lakhe: "why do you always hurt me like this Spho? Why? Would it kill you to give a single fuck about the wellbeing of our

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baby?" I got dressed. Me: "I do care!!" Lakhe: "then act like it!" Me: "what?!" Lakhe: "undivile Sphosenkosi. I don't want to lose another baby again. I will not go through that because of your selfish reasons again!" I gasped. Me: "what did you just say!!!!" I screamed. Lakhe: "Spho-" I grabbed my shoes.

Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi!!" I walked out the room to my mom's. He followed me.
Lakhe: "I didn't mean that..." Me: "yet you said it." Lakhe: "why do you always have to run away from problems!" I stopped and looked back at him. Me: "this isn't a problem Lakhe! This is an argument that I have had enough of because apparently, I'm selfish!" Lakhe: "how are you not understanding this!" Me: "I understand very well, husband." I started walking again. Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "leave me alone Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Spho. This isn't the way to solve things. We're getting married again tomorrow." Me: "are we? U-sure?" I got to my mom's room and knocked. Lakhe: "what the hell does that mean!" the door opened. Lakhe: "Spho what does that mean!" Me: "it means leave me alone." Ma: "kwenzeka ntoni ngoku?" I tried walking into the room and my mother blocked me. Lakhe: "Spho.." I looked at him. He had tears in his eyes. Me: "why are you acting?" Lakhe: "please Spho." Me: "cela udlula mama." Mama: "awuyi ndawo until you sort whatever this is out because tomorrow usiwa emzini wakho. This, must end now!" Me: "we can't sort it out mama. Lakhe has blamed me for losing our child, saying I was selfish." Lakhe: "I don't blame you!" Me: "you just said it!!" Lakhe: "Spho, its not what I mean-" Me: "then what do you mean? That I shouldn't have run away? I shouldn't have driven the car and gotten into an accident? Now I'm killing your second baby again right?" Ma: "second baby?" Lakhe: "you don't want to eat! What am I supposed to do? I'm worried about my baby!!" Ma: "Both of you!!! Shut up!!" Lakhe hid his face and looked away. I crossed my arms. Ma: "you're pregnant?" Me: "ewe mama." I looked to the floor. Ma: "what is this argument about Lakhe?" Lakhe: "I can't mama..." Ma: "thetha nam kaloku nyana." Me: "mam-" Ma: "No Spho, all I've been hearing is accusations from your side. Masilakhe, open your mouth and talk." he breathed quietly. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi akafuni ukutya. I made a stupid comment the day before umtshato wethu that left her feeling insecure. Now she's starving herself." Me: "I'm not starving myself." Ma: "kanti uyatya?" Me: "I'm just not hungry!" Lakhe: "she hasn't eaten since last night." Ma: "Spho, you need to eat. This isn't for you, you need to stop being selfish now and think of your baby. You're feeling overwhelmed and maybe you're not ready to give up your freedom, well Tough! That's what being a mother is. You will have to sacrifice whatever it takes to make sure your child is happy and safe!" Me: "I can't mama." Mama: "you're gonna have to! You are gonna have to be strong. Masilakhe cares about you yilento efuna utye nje! Look at him! What man would run after you like this? Hayi man Sphosenkosi khula!" she shut her door. I walked back to my room. He walked in right behind me. Lakhe: "I'm sorry about what I said." I went to the bathroom and put on the shower. Lakhe: "Spho I don't blame you for anything." Me: "well you should." Lakhe: "No." Me: "Yeah. It was my fault. I don't know anything but to run from my problems. That's all I've ever done

ever since I ran away from home. The day I lost the child, I was running as usual. So I don't blame you for resenting that part of me." Lakhe: "I do not resent you." I undressed and got into the shower. Lakhe: "Spho...please my love." Me: "can I just have some time alone Masilakhe? Please." Lakhe: "I'm so sorry my heart. Ndicela undixolele." I let the water run from the top of my head down my body. Lakhe: "I'm not leaving this room, I'm not leaving you here alone. Umvile la mfundisi Spho, we're one now. I refuse to let you be oluhlobo wedwa. It was my mistake and unchosen words. Ndicela uxolo mntuwam." Me: "its okay." Lakhe: "please forgive me." Me: "I can't forgive you just now and pretend like we're best friends again." Lakhe: "I

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understand and....." he faded away. Me: "and what?" silence. Me: "baby?" I opened the shower door. Me: "Masilakhe where did you go?" I was starting to panic now. Me: "baabe!!!" Lakhe: "ndim lo. You don't have to scream." Me: "I wasn't screaming. Uvelaphi? You just disappeared. I thought someone came in and kidnapped you while we were talking." Lakhe: "I was taking off my clothes in the room. Uyandithanda kanti, best friend." he got in the shower. Me: "we still not talking." Lakhe: "I know." I let him massage my shoulders. Me: "I'll eat three meals a day and have regular fruit snacks in between." Lakhe: "and drink lots of water." Me: "fine and lots of water." Lakhe: "and exercise." Me: "why is the list getting longer?" Lakhe: "its the last item on the list." Me: "okay. And exercise." Lakhe: "and a lot of sex." Me: "so now you're pushing it." Lakhe: "it had to be tested." he chuckled. Me: "I can do this only, if I get a massage before I sleep daily." Lakhe: "done." Me: "I get to yell at you at least once-" Lakhe: "a week. Fine." Me: "that's all I have for now." Lakhe: "no...sex fantasies? Don't want me to dress up as a fireman?" Me: "firstly before we even continue, firemen are not my fantasy, never have been, doubt they ever will be. Why would that be your first guess?" Lakhe: "because you're smoking hot." Me: "ndik'libele kanene awuphilanga." Lakhe: "Yinton fantasy yakho ke baby?" Me: "a doctor..." Lakhe: "like itshomiyakho yase kapa. Hmm." Me: "not that doctor.... The down there doctor. You know?" he smiled slowly. Lakhe: "Mrs Sobz, What can I help you with today?" he said with a sexy Spanish accent. Me: "oh Doctor.... I'm having this itching in between my legs." I giggled. Me: "this is crazy." Lakhe: "just go with it." he pulled me closer. Lakhe: "itching? Does it hurt?" Me: "no doctor, it doesn't hurt at all." Lakhe: "mind if I take a look? Just sit on my desk and open up for me. Let's see." Me: "as you wish Doc..." he kneeled on the tile and opened my legs. Lakhe: "I see where the problem is, ma'am... I'm going to examine you further to figure out the source of your itch." Me: "please doctor....is it going to hurt?" Lakhe: "not if you sit still my lady." he inserted a finger. Lakhe: "I think here is our problem." Me:

"yes...." he slowly pulled his finger out and pushed it back in. Rubbing in and out slowly. Lakhe: "how is it feeling now Mrs Sobz?" Me: "Oh doctor....its getting better...." I moaned. Lakhe: "and can you feel it here?" he circled his finger inside me. Me: "Doctor!!" Lakhe: "look at me." I stared down at him. Lakhe: "how does it feel?" I couldn't speak. His eyes pierced at me, it felt like they generated the steam around us. Lakhe: "tell me..." he hissed. Me: "it feels. Sooo....good...my love." Lakhe: "your husband isn't here Mrs Sobz, its just you and me." Me: "please go faster..." Lakhe: "I think I'm hearing a car in the driveway." Me: "don't stoppp..." Lakhe: "Mrs Sobz...." Me: "no doctor....please." Lakhe: "are you gonna cum for me?" Me: "Yesss!!!" Lakhe: "open for daddy." Me: "I'm almost there." Lakhe: "There's someone at the door Mrs Sobz..." Me: "don't....." my voice faded away as I listened to a soft thump in my clit that was reaching high for the climax. It gripped the shelve and I came.....tumbling down like an earthquake erupted inside me. Lakhe: "oohh....damn." my body was shaking and finally froze into stone. Me: "Oh My God, Masilakhe." I finally caught my breath. Lakhe: "so doctors really turn you on!? WOW." I didn't have time for his comments right now, that was the greatest orgasm yet. What the hell just happened? Me: "why you surprised? I told you this. You acted on it." Lakhe: "you cheated on me in your mind with a doctor." Me: "where did that accent come from anyway? Geez I have to visit this doctor more often." Lakhe: "I'm still shocked." Me: "that was amazing." he came up to my lips and kissed me. Lakhe: "I want you laying on your chest." he pulled me out the shower. Me: "your phone is ringing." Lakhe: "ignore it." I lay on my chest on top of the bed. He put a pillow vertically under me. Me: "what are you going to do?" Lakhe: "your fantasy is doctors. Mine is..... A bit...weird." Me: "tell me."

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Lakhe: "don't judge me." Me: "have I ever?" Lakhe: "submissive maids." Me: "Where's your tie?" Lakhe: "in my bag, why?" Me: "Master, I beg of you to do as you please as long as you spare my life sir..." Lakhe: "be still Monalisa. I had a very long day, with demanding patients, those of which, I do not have for you. Poke your buttocks up. Shut your mouth and sit still." Me: "yes Maste-" Lakhe: "I said be still!!!" I squirmed under him, following his instructions. He caressed the back of my thighs and made his way up my buttocks. Lakhe: "you, Monalisa....you are obedient, you are respectful." he kissed each cheek and breathed in between them. My eyes flustered. Lakhe: "you are a good maid, iron my clothes and clean my house as well you do, you deserve a treat." he planted a kiss on it. Lakhe: "but I saw you talking to John outside. What was so funny?" Me: "permission to speak Master." Lakhe: "granted." Me: "John had asked me....." he was licking. Me: "he asked how would it be...."

then sucked. Me: "if I had dinner in his hutwith him.. I'm sorry Maste-" a hot slap came into contact with my right butt cheek and left it jiggling for mercy. Lakhe: "are you having relations without my permission Monalisa?" Me: "No master. I apologize." Lakhe: "am I going to have to punish you again Monalisa?" Me: "No sir." he continued to lick. I held onto the pillow. It was taking all of my strength not to let loose. I had to scream and let it all out. In a split second, he bulldozed right into me and paused. Lakhe: "ohh this feels so good." boy was he right. I began backing it up and he held my waist. Lakhe: "I'm gonna cum in a second if you do that again." I squeezed the walls around it. Lakhe: "staaap...." Me: "but fuck me kaloku. Uthen na ngoku uMaster." Lakhe: "humbled by..." he whispered. Lakhe: "Shhh...." he pulled out and in then worked a slow rhythm. Lakhe: "Spho....." Me: "yes daddy?" I moaned. Lakhe: "shit...." he went faster. Lakhe: "oh baby..." Me: "master...." Lakhe: "baby don't do that.." Me: "I want it harder master....punish me...." I moaned harder. Lakhe: "Baby....Stop!!!" Me: "I want it Master. Please don't stop my excellency." he thrust deep and held me tight. Lakhe: "shiiiiitt!!!!" he finally stopped and breathed in gasps. Lakhe: "nooooo..." he complained. Lakhe: "why did you do that? Whyyyy." Me: "submissive maids huh?" Lakhe: "Don't. Judge. Me." Me: "I'm sorry my excellency." his body shook. Lakhe: "that still has not kicked in." I giggled. Lakhe: "this was so much fun." Me: "you cheated on me in your head with a maid." Lakhe: "I did shame baby. And I think I'm leaving you for her." I laughed. Me: "Try." Lakhe: "Monalisa is so obedient and sweet and considerate. All she wants is for me to do as I please. Goodness, I think I'm getting turned on all over again." Me: "haha. Uphambene. Monalisa is dead now. Get up." Lakhe: "urrgg...I miss her." he got up and lay beside me under the covers, I put my gown on since I was feeling a tad bit chilly. Lakhe: "I wouldn't mind arguing everyday if I got that afterwards. Shit, you could yell all you want at me." Me: "good, because I need to see my gynae regularly." Lakhe: "and Monalisa needs to be rehired." Me: "as you wish my excellency." Lakhe: "hmmm." he kissed my lips. Lakhe: "I need you to know that I love you. Even with the role playing, you're my Monalisa." Me: "I'll be whatever you need baby. I have 16 personalities. You just need to pick and choose who you want that night." Lakhe: "and that is why I married you my bipolar maid." I giggled. We were interrupted by a knock on the door. Sands: "I know you're in there. So open the door, or I'm breaking it." Lakhe: "we're naked." Sands: "so am I. Its hammertime. Open!" Lakhe: "Sandile its my wedding night. Can I have some time with my wife please?" Sands: "tomorrow, will be your time. Utata wants you at home. Ndizolanda wena apha. We have to prepare for early tomorrow morning." Lakhe: "just 1 more hour." Sands: "I'm not waiting that long." Lakhe: "Spho isn't

feeling well Sandile, she hasn't eaten all day and she's been throwing up. I can't just leave, can I at least make sure she's asleep before I leave?" Sands:

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"Why didn't you just say so? Spho, is everything okay mntase? You need anything?" Lakhe: "she's in the toilet as we speak. I'm sure akakuva." Sands: "oh...I'm sorry about that. Look, take your time. Make sure she's okay. If akabi right, call me. I can even pick you up ekseni ngomso. Just keep me updated." Lakhe: "I will. Thanks bro." Sands: "take care of her. Cheers." we waited a few minutes. Me: "do you think he bought that?" Sands: "of course I didn't!!!! GET OUT!! I'm kidding. Guys I'm bored. When are we going home?" Lakhe: "Sandile. I'm getting married tomorrow. We're leaving on Monday. Ziphi friends zakho?" Sands: "well, Dumi is sleeping. Sibuhleli neza girls. I'm bored. Open." Lakhe: "no." Sands: "Please? Please. Please. Please. Please. Please. Please." Me: "open for him. Entertain him. I can't listen to that all night." Lakhe: "uyamazi baby uSandile unjani. I want to sleep mna!" Sands: "so you're not gonna let me in?" Me: "oh hayi Lakhe omnye umntana." Lakhe got up and sighed. He wore his gown and opened the door. Sands: "Yaay!" he walked in. Lakhe: "were you smoking?" Sands: "just a little bit." Lakhe: "Sandile I hope you didn't forget uDumi somewhere nhe!!" he got dressed. Sands: "I didn't. He's asleep. Ndivela kwi room yakhe." Lakhe: "have you eaten?" Sands: "no." Lakhe: "phakama ke masambe." Sands: "isn't Spho coming?" Me: "oh no honey. I gots to sleep. Long day ahead for me." Sands: "not really. My dad said we're not going full on traditional. He's still a bit touchy about his family issue, and additionally to that, we're adopted so the ceremony won't be as usual weddings. I've already accepted you into our family. We're doing this officially tomorrow and we're gonn chill." Lakhe: "and my wife won't be wearing those clothes for more than a day. Khange ndifune makoti mna. My beautiful wife gots to flaunt her weave. Siphi dan." Sands: "oh wow, hey you." Me: "cela nihambeni guys. None of you are allowed in the bride's room. I don't know what you're still doing here. You can't be telling me these things either." Sands: "hayi ke andiyokhabhati mna. Masambe mkhuluwng wam.." Lakhe: "don't ever say that again. It sounds disgusting." sands: "heard it as soon as I said it." Lakhe: "I love you baby." he kissed me. Me: "be safe. Stay alert. I love you too." Lakhe: "alert? That's new." Sands: "bye Spho. Happy dreams." they walked out the door. Lakhe: "so...any updates?" Sands: "everything still going according to plan. You need to set up a meeting with Fernandez. So that we can hand over what we owe." Lakhe: "will do."

Sunday morning I was woken up by singing and chanting. It actually really pissed me off but I kept quiet ndayovula umnyango. The women came in, my friends, mom, the whole shebang, I rushed to the bathroom and kneeled in front of the toilet throwing up. Ma: "you okay there hun?" Me: "I'm fine ma, can you please turn it down a notch. I'm already feeling dizzy." she shushed the ladies. Me: "Uphi uZingi?" Mama: "akhange aze, she wasn't feeling well." Me: "yeah she did look unwell izolo naye." I got up ndayongena kwi shower. After showering I went to the bedroom where I was to get dressed. I didn't like having people in my room xandinxiba. It was a bit of an issue for me. Me: "mama, what's gonna happen today?" Mama: "its going to be a beautiful celebration mntanam. Don't be scared." Me: "just that I would love to know beforehand." Mama: "ayizoba intense wethu. La mzi doesn't do the ancestor ritual thing. Utshilo uDubs ukuba, this is more of an introduction lunch, early dinner." Me: "but then the ancestors won't know me." Mama: "my love, why are you worried about ancestors now? Uthembela ku Thixo nje wena mntanam, why uzobane stress se-ancestor. Not even our family has taught you that." Me: "I just thought that introduction to ancestors was the most important part of this ceremony." Mama: "luckily olusapho lufana nolwethu. Awulahlekanga mntanam. Don't you worry. This day is to bind the two families together through prayer and blessings." now my heart was at ease. Me: "Enkosi

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mama. I feel much better now." she kissed my cheek. Mama: "my baby girl has grown so much." Me: "barely. I feel so clueless." Mama: "you'll be fine as the day goes honey." after I got dressed, I let them brush back my hair ndanxityiswa some head scarf and they made up my face. I put on white superstar sneakers under iskhakha sam. Mama: "you look gorgeous." Me: "pity I'll have to take it off in a minute." I checked my phone and found messages from my groom. "My wife, I'm looking forward to seeing you today. I hope you woke up with a happy smile on your face because last night was the last night you're spending on your own. I love you. Can't wait for you to be by my side." I smiled. Mama: "siyahamba kengoku my love." I was wearing a long white Cinderella dress, (in Xhosa attire) it had black beads in a beautiful pattern all over. I had a short umbrella cape made from the same material and beads. My mother gave me a colorful necklace and fitted it on my neck. My head scarf matching my outfit and of course the white and black sneaker. We made our way to the Sobukwe mansion, which I remember not spending more than an hour in. Or was it two hours? I wonder where Stella was. When we reached the gate, my ladies started singing again. My ears were ringing and I could feel my head pounding. Why now? I was led toward

the gate ndingaboni the way because ndijonge phantsi. I really needed a glass of water or a headache pill. My eyes were starting to fluster again. The singing was now fading with praising voices and calling of clan names. Me: "mamaa." I whispered. She couldn't hear me. Me: "mom." no response. She wasn't even beside me anymore. I became so utterly confused then the hyperventilating started. "babe?" I could see his legs. Looking up felt like my head was going to be too heavy. Me: "I don't know what is happening." Lakhe: "how? You feeling sick?" I nodded. Me: "why are you here?" Lakhe: "I'm your husband, remember?" we walked together inside the house. Of course I didn't expect any less from the Sobz. The house was fully decorated in yellow and white and his family was sitting at the table, which my family also joined. A table that had small brown grass place-mats and silver cutlery. Our friends had a separate table opposite. Lakhe: "ndizokunikezela kwi family yam. You're part of me, my life and our family now. You left your home, to join mine. My parents have become yours and so have yours become mine. Ndicela uzohlala phantsi." he led to a big place mat that had a red pillow and sat me down. He sat next to me. Me: "this so exciting. I don't even know what's going to happen next." I whispered. Lakhe: "bendikubalisele nje baby izolo. My dad's pastor is coming to bless us, our marriage and welcoming you into our family. Also, nabantu basekhaya will join us here, nabakokwenu. We will have a prayer session, my aunt wanted to keep at least one part of tradition, so uzok'nxibisa after this then come back for advice and so forth sigqibe." the pastor kneeled in front of us. He started his first verse which went way over my head. Again, I wasn't feeling well. Something smelt really off here and I seemed to be the only one smelling it. Maybe because I was pregnant? I did feel sick kwaksasa so... Pastor: "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends." smell getting stronger. It wasn't making me nauseas at all, just weighing me down through the headache. I endured throughout the entire blessing in pain. Lakhe looked at me, I could feel him staring ngoku ndijonge phantsi. My heart was breaking because I was missing out on my own wedding because of this baby! I couldn't focus, I couldn't hear, most of all the pain was becoming unbearable. I didn't know what was happening around me. I kept taking silent deep breaths. The families came to sit around us. Dabawo started to pray. Through her prayer I felt my eyes become watery. This woman knew how to pull at heart strings. After the blessing, I was taken by uDubs, to go change my clothing. By this time, I was completely unseeing. I had a hazy vision. Me:

"mama.....mama....." I stopped walking. Dubs: "Yinton my love? Uright?" my knees were shaking and I was ready to fall flat on my face. Me: "I can't walk." she stared at me confused. Dubs: "njani kengoku?" Me: "I'm smelling.....something....I can't." I held on to her. Dubs: "Masilakhe!!!!!" was the last I heard.....

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Chapter 65

I woke up in a very bright room. There was nobody in it except me. Lying flat on the bed. What happened? Why does this keep happening? Me: "Lakhe." I cried. Lakhe: "I'm right here." I looked to my right and there he was. He looked exhausted. Me: "am I dreaming?" Lakhe: "unfortunately not." Me: "sizothini apha." the doctor walked in. Doc: "Mrs Sobukwe." Me: "why am I here?" Doc: "well, There's a lot of reasons that cause you dizziness and fainting, unfortunately, you have most of those reasons. Not eating enough, low iron, being dehydrated, not getting enough sleep. This is very dangerous for your baby ma'am." Me: "is he okay?" Doc: "the baby is fine.....for now. You need to slow things down and focus on you now. You need to take care of yourself. Are you taking your vitamins?" Me: "uhm....." Doc: "Sphosenkosi, this is not healthy. If you want this baby to survive, you need to by all means take proper care of you. You're his incubator. He literally has no one else in this world but YOU. He's depending on YOU. He needs you Spho. Those tiny little hands and feet have to grow properly from now onwards. This is scary I know but you have a lot of support from your family. Okay? I'm keeping you here for the night for observation." I nodded. She walked out. Me: "I'm sorry." Lakhe looked at me. He wasn't exhausted. He had been crying. He got up from his chair and walked out. I stayed alone in that cold room, staring down at my tummy. It was my own fault that I was here. I had been begged and pleaded with ngu Lakhe nomama but I didn't listen. Now I was all alone in this place. A nurse walked in. Me: "can you please call my husband for me? He just walked out." Nurse: "alright, your mother is just outside. Can I let her in?" I knew I was getting a lecture. Better now than later. Me: "yes." she went out to call my mom. When she walked in, I saw how worried she looked. Ma: "oh..my angel." she came to hug me. Me: "molo mama." Ma: "uziva njani?" Me: "I'm fine mama. Uphi utata?" Ma: "uhm....he left.." Me: "why?" Ma: "don't worry about that now." Me: "why not mama?" Ma: "utatakho ayimvuyisi into yoba uxokile. Trying to hide your pregnancy by getting married. Are you even sure ukuba uyamthanda uLakhe? You only met him a few months ago." Me: "mama I found out I was pregnant the day before our wedding. The day we left together sabuya emini. Ndiyamthanda uLakhe. I wouldn't have agreed to

marry him if I didn't. The only reason, we didn't tell you ngalamini was because of this exactly, thinking our marriage is because of the baby." Ma: "but I asked mntanam." Me: "you asked me on Tuesday. I took the test on Thursday night. It came out negative and Lakhe decided siye kwa gqirha to make sure nothing is wrong. The doctor said that my hcg level might have been low. The scan showed that the baby was 13 weeks." Ma: "I understand mntanam. Ndizothetha naye utatakho, you know he doesn't get mad long." Me: "kuyabanda apha." Ma: "they have the heater on kodwa. I'll bring you into yokombatha." Me: "uLakhe umnkile?" Ma: "I think so. Just give him some time love. He's goin-" Sandile appeared on the doorway. Ma: "mandiyokulanda ingubo yakho love. Ndizobuya." Me: "thanks mama." she walked out. Sandile sat down. Me: "what was that about?" Sands: "what?" Me: "wena nomama. Like some weird vibe." Sands: "I didn't feel a vibe. How are you feeling?" Me: "I'm okay. Just a bit hazy." Sands: "hmm...and how's Sands jnr?" Me: "actually igamalakhe ngu Peanut." Sands: "over my dead body." I laughed. Sands: "sumhoya uLakhe. He'll come around soon enough, he's just a bit shaken." Me: "but he warned me and I ignored him. Instead, picked a fight with him izolo." Sands: "but you made up for it, ndihambe naye niright." Me: "yeah, still." Sands: "you have pretty doctor." Me: "I thought you had a girlfriend." Sands: "urgg... Don't be uLakhe please. We all know I don't do relationships." Me: "Khanya is a sweet girl, she will never break your heart."

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Sands: "I know that. But I will break hers. So its for the best." Me: "how will you break her heart?" Sands: "I don't wanna get into it. Anyway, the ceremony today was beautiful." Me: "I ruined it by collapsing." Sands: "you didn't ruin anything. You were officially introduced to our family." Me: "I don't remember any of it. I don't remember any of it Sandile, its like I blacked out." Sands: "don't worry about that man Spho. Everything is going to be fine. My dad is so excited, it literally took the whole family to prevent him from coming here." Me: "wonwatyiswa Yinton?" Sands: "its his first time being a grandpa. And his first son just got married." Me: "that's sweet." sisahleli sincokola njalo, Dubs came in. Dubs: "molweni." Me: "molo dabawo." she gave Sandile a look. He looked back at her. Then came the awkward silence. Dubs: "ndicela uthetha noSpho Sandile." Sands: "oh, you don't say. Ndizok'bona ngomso Spho." Me: "bye Sands." he walked out. Dubs: "akaphilanga lamntana." I smiled. Dubs: "Sphosenkosi, ndiqondbe mandize kuwe ndizokubuza personal lento ubuyiva pha kulandlu." Me: "I can't describe it dabawo. Bekunuka ingathi kunento efileyo or ebolileyo. But then again, I was imagining things because ibimane ngophela iphinde ibuye." Dubs: "kwenzeka ntoni after unukiselwe yilento?" Me: "bendiqalwe yintloko before that, so after elavumba yaqinisa intloko, I

couldn't hear what was being said. I didn't know bendisenza ntoni or ndiphi." Dubs: "then..." Me: "I got upset, ndazama ukuphefumla. Waqala wena uthandaza after some time, which made me cry. Ngoku undisa eroomin, I got even weaker and akwazi uhamba, kungcangcazela amadolo. I couldn't see, ibingathi kukho inkungu...that's it. I don't know what happened next." Dubs: "sekhe yenzeka lento before?" Me: "no dabawo. I just faint usually." Dubs: "zonke ezi zinto zange zakwehlela anywhere else?" I shook my head. She sat and looked at the bed deep in thought. Me: "the doctor says I'm dehydrated and andityi enough." she sighed. Dubs: "ayiyo leyo." Me: "njani dubs?" Dubs: "kukho umoya omdaka kulandlu. Akekho mnye futhi, mininzi." Me: "yimimoya yantoni ngoku leyo dabawo?" Dubs: "Andiyazi ncam, kodwa ndithe ndongena pha ndava ukuba something is wrong. Njebe ndithandaza ndiboniswa izithinzi zabantu zisondele kuni. Yilento ndingayekanga ukuthandaza. Ikhona into efihlwe kulandlu Sphosenkosi, and ayikufuni wena pha. Ukuba ufuna uphila mntanam, ungak'linge usondele pha kulandlu.." Me: "but Dabawo, kuk'lo mnyeni wam pha." Dubs: "ndiyaphinda ndiyatsho, ukuba ufuna ukuphila Sphosenkosi, wena nomntanakho, sukuphinda usondele kulandlu, hlala nomnyeni wakho endlini yakho." she got up and walked out. My heart was beating fast ingathi kukhala igubhu. What the hell was happening? What spirits are these? Why zifuna mna? While I was still thinking and confused, my mom was back with the blanket I'd asked for. Mama: "hey my baby." she put it on me. Me: "enkosi mama." Mama: "what's wrong?" Me: "nothing." Mama: "come on Spho, ndiyakwazi. Ungumntanam. Thetha nam." she gave me a Tupperware container with food. I opened it and for the first time I was hungry. I ate quietly and drank water. Me: "Uphi uLakhe?" Mama: "I haven't seen him." I didn't know whether to tell my mother what uDubs said to me or not. I, myself couldn't believe it. Yena uzothini? Mama: "Spho, something is bothering you." Me: "just that, Dubs thinks There's something lurking in the Sobukwe house." Mama: "uthetha nganton ngoku." Me: "like spirits. Uthi, she saw shadows walking toward mna noLakhe while she was praying." Mama: "hayi wethu Sphosenkosi. There's no such thing.....is there?" Me: "I don't know mama. Uthi she reckons kukho into efihlwe kulandlu and they don't want me there that's why it affected me alone." Mama: "wena ubenze ntoni? Hayi akholonto apha Spho. You just need to eat healthily, get enough rest and stop stressing." Me: "okay ma." we sat and chatted for a while longer. She was actually waiting on me to fall asleep. When I was finally giving in, I saw my dad walk in. Khaya: "how is she." I was too scared to face him so

I went with ubuthongo bam instead. Mama: "she's fine. She misses you. And ucela uxolo." heee umama. Khaya: "oh." ouch. Khaya: "its late. Masimnike space alale. We'll be back in the morning." I heard my mom get up. She kissed my cheek. Mama: "sweet dreams baby." she walked out. My father followed after her.

The next morning, I was up early ndisitya breakfast and my pills. Sandile walked in. Sands: "you ready? Its time for us to go." Me: "go where?" my heart did that thing again making it hard to breath for a second. Sands: " we're going home. Ndikhumbula ibhayi lam mna. Bekukdala ngoko." I sighed. Thank God. Me: "who's making noise outside." Sands: "your father in law. Inoba ucimba you gave birth yesterday. He's so excited to see you." I laughed. Me: "ndisezovasa ndilungise though. You guys are early. Uphi uLakhe?" Sands: "he didn't come home." trust Sandile to tell you the blatant truth when you don't want to hear it. Sands: "he's probably fine. Let's get you up missy." Me: "awuva ke wena. I just said ndizovasa. So wait outside. Ingathi nguwe lo u-excited." Sands: "can't wait to see my nephew grow." Me: "he or she is still developing. It will be a very long time for him or her to pop out." Sands: "I'll wait.. I'm his godfather right?" Me: "I haven't even decided that." Sands: "is he kicking? He's gonna be a rugby boy like me." Me: "Sandile. Leave." I chuckled. Sands: "mxim. Fine." he went out. I got ready in the mean time, I was probably stalling because I wanted Lakhe to appear. He didn't. My mom arrived as well. Me: "Mommy." I hugged her. Mama: "oooohh. When last did I get this." Me: "I just want to say thank you mama. For everything You've done for me until now. You've been my support, my shoulder and everything else in between. I don't know what I would be without you." Mama: "awww sthandwasam. It is a pleasure. I want you to pass this on to your baby too, its a wonderful feeling to be appreciated." Me: "I will mama. I'm done now. Nihamba nonke nooSandile?" Mama: "no honey. Ndizizele mna." Me: "sibuyela ebhayi ngoku." Mama: "apparently so. If only sinofumana uMasilakhe Sobukwe." Me: "I think I'm hearing his voice in the passage." my mom went to check, wabuya naye. Lakhe: "Molweni mama." Mama: "ewe ke." she walked out. Me: "where did you go last night? You left me here by myself." Lakhe: "Are you ready to leave?" Me: "Are you mad at me?" Lakhe: "No. I'm not." Me: "then kwenzeka ntoni? Why aren't we talking?" Lakhe: "kanti senza ntoni ngoku?" Me: "Lakhe, I said I was sorry." Lakhe: "what are you sorry for?" Me: "for not listening to you. Yesterday morning was hectic, I didn't have a chance to eat." Lakhe: "that is not your fault Spho. Andiqumbanga, I just want us to leave this place." Me: "you need to tell me why unje. You disappeared all night. Ubuya u-moody." Lakhe: "it just brings back painful memories Spho. I don't want to watch you sleep in a hospital bed. Ndicela

sihambe apha!" Me: "my discharge papers-" Lakhe: "I've already signed them." I followed him out. Rob: "Hi angel!" Me: "hello tata." Rob: "so I heard the good news. Kwathini ungandixeleli?" Me: "we'd just found out tata." Lakhe: "we'll have to drive down to PE. The weather isn't good for flying." Rob: "you can take my car. Its in the garage endlini. Sinoqala pha." I swallowed hard. Me: "actually, I have to go to uDabawo. Ucele ndiyombona eMdantsane before we leave. So uzondifumana khona." Lakhe: "fine." Rob: "but uye etown namhlanje. I called her 20 minutes ago." Lakhe: "uzoyo dibana naye town kaloku." oh thank goodness. Everything went accordingly. My mother and I were dropped off at town and the boys went to the house. We caught up with uDubs and helped her with her shopping. Thank goodness she didn't touch the spirits subject, not only would it have freaked me out all over again, but I know my mom wasn't ready to agree on that whole thing. They chatted about izinto zabo and I texted my friend asking their whereabouts. Zintle: "we at the hotel girl, silinde uSibu then sihambe naye.

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How are you feeling?" Me: "like shit. But I'm okay." Zintle: "you scared us izolo. It was so bizarre. The bride collapsing during her ceremony! Yoh. That was intense." Me: "don't be dramatic." Zintle: "it was SCARY. For a second I thought you were poisoned like in those black and white movies." I laughed. Me: "uphambene kanene. Nothing such man. Just dehydrated and low on iron." Zintle: "utye ke i-fish sisi." Me: "LOL. Fish yodwa ne?" Zintle: "ayisecace kengoku. Uzotshintsha nge lobsters and prawns." Me: "euuww." Zintle: "hayi ungak'linge. You used to love those." Me: "USED TO. Hows Fez?" Zintle: "une stress. He's gay again." Me: "hahaa! Ebeyeke nini?" Zintle: "Friday night. Ngoku ebeqalisa uhlala noSandile, waske wayi ndodana yase wisile. Khange umbone wena." I giggled. Me: "so u-stresswa Yinton? That he's gay again?" Zintle: "ewe kaloku, ebefuna uhlala ne boys zamgxotha." I laughed out loud. Me: "Whyyy! Wenze ntoni?" Zintle: "andimazi umoshe xabek'theni. Unikwe uN.R. obomvu ke." Me: "No Return? Hahahaha!!!" Zintle: "so he's stressed uyilonto ke. Have you spoken to Zingi?" Me: "not yet. You?" I received a text from Lakhe. Zintle: "I'll call her just now. Ndimgqibele izolo. I didn't tell her about you, I didn't want her to worry ekude for nothing." Me: "thanks babe. Sizodibana ebhayi. Got to go now." Zintle: "mwah!" I looked for my mom then read the message. Lakhe: "ndiyeza." was all it said. I couldn't find my mom in the shop and I was panicking. "can I help?" a voice behind me said. Me: "I can't find my mom." Him: "awusemdala." I looked behind me. The man smiled. Me: "do I know you?" he shook his head. "ndingu Siyanda Kusile. I'm here to meet a friend of mine but as usual, lawyers are always late." Me: "and who's always early?" Siya: "I am. What's your name?" Me: "my name is Married and not interested.

Nice to meet you Siyanda." he smiled. Siya: "all my friends call me Yaya. So what do yours call you?" Me: "you don't give up, do you." Siya: "its a thing of mine. At least tell me where you work or live." Me: "you don't have to worry yourself about that because I'm not from here." Siya: "Oh? Then where?" Me: "ndisuka ebhayi." Siya: "wow...." Me: "Yeah. You don't have to stress about your imaginary journey." Siya: "you're funny yazi... Ndihlala ebhayi by the way. In Summerstrand. My practice is in Newton Park." Me: "what do you practice? Witchcraft?" he laughed. Siya: "medicine." so witchcraft. Me: "you're a pharmacist?" he chuckled. Siya: "I practice witchcraft, remember?" my phone beeped a message. Lakhe: "Where you?" Me: "I have to go bhuti. My husband is outside." he gave me his business card. Siya: "tell him I say hi." Mama: "Spho!" I hid the card. Where the fuck was a bin when you needed it? Me: "oh there you are." Ma: "who's this?" Me: "this is my friend Siyanda." Mama: "uh huh. Okay. Its time to go." Me: "bye." he waved. Me: "Uphi uDubs?" Mama: "there she is baby, go say goodbye." where had the two of you disappeared to in the first place? I went to say my goodbyes to Dabawo and joined mama in the car with Lakhe. We drove to the hotel to drop my mom off kutata then left for PE. Me: "so I'm in the shop texting, this whole time ndilinde umama noDubs. They end up disappearing and this guy approaches me. He starts asking if he could help me. Ndimbuze ungubani Uthi ungu Siyanda. And started chatting like we were buddies or some stupid ish. He even gave me his business card." Lakhe: "hmm..." Me: "I couldn't find a nearby bin to throw it away, then mama came out of nowhere-" Lakhe: "why do you wanna throw it away?" Me: "I'm not gonna use it mos." Lakhe: "so ebekuplita?" Me: "no...actually he friendzoned me very sly." Lakhe: "is it." Me: "we're supposed to be laughing about this. I don't know what to do or say to get through to you. I already feel responsible for all that happened." Lakhe: "I didn't want my family to find out about peanut so soon. Now everyone is excited and happy." Me: "but they should be." Lakhe: "except your dad. He's angry at me. I betrayed him. His trust." Me: "hayi tshin Lakhe sibadala and we're married. What betrayal is this now? I understand disappointment

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but betrayal? Hayi noko." Lakhe: "I feel like I broke his trust." Me: "I know. I feel that way too, kodwa asizohlala siqumbile ngenxa yalonto. There's no turning back now." Lakhe: "ubutyile?" Me: "yes, before kufike uSandile esbhedlele. I need water though." Lakhe: "I'll get some at the next garage." Me: "Sandile says you didn't sleep at home." Lakhe: "I was at the hotel. I wanted to be alone." Me: "ubukhe wathetha nomamakho?" Lakhe: "not recently." Me: "do you know where she is?" Lakhe: "nope. All I know is that umnke phakathi evekini." Me: "how was the ceremony izolo?" Lakhe: "bingekho i-need yayo

but you were insisting so much, it was lovely though." Me: "why doesn't your family do rituals? Actually, a wedding isn't even a ritual, how come kungenzwanga a normal celebration?" Lakhe: "we're just not into it. Utata prefers blessings from God." Me: "you didn't feel anything wrong or funny during the process?" Lakhe: "nope. Everything felt right. I was happy that I'd gotten to that place in my life with you. Grateful that you're my wife." Nothing at all? Why is it that ndim noDubs qha that feel that house is creepy? Lakhe: "you looked as if you were in pain toward the end..." Me: "it was the headache and the nausea." Lakhe: "is there a way of decreasing these symptoms? I don't want you to suffer like this ngenxa yam." Me: "its okay baby. Ndiyozela kengoku." Lakhe: "hayi ke iworse ndizoshiyeka ndodwa ?" Me: "just an hour baby." Lakhe: "okay ke. Lala." I lowered my seat and took a rest.

I woke up a little while later and we were in PE, just didn't know this area. Me: "hey..." Lakhe: "hey... Ubundozelisa wena. I stopped at Port Alfred to take a nap too." Me: "you should've woken me up." I took the bottle of water and drank some. Lakhe: "you looked too cute. I couldn't." Me: "siyaphi?" Lakhe: "Malabar. I just thought we'd visit my late mother's grave." my heart got stuck in my throat. I did not expect this. Me: "oh. Now?" Lakhe: "yeah, I need to show her my wife." Me: "I see." Lakhe: "why are you nervous?" Me: "you spring things up on me all the time Lakhe. I don't even get to prepare." Lakhe: "its not like you're going to meet her. I just want to be there. Can we do this for me please?" Me: "Fine." he drove into the cemetery and found a spot to park. Lakhe: "come." we walked together in the quiet graveyard. This place kind of freaked me out. Lakhe: "here." I stared at the tombstone. Nolitha Geraldine Mbumbane. He squatted next to it. Lakhe: "Hi ma... Ndim unyana wakho. Ndizokubulisa namhlanje and ndizok'xelela ukuba ndide ndamfumana umfazi. Igamalakhe ngu Sphosenkosi, and sizolakha elikhaya as you wished ngemini wandizala ngayo. Sondela baby." I took only one step. Lakhe: "don't you wanna say anything?" I shook my head. Lakhe: "okay. Maybe next time." he spent a few more minutes talking there and finally said his goodbyes. I walked straight to the car. He followed me in. Lakhe: "what happened?" Me: "graves creep me out." Lakhe: "you do know that sooner or later-" Me: "don't." Lakhe: "I didn't. I'm just saying." he drove the car. I stayed quiet the entire way home. We finally drove into our driveway. Me: "ayingo Sandile lo? How did he get here so fast?" Lakhe: "you really want an answer to that? Umazi uSandile akanangqondo." we got out the car sayongena endlini. Sands: "hey, hey! I made snacks. Dinner will be ready in 30 minutes." Me: "ufike nini?" Sands: "its been a while now." Me: "Uphi uDumi?" Sands: "he.....asked if I could drop him off at his house." Lakhe: "ku Zingi?" Sands nodded. Me: "is he staying there?"

Sands: "no, he'll be back later. Uzoyolandwa ngu Sibú at 17h15, in time for dinner." Me: "okay." I went to the bedroom, taking my laptop and switching it on. Lakhe: "what are you doing?" Me: "my boss wants a full proposal on my project on Wednesday. Did you get a hold of Luyolo?" Lakhe: "yes, I'm meeting him in an hour at the office." Me: "can I come?" Lakhe: "the doctor said rest." Me: "she didn't say Die." he stared at me. Me: "I'm sorry." Lakhe: "Awuyi ndawo. Matter of fact, give me that."

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No work today please. Just get better. All this will still be waiting for you when you're better." he took my laptop and iPad.. Me: "Geez. Even the iPad? What about my Facebook and instagram?" Lakhe: "you have all that on your phone. Have some of the snacks Sandile made, he used the ingredients I got from the doctor, watch television and laugh." Me: "fine." I got up and went to the lounge. Me: "fruit snacks? I thought you meant chips and marshmallows!" Sands: "its healthy. Eat up." Me: "can I At Least have some yogurt?" Lakhe: "plain only." Me: "whaaat!!!" Lakhe: "hahaaa! Kidding. Itya mntuwam." he went back to the bathroom. Sandile gave me yogurt. Me: "Sands?" Sands: "yes my dollar." I didn't know how to approach this topic with him. Me: "why doesn't your family do traditional things?" Sands: "same reason as yours." Me: "even weddings?" Sands: "it was dad's idea. He's crazy secretive about it though. Once said no blood should be spilled on the estate grounds. Human or animal." he shrugged. Sands: "I think he's just shy to admit that he's scared of slaughtering." I smiled faintly. Me: "so you've never slaughtered on the estate?" Sands: "if by 'you', you mean me, No." Me: "I meant the whole family." Sands: "nope. Not as far as I can remember. Are you worried about ancestors not knowing you?" Me: "Not really. I just think its a bit weird, you know." Sands: "its nothing really. I don't think my ancestors even know ME. You're part of our family regardless, We will protect you from anything. Sukoyika." I nodded. Lakhe walked into the lounge and kissed my forehead. Lakhe: "Sandile when are you leaving my house?" Sandile gasped holding his chest. Sands: "I cook you dinner and you're throwing me out in the streets all by myself?" Lakhe: "it was a simple question, hoity toity. There was no need for drama." Sands: "how could you bhuti!" Lakhe: "Mxim. Ndiphumile. I'll be back soon my love." Me: "bye baby." he walked out. Sands: "he melts whenever I call him bhuti." Me: "why don't we open the other side of the house. For you, Sibú and Dumz?" Sands: "that's a good idea. I'll watch them do all the work xabefikile." I giggled. The shows on TV were quitehow do I put this lightly? Boring. They bored me. I didn't understand half of what was happening. I finally ended up seeing an episode of Dragon's Den. Finally something interesting. Hours went by. My mom had called to tell me they'd arrived at home. So did Zintle and

Fez who wanted to come over since I mentioned Sandile cooked dinner, I had to do damage control for that and so Sibuy arrived at last with Dumi. We were just waiting for the man of the house. Me: "hey, how's Zingi doing? Is she okay?" Dumi: "she's fine now, ebeye kwa gqirha and apparently she has high blood pressure so I need to keep checking on her regularly. She's almost 6 months pregnant now. Things are getting tougher. I don't know why this pregnancy is so complicated." Me: "the baby is going to be fine Dumi. Zingi can and will take care of herself properly." Dumi: "and she says you should too. She'll email you the right exercise for your trimester." Me: "Oh My Goodness! Everyone is acting as though I am not capable of carrying this baby." Sands: "No...its not that. Its just that, you're a bit relaxed. Too relaxed." Me: "he's okay in there. He's part of me, he's a warrior." Sands: "now I wish I was carrying him." Me: "that's creepy-" Sands: "in my arms Spho. Your mind though. Dinner is ready. Dumi help me with the plates." Dumi: "really Sandile? Because I can reach the high cupboards?" Sands: "you always tell me to treat you like you're normal, now I'm being too normal?" Dumi: "why do you have to give me impossible tasks? WHY!" Me: "stop! You're like cat and dog, always fighting, and Sandile please let Boogie out he looks like he's about to pee. Dumi, your duty kuqoqosha izitya uzifake ku machine and switch it on. Sibuy packs the dishes when they're clean. Sandile takes care of Boogie's poops outside." Sands: "Boogie is potty trained. He doesn't shit or pee in the house." Me: "outside, I said." I called Masilakhe. He's been gone for hours and it was dinner time already. Rebecca set up the table, I went to wash my

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hands. When I came back, Lakhe came in. Me: "tried to call you." Lakhe: "I think my battery died. I cannot believe I put my company in Harold's hands, you know he almost lost our Telkom deal?" Me: "NO!! What! How?" Lakhe: "missed two fucking meetings. No explanation whatsoever to where he was. Now, that wasn't just it. He sent the wrong documents to Clive at headquarters, I just received a bomb call from Oliver who tells me that Jane has been trying to get a hold of me because Victor isn't understanding the entire concept so he would like a meeting this Tuesday with me and Wendy." Me: "WOW. How many PA's does this nigga have?" Lakhe: "like 12, its crazy. Anyway-" Sands: " H E Y !!!!!!!!!!" everyone looked at him. Sands: "I cooked. DINNER. Sit. Shut the fuck up. And EAT." Ohkaay. We sat down quietly. Sands: "so, this is the first dinner in a very long while we've had together as a family unit-" Lakhe: "technically-" Sands: "Silence. I'd like for us to enjoy this meal I rushed home for to specially prepare. Literally risking my life-" Dumi: "and mine." Sands: "this is not about you. And again, I want to say congratulations to our newly weds-" Lakhe: "we need our house back." Sands:

"stop interrupting me and eat your food." Lakhe: "you know its Dumi only who is authorized to live in this house." Sands: "I'll be gone by morning. To my side of the house." Lakhe: "which I still own." Sands: "which you don't use." Me: "you guys can stay here as long as you want. Lakhe don't be mean to your brothers. They love spending time with you. They cook you food, they.....uhm..." Lakhe: "keep going, I'm listening." Me: "that's all I've got." Lakhe: "I thought as much." Sands: "we gonna be having all kinds of parties next door-" Lakhe: "still in my house, and by all kinds, what exactly does that mean? Baby, we need to draw up a rental lease for these three." Me: "I wish I had siblings." Lakhe: "I wish I didn't." we ate our dinner. Me: "thank you." Lakhe: "for what?" Me: "for listening to my complaints, my grumblings, my outbursts. You're a considerate, honest and amazing husband." Lakhe: "awww. Thank you my wife. You don't complain that much anyway." he kissed my cheek. Lakhe: "ndihluthi kamandi. Thank you Sandile." Sands: "Oh? What for?" Lakhe: "thank you for dinner. I'll be looking forward to more of these." Sands: "so I'm staying?" Lakhe: "of course you're staying. You're a big baby. Peanut is gonna have to take care of you." we all laughed. Our intercom rang. Lakhe: "maybe ngu Babalo lo. Maybe came to check if we got home safe." Sands: "Quick, everyone hide!" Me: "No...." I got up to answer. It was definitely not Babalo, thank goodness. Otherwise I'd have to hide. Me: "hello?" "Hi, this is Detective Sullivan and Strauss. Can you please open for us?" What were detectives doing here? Lakhe: "vula." I opened. Me: "why are they here?" nobody responded. We all looked at the door. Waiting. It was already open. They finally appeared. Me: "hi, how are you?" Det: "good thank you ma'am. I'm looking for a Masilakhe Ikhaya Sobukwe." I looked at my husband. Me: "Why." Lakhe: "This is he." Sands: "Bhuti-" Lakhe: "yima Sandile." Det: "Sir, we'd like to take you down to the station for a few questions." Lakhe: "in connection with?" Det: "You have come up as a suspect in Desiree Morgan's murder. If you could come with us please." Lakhe: "wait....I'm being arrested?" Det: "We are just taking you to the station for questioning. That's all." Dumi: "I'm coming with you." Det: "and who are you?" Dumi: "I'm his lawyer. Let's get it moving." Det: "after you Mr Sobukwe. Its gonna be a very long night."

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Chapter 66

Lakhe sat in the interrogation room. Agitated and tired. Lakhe: "I don't know what more you want me to say. I've told you everything I know." Dumi: "what I don't know is why you're still keeping my client here when you don't have any holding evidence that links him to the murder of this young woman, may her soul rest in peace. It is time for us to go now." Det: "unfortunately not. We

have reason to believe that, your client had problems and confrontations with the deceased." Dumis: "everyone has confrontations and problems does that make them murderers?" Det: "No, but its pretty convenient that after a public declaration, which could potentially ruin your client's future, the deceased ends up dead." Dumis: "that's quite a funny statement. How long did it take you to figure that out?" Det: "If your client is innocent, tell me where he was last week on Thursday night the 21st." Lakhe: "I was at home with my wife." Det: "who else can testify to this?" Lakhe: "do you really think everyone in my house sleeps in my bedroom?" Det: "so everyone in your house saw you go to bed that night?" Dumis: "I live with him, and yes. I saw him go to bed." Det: "so your wife and lawyer are the only people that saw you go to bed that night?" Lakhe: "yes." Det: "tell me about the 22nd. Friday. What happened then?" Lakhe: "what do you mean? I woke up and took a shower with my wife, we got dressed and left for our doctor's appointment." Det: "then?" Lakhe: "we went out of town for a few hours and came back to finish sorting things for our wedding." Det: "later that night?" Lakhe: "she left for the hotel with her bridesmaids and mother. I went to get a haircut with my dad and father inlaw." Det: "do I really have to keep asking?" Dumis: "do you even know when she died?" Det: "the forensics say she might have died between Thursday night and Friday morning. Carry on Masilakhe." Lakhe: "I came home after that." Det: "so you spent the whole night at home on the eve of your wedding?" the room was silent. Lakhe: "if she died on Thursday night/Friday morning, how does my Friday night plan become affected?" Det: "Here's my theory... You, must have disappeared on Thursday night while your wife slept soundly. Killed your ex fiance and hid her body to be back in time for the next morning. The problem is, you didn't kill her on the scene, she died long after you left her in the cold. You pretended the entire Friday morning and afternoon to be the perfect and present husband until you disappeared again soon after your wife left for the hotel with everyone. You went back for Desiree, to get rid of her body with a little bit of help." Lakhe: "If I wanted to kill her, I wouldn't need any kind of help and you would never have found her body because I'd hav-" Dumis: "What my client is saying is that this is a load of bull crap and clear stupidity. You're bringing useless theories because you don't know what else to do." Det: "I'm just giving him a chance to come out and tell the truth. We can make this quick, easy and light." Dumis: "or we can rethink your strategy and come back another time." Det: "I see." he looked at his phone, reading something. Dumis: "of course you do. Now if we may....." Det: "unfortunately not. I have a new lead I need to follow up. You're gonna have to stay here and wait." he got up and walked out. Dumis: "what the hell!!!! Why would you say such things?" Lakhe: "I'm tired of this shit!!! I didn't kill the bitch! Matter of fact, I doubt she's even dead! She's just faking

this to get at me!" Dumisani: "I don't think she would get this far, faking her own death. Lakhe this is a very serious accusation. Please tell me the truth. We could work it out-" Lakhe: "I didn't do it!!! I'm fucking serious! Why would I leave evidence if I killed someone? Ndidom Dan? Dumisani, you got to make sure none of this goes out to the public." Dumisani: "you need to stop saying things like this and let me do the talking. Friday night ubuphi?" Lakhe: "with Sandile and Sibule." Dumisani: "perfect. They are your alibis beniphi?" Lakhe: "I was taking care of business. Besides, I can't say I was with Sandile. This will open a whole bag of worms." Dumisani: "how?" Lakhe: "Sandile has been charged before, just that....all his dockets and witnesses seem to disappear and everything gets dropped. Maybe I should've hired his lawyer, I'd be asleep next to my wife by now." Dumisani: "really? That's the attitude you have? You seem to forget that you're a public figure. Should a docket disappear, police will do anything that's everything to bring you down through the media. We can prove that you're innocent. You were just chilling with your brothers in a bar." Lakhe: "I was nowhere near a bar." Dumisani: "Masilakhe, when you left with ooSandile that night and came back in the morning.....did you kill that woman?" Lakhe: "how many times must I tell you I don't need help killing someone?" Dumisani: "stop saying that!" Lakhe: "its funny how I'm accused of murdering someone and the actual person I did get rid of remains unfound. Fucking funny." Dumisani: "what does that even mean?!!! Who did you -" the door opened. The detective walked in. Det: "Mr Sobukwe, I give you one last chance to get your story straight." Dumisani: "if you have nothing to charge my client with. I would suggest that you let him go." Det: "I knew you would say that. I'm afraid that new evidence has come to light, maybe he will change his story when he sees the video footage of him thrashing Miss Morgan to death with a blunt object." Lakhe: "so let's see." Det: "its still loading onto my computer." Lakhe: "of course it is." Dumisani: "Shh." they waited in heavy silence. Det: "and there. Right there....please look closely at the screen. Isn't that you Mr Sobukwe? Beating into something." Dumisani: "its dark you can barely see its him. This could've been anyone." Det: "really...and I'm sure the Rolex watch he misplaced on the scene with his initials and last name also isn't his?" Lakhe: "what watch." Det: "oh come on. Masilakhe Sobukwe. You left your little expensive watch on the scene where you buried the deceased. I'm going to have to arrest you for the murder of Desiree Morgan. You have the right to remain silent-" Lakhe: "D u m i s a n i!!!" Dumisani: "I think he gets it detective. Listen Lakhe-" Lakhe: "No! Not listen! I'm not spending the night here!" Dumisani: "you'll appear in front of a judge for your bail hearing. I'll push for tomorrow latest." Lakhe: "My God." Det: "chit chat is over." he tied the handcuffs behind Lakhe's back. Lakhe: "Tell my wife I love her, she shouldn't stress. And watch her eat. Please." Dumisani: "I'll fix this. I promise." Lakhe: "uzogoduka njani?" Dumisani: "I'll call

Sands. Don't worry, go." Lakhe: "as if I have a choice." Det: "let's go smarty pants." he pushed him out the room. Dumi: "God, please help."

I had been up the entire time waiting for Lakhe and Dumi suddenly rolls in with Sandile. Me: "Uphi uLakhe." Sands: "Wow, you finished the entire cake?" Me: "Sandile do not question me. Where is my husband!!" Sands: "ask him. I was just an Uber. Damn." Dumi: "they've kept him in custody. The bail hearing is on Wednesday-" Me: "so he's spending two nights in jail!!! Dumisani you were supposed to get him out!" he explained everything that happened there in detail. Dumi: "I tried. They even have a video footage, plus his Rolex watch on the scene of the deceased. I ask him to tell me the truth-" Sands: "wait....did you just say Rolex?" Dumi: "yes. La detective said that the watch was an expensive Rolex." Sands: "bhuti doesn't own or wear Rolex watches. Its the Apple watch, for his Iphone. The Hublot collection and the two AP's. No Rolex. Never has been." Sibuh: "yeah. That's true. He said it made his wrist look cheap, I threw mine away ngenxa yakhe." Me: "so why would the detective think it belongs to Lakhe." Dumi: "it has his initial and last name engraved on it." Me: "you know what this means right?" Dumi: "someone is trying to set him up." Sands: "or someone fucked up." he flopped on the couch. Me: "what are you talking about?" Dumi: "was it you!???" Sands: "oh please, don't insult me with tacky uncreative and silly murders." Me: "I don't think uncreative is a word." Sands: "can you bring back my cake?" Me: "mxim. You are uncreative." Dumi: "guys I need answers. Who might have done this?" Sibuh: "maybe it was an accident." Dumi: "she was beaten by a blunt object. Repeatedly." Me: "oh God." I sat down. Sands: "what? What is it?" Dumi: "Spho please calm down. Don't stress." Me: "that night... When utata wenu came out about uDubs and him and welcoming Vuyi. The two of you, Sandile, disappeared. Your father said, one of you drinks the other smashes. Lakhe came into the bedroom that night with his hands and t shirt covered in blood." Sands: "its probably his own blood or some animal. Lakhe is not awell he's not careless." Me: "and he'd never kill someone!" Sibuh: "he was pretty pissed off about the article." Sands: "still. He wouldn't just he's not careless." Sibuh: "what if your mom did this.....as punishment for throwing her out the family?" Sands: "my mother isn't capable of killing iphela eli lincinci. She jumps on sofa's because of a little spider and a dead rat. I don't think she can stomach killing a human. Especially by beating them like this." Dumi: "what about this watch then? Why would it have his initial and surname if it doesn't belong to him?" Sands: "M. Sobukwe." Me: "isn't it M.K?" Sands: "Masilakhekhaya is written as one word on his documents so no...its just M." he looked deep in thought. Sands: "I have to go." Dumi: "NO! Nobody leaves this house. Whatever you're thinking. Out with it!" Sands: "I can't....I.....its extreme!"

Me: "thetha man Sandile!!" Sands: "Monwabisi...." Dumi: "who the fuck is that?"
Sibu: "wait.....No!" Sands: "I mean..." Sibu: "you can't possibly think-" Sands: "I know!...." Me: "I'm gonna smack the both of you at once if you don't talk!!"
the house went quiet. Sands: "I need you to sit down." I sat down. Dumi: "I'm already down here so...." Sands: "Sibu you say it." Sibu: "uqale nini uba shy kengoku?" Sands: "Monwabisi is my dad's first name." Me: "then wouldn't it say M.R Sobukwe? Since his middle name is Robert?" Sands: "that's what I'm thinking nam....does Dad have a Rolex? I don't even know." Dumi: "guys.....this is big. Do you think your father might be capable of murder?" Sandile and Sibu looked at each other. Me: "guuuuys!" Sibu: "I didn't say a thing." Dumi: "Sandile...please." Sands: "its just that.....no." Me: "everything you say will remain here." Dumi: "Sandile, your father might have done this?" Sands: "no."
Me: "you don't sound so sure. Have you ever seen him in a violent agitated state?" he looked at the tiles. Sands: "yes." Me: "he was beating someone wasn't he." Sands: "I don't want to talk about this!" Dumi: "Sandile your brother is spending a night in jail, his wife is pregnant and they've just gotten married. What you're doing is not fair. If you think your dad might've done this-" Sands: "it was in the ring, the guy died hours later in hospital. My father quit boxing because of it. That's all. It was an accident. My father is not a murderer."
Dumi: "okay. I understand." Me: "guys I'm having a funny feeling about this..." Sands: "me too. It doesn't make sense." Dumi: "I'm gonna have to work all night on this." Me: "I'll help." Sands: "me too." Sibu: "I'll go make the coffee."
Me: "hot chocolate for me vha." Sibu: "okay." Sands: "let me lock the doors and put on the fireplace. Spho are you okay babe? I don't want you stressed here." Me: "I'm better here, finding a solution with you guys than alone in that bed. I'm okay. If it gets too much, I'll tell you." Sands: "cool." we started making lists of Lakhe's enemies, actually Sandile had more knowledge there but none of them had enough motive. Me: "who would want to kill a pregnant woman?" Sands: "and blame ubhuti." Sibu: "I still say that whoever did this is closer than we think." he set the tray down. Dumi: "why usitsho?" he took his cup of coffee. Sibu: "when you were explaining, andithi ithe le detective, they had confrontations and problems? All these confrontations and issues happened inside this house Dumi. In front of the whole family, so who else would know about them?" Dumi: "good catch Sibu! Why are you an accountant!" Sands: "WAIT. If the police know about the confrontations, someone in this family must be giving them information." Sibu: "Not me, everyone knows my conscience runs thigh deep." Sands: "andiyo cupboard. If I told someone, I'd tell you I did it. Ndinoyika nganton?" Me: "well, he's been the most amazing husband way before our wedding, I don't see another man putting up with me for this long so I have no reason to put him behind bars." Dumi: "I am dead scared of Masilakhe Sobukwe. I am not even on the

list of people that might think of attempting to double-cross him." Me: "so not my parents or his either. Not Dubs, she barely knows him." everyone sipped their hot beverage and stared into the fireplace. Dumi: "its someone that keeps to themselves." Sands: "that seems to remove themselves from our family feuds." Sibuh: "and that someone knew that the police were coming here before they arrived." Me: "so they decided to take the day off. Get her here!!!!" Dumi: "wait!! Hold on... She is probably in witness protection. She knows Masilakhe is dangerous-" Me: "erhh....no he's not. He's harmless." Sands: "hun, I'm going to need you to focus and not stress yourself about some things you might hear. And please do not ask questions because andizokuphendula." I kept my mouth quiet. Sibuh: "All this time we've been living with a snake! She's working with someone! She knows what happened to Dez. How else would the police know to ask about specific days in Lakhe's week. Rebecca has been playing us all along. She needs to be found before she let's loose anything else." Sands: "don't worry. I will find her, and God forbid when I do." Dumi: "we don't know if its her yet!" Me: "then who!" Dumi: "guys if the main witness, the one being kept in protection, mysteriously dies, this is gonna raise alarms and Lakhe will not even be considered bail. Do you want your brother to spend Christmas in jail?" Sands: "No but she-" Dumi: "There's a better way of doing this. Right now, she doesn't know we've figured this out. She's probably going to come here and pretend everything is hunky dory in the morning." Sands: "I can't be here. It will take all of me not to slit her throat and burn her to ash. She doesn't know who she's fucking with." Dumi: "oh she knows....problem is underestimating." he started writing something down. Sands: "I can't do it. I can't even calm myself down now! I trusted her with my life!" Sibuh: "technically, if Spho hadn't made that call, she would've let you die so...." Sands: "please tell her not to come back. Please?" Me: "she's going to know something is wrong. Relax, you can leave in the morning. I'll speak to her, and ask if she can commute to work everyda-" Dumi: "actually, she doesn't really need to be here everyday or all day nangezomini. Right now I'm working on this case and will barely need her help. So she can only come on physio days please." Sands: "draw a schedule." I chuckled. Deep down a part of me ached. At least my love left the house fully fed, I hope he's not cold and he's comfortable where he is. Well, that's a bit crazy, nobody is ever comfortable in jail. Sibuh: "guys....I feel like I trust you to tell you this without gasps and hysterical laughs." Sands: "do not trust me. I will laugh in your face." Sibuh: "I know.... Anyway, its as though....I don't know how to put this." Me: "just say it as it sounds in your head." Sibuh: "when I was in East London, I had a painful chest pain and goosebumps. Qho xandingena endlini." Sands: "really?" Sibuh: "yeah, was it only me? And I could've sworn xandingena emnyango kukho umoya ondityhala umva." Sandile burst out

laughing. Dumi: "very mature Sandile." Sands: "whaaat? So what do you think? That there's evil spirits that don't like you in there? Hahaaaa. U-funny shame." Sibú: "you were outside the entire time." Sands: "I was braai-ing meat. Ndiyinton ngaphakathi kutshatwa? Maybe that's why ubuvuthelwa, why would you wanna be inside with the ladies." Sibú: "Spho....?" I looked up at him. Me: "I'm pregnant don't ask me. I faint even here plus I didn't have breakfast that day so..." Sands: "look Sibú, sometimes I too, feel like there's something a bit cold in there but then again, it's nothing. I've lived there my whole life. I've never had any encounters with creepy things." Sibú: "what about the story you told me.....you know, about the mirror." Sands: "I was hallucinating. I had an imaginary friend. It's nothing!" Dumi: "tell us the story Sandile." Sands: "it's dark and late. Not the time." Dumi: "it's the perfect time. Thetha..." Sands: "If you insist. I was downstairs in the basement where umama stored all our old toys and dad's things. She sent me down there to put some stuff away so I went down the stairs with the box. I think I was around 12. Lakhe was at a match. I put down the box and found an old toy of mine. Potato man. I used to wind it up, set it on the floor and let it roll forward. Potato man broke and ended up in the basement without batteries, so when I saw it, I tried to pick him up." I had a lump in my throat. Me: "you picked him up right..." Sands: "he rolled away." Dumi: "he did have batteries though...right?" Sands: "his back was open and empty plus he made a turn. So I stood up, clearly shocked, waved my torch to where he could've ended up and instead I saw a mirror." Dumi: "please stop." Sands: "someone was standing behind me. He didn't have a face-" Dumi: "STOP IT!!! You're making this up!" Sands: "if that's what you think." Sibú: "let him finish." Sands: "well I screamed obviously ndilila. My mother came rushing down. She asked ndibone ntoni and I told her. My dad blamed the imaginary friend I had. He said I needed to be baptized." Dumi: "okay, enough of this Sandile. If you're trying to freak me out. You did. Can someone help me onto the couch? I need to work comfortably." Sibú: "let me..." he went to help him. I looked at Sandile. Usually when he jokes around, he laughs and drags it on longer than necessary. Now, he just remained silent and a bit embarrassed. Crazy as it sounds. I believe him. Sibú: "I'm not sleeping alone tonight. I'm going to grab my sleeping bag." he went to his room. Me: "cela undiphathele ingubo ezimbini." Dumi: "cela 1 mna." Sandile was still quiet. Me: "hey.. Lighten up." I pushed him. He turned his head slowly to look at me. His eyes not blinking. He looked as if he wasn't even breathing, I don't know what scared me more. Me: "Sandile." Sands: "what?" he blinked and looked at his hand. Sands: "Uphi uSibulele?" what the hell just happened? Dumi: "he went to fetch the blankets." Sibú: "one for you. Two for Spho." I took one and tossed the other to Sandile. Me: "thank you for spooking us. Now nobody wants to be alone."

Sands: "then I have succeeded as a family man. Let me tell you about Mpumalanga." only then he started laughing. Dumi: "No. You can keep that one to yourself. We all know what happens that side is not for the faint hearted, I, my friend, am very faint hearted. Khona uyintoni eMpumalanga?" Sands: "makazi lives there." Me: "Makazi being sister ka mamakho?" Sands: "yes. She's a lovely woman. I feel like a king everytime I'm there. I'm her favorite." Dumi: "make sure she doesn't die because she's the only one that likes you that much in the world." Sands: "jealous." Me: "ndim ndodwa olambileyo?" Sands: "you finished my cake." Me: "half of it. It was already half." Sibu: "I could eat." Sands: "McDonald's?" Me: "do they deliver at this time?" Sands: "suppose-ably." Dumi: "That is not a word. Inoba ucimba you're another kind of special. This isn't New York." Me: "just try. Dumi stop being a wet blanket." Dumi: "if you succeed, I'd like a double quarter pounder." Me: "same." I couldn't help feel guilty. Well, even if ebekhona he wouldn't dare touch McDonald's with a stick. He would want me to eat though. As much as possible. I wonder what he's doing there. Sibu: "I'll have a McFeast." Sands: "of course. A meal for Kings. Only queens eat double quarter pounders." Me: "I'm actually offended." Dumi: "I'm not, they're trying to make me change what I like to what they like. Its not gonna work. Call me whatever you want. I've been bullied all my life, I'm immune to it." Sands: "mxim. Who's gonna make the call." Sibu: " ooh. Me. Give it." he took the phone and called for our orders, while we joked and disturbed Dumi with his other cases. Me: "but he did do it though. Thabo sounds like a piece of work." Dumi: "the security footage in the bank says its him. He's denying it kudala ndimzama ndimcela to plead guilty so that he gets a lighter sentence. He's just making my life difficult." Sands: "then make it disappear." Dumi: "make what disappear?" Sands: "duuuh, the video." Dumi: "that is beneath me. I am an honest lawyer." Sands: "what's that?" Dumi: "what?" he looked at himself. Sands: "an honest lawyer. What is it? Someone that teaches how to ride unicorns or is it a rainbow hunter? Oohh wait, don't tell me, Honest Lawyers.....plant magic pumpkins right? Right?" I giggled. Dumi: "I'm surprised you got through high school." Sands: "I have a degree Dumisani." Dumi: "so you keep saying. What did you graduate in Sandile? Marble collections?" I laughed. Me: "I'm sorry. That just popped out." Sands: "at least I can collect something. Uxakwe ngoku to collect simple footage. My lawyer made things disappear a lot. Even his wife shame." Dumi: "your lawyer?" Sands: "yes. MY lawyer. Edwardo is his name." Dumi: "I never asked." Sands: "you didn't have to. Telling you was courtesy." Dumi: "okay Sandile. It was nice to meet Edwardo. Are you sure he wasn't the one standing behind that mirror when you were 12?" everyone laughed. Sands: "Cute. Funny. Now you're that you're spending so much time with me, you're actually quite interesting." Dumi: "come on. Don't be Petty..."

Come give me a hug." Sands: "awww thank you Sally." Dumi: "Hahaha. Uyi bitch shame." after a long wait, our food finally arrived and we ate like kings.

Tuesday morning, I woke up second and cleaned up. Sandile was already gone, ebengadlali tu izolo. I threw away our dirt and made breakfast. Dumi: "Sibulele." Sibulele: "what..." he woke up. Dumi: "can you get me up?" Sibulele helped him onto the wheelchair. Dumi: "enkosi." Sibulele: "where you going?" Dumi: "ndiye toilet. Then, I'm going to bath." Sibulele: "okay, masambe-" Dumi: "no I got it. Sleep." Sibulele: "I usually help you. What's the problem now?" Dumi: "I want to try and do this myself. I can't depend on you all the time. One of these days you're gonna be busy." Sibulele: "okay. I'm going to stand aside and assist. If you need any help, I'll be there in case you hurt yourself. You know you're my best friend, I'll never let you do this alone." Dumi: "I thought Sandile was your best friend." Sibulele: "both of you are." Dumi: "thanks Sibulele." Sibulele: "come, let's get you scrubbed." Dumi: "now when you say it like that I don't want-" Sibulele: "shut up..." he pushed the wheel chair letting it roll down the passage fast. Dumi: "Sibulele!!!" I dished up breakfast and set it on the table. Me: "breakfast you guys!!!" I took Boogie outside to poop and pee. Then took the duck food to them and fed them. The gate buzzed, I could see as far as I was that it was Rebecca. Me: "Calm down Spho. Be friendly and normal." I prepped myself and went to open. She walked up the driveway and into the house. Me: "hi." Rebecca: "hello Spho. How are you? How was the wedding?" Me: "I'm great thanks. It was amazing. So what did you get up to yesterday?" Rebecca: "oh nothing much. I was with my mom. Catching up. Is Dumi ready?" Me: "almost, listen, he tells me that he's doing very well and that he doesn't need much help anymore. So.....you could just come on the physio days and go back to mom at home to spend more time with her." Rebecca: "but my agreement with Mr Lakhe is that I stay here." Me: "well, I'm married to Mr Lakhe now and whoever stays in My house is my decision. Dumi says he coping. So, you will only be here for the few hours of physio, 3 days a week. I made breakfast, help yourself." I walked to the bedroom. I couldn't keep my cool. I tried though. There was a knock on my door. Me: "come in." I wasn't in the mood for this bitch really. Sibulele came in. Me: "oh its you, come in." Sibulele: "ubucimba ndingubani?" Me: "Rebecca, she's here." I whispered. Sibulele: "andinamdlawombona ke shame. Anyway, are you okay?" Me: "yes....you?" Sibulele: "I have a feeling that you lied yesterday. When I talked about East London. You tensed up. Why." Me: "did you see how Sandile laughed at you? No." Sibulele: "so you saw something?" Me: "smelt. Ndizothetha isiXhosa, noba undimamele lo angandiva ba ndithini. Ngoku bendipha kulandlu, I was overpowered by ivumba lento ebolileyo okanye efileyo. Kodwa ingathi ndim ndodwa olivayo. Landenza intloko andakwazi ubona nakakuhle, andisakhumbuli noba

bekusithwani pha then ndawa. So uDubs uye wafika esbhedlele ezondibuza ndive ntoni ndamxelela. Uthi yena ngoku ebethandaza pha, ubona izithinzi zabantu zisondelela kuthi. Uthi ikhona into efihlwe kulandlu and andinokwazi ubuyela pha otherwise ndizofa. So I'm gonna need your help with that." Sibu: "of course! Inzulu mos xa injalo Spho. Uzothini kengoku ku Lakhe?" Me: "ndoyika umxelela. Andicingel ba uyakholwa zezazinto." Sibu: "kodwa uyabona ukubhanjwa kwakhe Yinto evele snaaks? Mna ndithi, la mama uklandlu uyayazi lento yenzeka pha and yeyakhe. Yilento engakufuni. Usebenzisa lo ulapha for ukuphalaza ngapha." Me: "exactly. Uvile kwela bali lika Sandile xa esithi ngoku ebelila ufike umamakhe wabuza kuye ubone ntoni. Kuthen ezobuza lonto instead of ukhalela ntoni?" Sibu: "bendicimba ndim ndodwa ozibuza lonto!! Uthini kengoku ngokufa kuka ma'am?" Me: "Andiyazi ke yona. Iyandibhida straight." Sibu: "Spho, lento ndizok'xelela yona ndicela ungaze uyichaphaze nakubani na. Especially uMasilakhe noSandile." Me: "what is it.." Sibu: "ngolwesihlanu, besihamba sonke...siyolanda something." Me: "Yinton le beniyoyilanda?" Sibu: "iziyobisi. Ibiyeyokugqibela la pasile. Lakhe uneskweleto esikhulu komnye ubhuti, so bekufuneke sithengise lento sifumane imali, siyithumele kuzocinywa igamalakhe kwizinto zalomntu."

Chapter 67

I looked at Sibu. Me: "Lakhe akathengisi obob'ghanxa. He is a businessman. Sandile probably, but my man? No." Sibu: "I know its not what you want to hear-" Me: "its not. And its not true." Sibu: "can you just do me one favor?" Me: "what?" Sibu: "promise me you're never repeating this to anyone. Especially ubhut' Lakhe. You do not understand how dangerous he can be. Umvile nawe uDumisani utheni. Nobody can get in his way." Me: "fine." Sibu: "promise me Spho." I looked at his eyes. He really looked scared. Did he think that uLakhe would hurt him? But he's family. Me: "I promise." Sibu: "thank you Spho. I trust you with my life. I really do." Me: "okay Sibulele. I have a lot to do." Sibu: "okay. We'll talk later." I went to shower. After my shower, I got dressed and ready for the office. Sands: "Spho?" he knocked on the door. Me: "come in." I sat down to brush my hair. Sands: "so where are you going?" Me: "work. While Lakhe is out of action, I have to keep the boat afloat, you heard what he said yesterday, Harold almost destroyed us. Cost us our most important deal." Sands: "okay, but its only for today, and I want you home at 3pm. No later than that. Lakhe would never approve of me letting you go to work when you should be resting but you scare me so you can go.....and come back. In time." Me: "I will. Thank you Sands." where was he this whole time? Me: "Sandile, uvelaphi? When we woke up you went there." Sands: "yes, I went to start cleaning on the other side. I needed to think and probably calm down."

Me: "that's good. That's very good, now stay that side-" Sands: "I'm not doing that, I'm gonna be Dumi's Uber driver again." Me: "when last have you checked on your hotel?" Sands: "today at 12pm when I have a shareholders meeting. Apparently two other people own shares that I didn't know about." Me: "I thought Michael was the only other person." Sands: "he lied. As usual." Me: "you don't really like the hotel thing do you?" Sands: "tu. But if its to keep my brother happy then why not." Me: "so is Sibub looking for a job?" Sands: "he has an interview tomorrow." Me: "so what's he gonna do today?" Sands: "uzayobona umamakhe. He hasn't been there in a while." Me: "that's nice." Sands: "sowutyile?" Me: "I'm about to right now. Just finishing here. Ndilambile actually qha bendingafun uhlala nalantombi pha." Sands: "okay then. Look I'll see you later, I'm checking on Dumday. Enjoy." Me: "bye." I took my bag and went to eat breakfast. Kuyo yonke lo breakfast I was still craving chocolate chip cookies that I didn't know where I was going to find. Me: "Sibu!" he appeared from his bathroom enxibe gown. Me: "I'm leaving." Sibu: "okay." Me: "is Dumi going to see Lakhe today?" Sibu: "I think so." Me: "There's some breakfast left over, I'll pack some for him amnike." Sibu: "its okay. Don't worry about it. Iya emsebenzini." Becca: "where is Mr Lakhe?" she came from the kitchen wiping her hands. Me: "I'll be at work." Sibu: "I need to get dressed." we both dispersed as quickly as possible.

Four hours into my day, I could barely keep my head up. I was so tired and sleepy. Me: "kodwa peanut, you're being unfair. I have to work." Harold: "who are you talking to?" Me: "myself. I'm so tired." Harold: "you can totally go." Me: "after what happened last week? No." Harold: "look I'm sorry about that. My head was all over the place." Me: "oh?" Harold: "I'm not sure if Lakhe has told you..." Me: "told me what?" Harold: "about Bianca." Me: "what about Bianca?" Harold: "that...she had my baby." Me: "Whaaat!" I was acting. I knew this. As if Lakhe never told me anything. Me: "he didn't tell me this. You didn't tell me. Why? How?" Harold: "I don't know. It just happened." Me: "is that why you haven't followed your family back to Australia." Harold: "I wish I did a long time ago. Bianca is using that baby against me." Me: "do you even want a baby?" Harold: "when I saw him for the first time....something happened to me. He's so precious and beautiful. I just want to hold him-" Me: "Harold you're married." Harold: "that's the worst part. I don't know what to do. What do I tell my wife." Me: "I think you should just be honest." Harold: "and lose my other kids plus wife." Me: "then what do you want to do?" Harold: "would it be unfair if I said I wanted all of them to be mine. I want my wife, my kids and be with my baby Neil as well." Me: "his name is Neil? So sweet." Harold: "yeah." Me: "its very unfair of you Harold, if you'd been cheating you were supposed to have used a condom. Now you'll be hurting your wife whom you love very much.

Your kids also. It would be worse if they heard this from someone else." Harold: "I know. I guess I should come clean." Me: "good luck okay?" Harold: "thanks. So where's the big boss?" Me: "I am the big boss." I smiled. Harold: "of course. The other one. I want to apologize to him." Me: "he's on a business trip to Pretoria." Harold: "to fix my mess." Me: "don't worry about it." Harold: "you guys just got married, you should be spending time together instead-" Me: "its okay!" Harold: "okay. Well...I still think you can go rest for a little while. If I get stuck I will call you. I promise." Me: "okay. I'll be in his office." I took my phone and bag, walking to Lakhe's office. I locked myself inside ndakhwela kula couch and took a sweet nap. I woke after 1pm and I was hungry again. My phone rang. Me: "hey." Harold: "hey Sphe, I have a fax from Telkom here, they need it signed and sent back to them as soon as possible." couldn't he do it? Me: "is it long?" Harold: "not really. I just need your guidance. Most of these topics covered, I'm not sure of." Me: "okay, I'll be there in a minute." I hung up and brushed my hair. Then got up and walked to Harold. Me: "I'm here. Let's see." Harold: "you really took a knock out on that nap hey? You even have a map on your face." Me: "wow, thanks Harold." I took the papers and read through. Me: "is there by any chance you can get me chocolate chip cookies?" Harold: "there is a bakery just down the street..." Me: "is there by any chance you can get me chocolate chip cookies?" Harold: "There's a bakery.....or you mean me going to get them for you. Okay. I won't be long. How many?" Me: "as much as they have." Harold: "uhm..." Me: "I haven't had lunch." he walked out the office. My phone rang again. Me: "hello Dumday." Dumi: "so Sandile has taught you that also. Anyway, I have someone here to talk to you. Hold." Lakhe: "baby?" Me: "hey my love. How are you? Did you sleep well? Ubutyile?" Lakhe: "I'm fine babe. Everything is fine. Wena Unjani?" Me: "I'm great. You're being evasive. What's wrong?" Lakhe: "nothing. I just miss you that's all. Ubutyile? Are you resting?" Me: "yes I ate at breakfast. Harold is bringing me chocolate chip cookies. I just woke up from a nap a few minutes ago." Lakhe: "good. Why is Harold bringing you cookies?" he's going to find out anyway. Me: "I came to check up on a few things here at work." Lakhe: "you're working?" Me: "Yes, I know you're gonna get mad but I had to make sure Harold doesn't send us to the sewerage again. But I promised Sandile I'd be home by 3pm and I have a feeling he'll come drag me kicking and screaming if I don't-" Lakhe: "I'm not angry. I'm actually very glad you stepped in when your man isn't in action. You need to keep yourself busy and not stress about me. I'm more afraid of what Harold would do. Andiyazi uske wathini lately." Me: "I spoke to him. I think iyam'worka lento yalentombi yakhe." Lakhe: "oh well. Mamela ke my love, kuyo yonke into eyenzekayo ungameleli mntu about my whereabouts. Even our parents." Me: "I've already concocted the story that uye Pretoria." Lakhe: "okay. That

will work. I love you Spho. Tell Peanut I love her. Is she kicking yet?" Me: "No, HE's not kicking. Can't wait till you're back." Lakhe: "me too. I have to go." Me: "I love you too Masilakhe." he hung up. In a few minutes Harold came back with 12 chocolate chip biscuits. Me: "thank you H." Harold: "are you gonna finish those?" Me: "not now obviously." Harold: "oh, good. Anyway, are you still good? With the docs? Do you need help?" Me: "No. I'm good. I'll be done in 30 minutes." Harold: "I'll be in my office then." he walked out. which would be almost 2pm by then and I'd have an hour left. Luyolo walked in, the new guy Lakhe is supposed to groom. Me: "hey you." Luyolo: "molo sisi. I haven't seen Mr Sobukwe today, I'm finished with the research he asked me to do." Me: "research?" Luyolo: "Yes, this is my first trial. Seeing if I can work under pressure and efficiently." Me: "when did he give you this task?" Luyolo: "yesterday." Me: "Well, at the moment Lakhe had an emergency meeting in Pretoria. He'll be back on Thursday. Did he mention anything about your next task?" Luyolo: "well no ma'am." Me: "please call me Spho." Luyolo: "okay Spho." Me: "listen, I'm going to partner you up with Brett in marketing for the rest of today. Tomorrow you'll be with Keith. I want you to shadow them and help them with what they need. Let me call them." I called the two guys to my office and they arrived in a few minutes. Me: "guys, this is Luyolo. Mr Sobz is grooming him for the next couple of months but for the next two days, he's in Pretoria. So, I would like for you two to show Luyolo around workwise that is. Let him help you and show him a few other things that you do here. Not making coffee. Not filing. Exactly what you're doing. Lakhe would be so happy to see you helping each other." Keith: "what I'd give to be groomed by him myself. Hi Luyolo, I'm Keith." Brett: "I'm Brett." Me: "Brett, you're with him the rest of the day." Brett: "can I do tomorrow whole day instead? Right now I have a dentist appointment, besides, tomorrow is our marketing field day. He'll learn a lot there." Me: "perfect. So for today Keith?" Keith: "fine with me. Come let's go." Luyolo: "Enkosi Spho." Me: "bye.... Enjoy." they walked out the office. Brett remained behind. Brett: "so...." Me: "so what Brett?" Brett: "how did he get the internship? I would die to have Mr Sobukwe teach me." Me: "what is it with you guys and Mr Sobukwe." Brett: "funny you should ask. Mrs Sobukwe. Congratulations by the way." I laughed. Me: "thank you. I'm sure if he has time, he will squeeze you guys in for mentoring. You're already great at your job though. Luyolo is still starting out." Brett: "still, I'm jealous. I'm gonn be late. Gotta go Mrs Sobz." he dashed out. I finally finished going through this thing which bored me to death, but at least the cookies kept me company. I signed it and faxed it back to the headquarters. I cleaned my office. Me: "Harold!!" I yelled down the passage. He appeared in my doorway minutes later. Harold: "are you sure you're okay?" Me: "yes. I'm going home now. I'm really tired. I just sent those contracts back just now okay. I'll see you

tomorrow." Harold: "thank you so much. Bye." I took my bag and walked to my car then drove home.

That evening I was sitting in the lounge by myself eating the pasta I'd cooked earlier. Sibulele walked in first. Me: "hey.." Sibulele: "hi." Me: "so what's wrong now?" Sibulele: "ukhona lo?" Me: "no, she just left." Sibulele: "good.. Bendiyobona umamam. She's just destroying herself with alcohol and I don't know what else." Me: "why?" Sibulele: "well..... she blames herself for losing my sister. Then my dad." Me: "you had a sister? What happened to her?" Sibulele: "she doesn't know." he had tears in his eyes. Sibulele: "she doesn't even know where her own daughter is!!" Me: "well, maybe she really doesn't." Sibulele: "She thinks she's dead Spho! What kind of mother is she? Why has she never tried to look for her!" Me: "why has the daughter never tried looking for her mother yena? Its probably not entirely her fault." Sibulele: "and my dad? Why did he leave? And why does nobody know where the hell he is!!!" Me: "I'm so sorry Sibulele." I hugged him. Me: "just try and be patient when you talk to her. Understand that she's also going through pain. Why else would she drink herself like this? She loves you and her daughter. Give her some time. Kuthen ungakhe uhlale naye like you did before andithi she got more sober and you began connecting." Sibulele: "she makes me so angry that she lost her. I've always felt in my heart that ikhona into eshotayo kum. Now she just drops this bomb on me." Me: "is this sister your twin?" Sibulele: "I don't know. Why don't I have any memory of her? Ndiyashota, but Andiyazi kushota ntoni." Me: "don't worry Sibulele. Sooner or later you'll figure it out and you need to keep calm until you do. Pray about it. Let God into your heart, izovela lenyani uyikhangelayo mntase. Ndik'phathele ukutya kwakho?" Sibulele: "yes please. I'll have it in my room." he let go. I went to heat his plate and took it to his bedroom for him. I went back to the lounge. My phone rang. Me: "hi Fez." Fez: "hey boo. Uphi?" Me: "I'm at home. Why?" Fez: "I have a crisis." Me: "oohkay. What is your crisis hun." Fez: "goodness. I'll have to see you." Me: "okay. Come over. The hubby is out of town and the boys won't be in until late." Fez: "okay. I'll request an Uber, pull out some wine for me please." Me: "okay love." she hung up. I wonder what's the issue this time. I took upon this time to call Zingi. Her phone rang twice and she picked up. Me: "hey babe." Zingi: "hey Spho. Unjani?" Me: "I'm good. Wena? Uright?" Zingi: "oh I'm okay. Just having to take it really slowly now. This baby.....is really...difficult." Me: "I'm sorry about that friend. We're here for you though, if you need anything." Zingi: "thanks love and Dumi is being decent as well, so I'm grateful for that." Me: "that's a first step. It will be fine." Zingi: "I just feel so stupid, you know." she sobbed. Me: "No. You shouldn't be-" Zingi: "I am Spho!! I don't know what's wrong with me!!!" she was crying now. Me: "Zingi, please calm down. Seriously. What's happening?" Zingi: "this is gonna sound so

crazy." Me: "okay." Zingi: "I still have like...tiny bitty feelings for someone." Me: "who's someone? Dumi?" Zingi: "no..." she sniffed. Me: "Sandile?" I whispered. I don't know why. It just felt appropriate to whisper. Zingi: "I know I'm being a whore. Its just that...he looked so good on Saturday. And he was his usual nice self." he has a nice self? Me: "he was dressed as he usually dresses. All black. All the time. As usual." Zingi: "you obviously wouldn't see it..." Me: "babe. Its just the hormones. Don't feel bad about it. A few guilty thoughts won't hurt. Worse kengoku you're lonely in that big house." Zingi: "so I should call him-" Me: "NO. That's a bad idea. Sandile has become really close to Dumi. Keep these thoughts to yourself my friend, Dumi is starting to come around and the last thing you want is to push him away and not have any support in your corner when things get tough." Zingi: "you're right. I just haven't had sex in a very long time Spho. I'm always horny and I don't know what to do." Why is she telling me this??? :(I don't want to know. Zingi: "maybe I should get a dildo." Me: "I don't think that's a safe idea." Zingi: "ndithini ke?!!" Me: "ask.....Dumi to help you." What a dumb idea Spho. Zingi: "even you must know that is far fetched. Even if he were to say yes. I'm pregnant. He's in a wheel chair. HOW would it work." Me: "he would lie flat on his back and You'd be on top." Zingi: "I don't think he's gonna say yes." Me: "he hasn't had sex in a long time. I don't think he has the right to say no." she giggled. Zingi: "well....trying won't hurt right?" Me: "definitely. And you won't feel guilty because he's still your husband and utata wabantwana bakho." Zingi: "thank you so much my friend." Me: "oh its fine! Just so long as you're happy hun." Zingi: "okay, I have to go. Nanku mama efika. Love you." Me: "love you too babe." I hung up. The gate buzzed ndayovula. Wangena uFez. Me: "What the Hell are you wearing!" Fez: "khandiyeke wethu tshomi. This is my depression outfit." if you were wondering. He was wearing black leather bum shorts. A see through black vest. A Black ankle boot that was a wedge. And a long black sleeveless cardigan. Me: "depression? Well....the color says it all. What is happening?" I poured him wine and juice for myself. Fez: "why ungaseli nam? I'm ugly aren't I?" Me: "No. The doctor says I must take a break on alcohol remember? I told you this. Ndik'phakele?" Fez: "no tshomi I'm on a diet." Me: "Kwenzeka nton Fez." Fez: "oh I gained a bit during the winter. I look like a cinnamon roll." Me: "not your body man, you called me urgently ufuna uthetha!" Fez: "oh yes! where do I begin? Oh wait. In this house on Friday." Me: "what happened in this house on Friday." we sat in the lounge. Fez: "Spho I met the love of my life." I held in a giggle. Me: "u-sure tshomi?" Fez: "of course I'm sure. I always am." Always? Me: "who is it?" Fez: "only the sexiast man I've ever seen with his top on." Me: "this is getting a little creepy." Fez: "Oh Spho! He is gentle. He has the devil's look in his eyes." Me: "how can one be gentle and still have that lo-" Fez: "and when he smiles, its like a flower blooming in

Spring. He is gorgeous Spho." I had to wait for him to finish. Fez: "the sweet cutie little dimple. Those muscles!!!" Me: "uSandile?" Fez: "how did you know?" Me: "he's the only other person with a dimple besides my husband who you'd probably never know well enough to like a single piece of him." Fez: "yeah. That man is like a brick wall. I don't know what you see in him. Sandile is so sweet, thoughtful, and so-" Me: "so that's why they kicked you out on Sunday?" Fez: "no.....maybe. But I didn't say anything nje!" Me: "you? Not say anything?" Fez: "I was subtle. Very." Me: "then what happened?" Fez: "nothing." Me: "Fezile." Fez: "I touched his arm." Me: "and..." Fez: "I just said he had sexy muscles." Me: "why would you do that?" Fez: "ndithini ke? What's done is done. He's sexy. So?" Me: "what is so sexy about Sandile? He's like a little piglet." Fez: "Piglets don't have muscles. You have been blinded my friend by your dear husband. Thina ke sisene eye sight." he batted his eyelashes. Me: "well, what are you gonna do about your eye sight?" Fez: "I don't know!" Me: "I hate to break it to you Fez....but Sandile is very straight." Fez: "I know that my friend but ndizom'visa izinto ezimnaarndi ezi popayo tshomi doesn't he understand this?" I laughed. Me: "ezi popayo?" Fez: "Yoh tshomi." Me: "well, nankuya engena e-gate'in ke. Uzumbalisele ngento ezipopayo." Fez: "I would rather die....but kodwa tshom singayi killer-kuple. Imagine, me with my pazazz. Him with his swag. Siyiqhwabe ibeyi mess." I laughed at that possibility. Sandile and Fez? God, no. Sands: "well, you should've let me handle it-" Dumis: "you're not a lawyer Sandile. Your kind of handling would get me into trouble." Sands: "it would've been effective-" Me: "you're not even in the house for 2 seconds and you're already arguing!" Dumis: "its your brother. Can't drive like a normal human being, can't talk like one either. He doesn't even know any other color besides black." Sands: "good luck for your day tomorrow." Dumis: "it was a joke... Sands. I'm kidding." Sandile walked into the kitchen elandelwa nguDumis. Fez: "uyambona ke tshomi?" Me: "Who?oh. Yes. Oh!" the boys came into the lounge with their food. Dumis: "Hi Fez." Fez: "molweni." he crossed her legs. Sandile was eating. Mouth already full, flicking through the TV channels. I looked at Fez. Me: "do you now see?" Fez: "Shut up. still cute." Me: "you have hit a new low my friend." Dumis: "Spho, we have a family meeting in 20 minutes." Me: "Oh? Ushushu umba?" Dumis: "very." Fez: "that's my cue. I'll request for myself." he clicked on his phone yacima. Fez: "oh no!!! My battery is dead." Me: "There is no need for drama. Wonke umntu ohlala kulendlu uses an iPhone." Sands: "uyaphi?" he looked directly at him. Fez: "uhm....I..." I could see him struggling to breath. How is this not funny? Sands: "while I'm still young Fezile." Fez: "oh uhm.....ndiye Walmer Heights." he gave him his address. Sands: "your Uber will be here in 8 minutes." Fez: "thanks you a lot." the excitement in his voice was tickling me ndik'xelele. But I couldn't be laughing. The lounge was quiet for a

few minutes. Sands: "Uphi uS'bulele? Is he back?" Me: "yes but he wants to be alone so don't go-" he was already up and striding down the passage. Me: "marching in." Dumis: "why? What's wrong?" Me: "just some stuff with his mom." Dumis: "hm.." he stared at his phone. Dumis: "oh." Me: "yeah." I was curious about the 'oh' text he just received. I needed a hobby you guys. Sands: "Uber outside!!" he yelled down the passage. Me: "so much for your thoughtful sweet man." I walked Fez out. Fez: "he requested the Uber without having being asked." Me: "I see." Fez: "he cares tshomi." Me: "I don't want you to get hurt Fez. Sandile is quite unpredictable. Don't gamble with your feelings when it comes to him." Fez: "I'm a big girl Spho. I know how to handle it. Bye boo. Love you lots." I opened the gate for him. Me: "love you too babe." wakhwela kwi cab yakhe. I went back to the house. Me: "hey." Dumis: "Where's your friend?" Me: "he just left. Are you okay?" Dumis: "I don't know...look...I don't know who else to talk to. Now that Lakhe is in jail.." Me: "he'll be back soon...right?" Dumis: "yeah. But right now he's not here and I can't really tell Sandile kunye noSibu." Me: "then talk to me. We've been friends way longer anyway." Dumis: "too long." Me: "you know, I remember most things about my life now. But I can't remember how I became friends with you and Zingi." Dumis: "I think that's best....a story for another day. This is more pressing." Me: "what's wrong? Ngu Lakhe?" Dumis: "no, definitely no. I received a text. From uZingi. She wants me to come over for dinner." Me: "and..." Dumis: "she says she's lonely and in need of my help." Me: "okay. So you're going? Right?" Dumis: "why would she call me?" Me: "you're still her husband." Dumis: "what help would she need kum? I can't even stand." Me: "maybe you don't need to stand." Dumis: "I'm confused now." Me: "she's lonely Dumisani. Something the kids can't fulfill. Only you." Dumis: "you mean.....she wants to..." Me: "duh." Dumis: "Wow." Me: "isn't that a good thing? She misses you." Dumis: "Me? What if I can't You know what, just leave it." Me: "don't be so hard on yourself Dumisani. Zingi contacted You for a reason. She's still your wife. Carrying your baby." Sandile and Sibu came in the lounge. Sands: "family meeting." they sat down. Me: "what's this meeting about." Dumis: "Spho tomorrow, Lakhe appears in court for a bail hearing. There is a possibility that the bail amount may be high. Lakhe uthi his bank will not allow any withdrawals beyond 10k from anyone but himself and he'll still be in custody then. So, he says, ucela uye ku sisNolitha. Uzokunika imali." Me: "ngubani uSis Nolitha kanene?" Sands: "are you being serious right now?" Me: "I've never met a sis'Nolitha in my lif....." Dumis: "what is it?" Me: "he said ndiye ku sis Nolitha? She would give me the money?" Dumis: "that's what he said." Me: "that can't be right. Are you sure you heard-" Sands: "I was there. He said uSis Nolitha. Something about you met her recently and you know where she is. He suggested we go tonight. She doesn't like visitors during the day. So let's go." Me: "I am going NO DAMN

WHERE!!!! Is he craaaazyyyyy!!! Dumisani: "Spho, calm down!" Sands: "ngubani uSis Nolitha!" Sibulele: "and where the hell is she? Kutheni ezofuna uyobonwa ngobusuku?" Me: "its his mother!" Sands: "but uStella ngu Nokwakha kaloku. I doubt he'd want anything from her." Me: "his late mother Sandile. She is Nolitha. He introduced me to her on Monday when we came back!" Sibulele: "when you say late....." Me: "I mean she's dead!" Sands: "that can't be right. Maybe There's another sis Nolitha. Because firstly, siyothini kumntu owafayo. Secondly, didn't he say her body was cremated not buried. How can she be..... OH." Me: "What." Sands: "this is awesome!" Dumisani: "I do not like the sound of this." Sands: "I have the smartest brother ever. Get your shovels people!" Sibulele: "why?" Sands: "my dear brother, created a grave and hid money in it, in case of emergencies. The last place anyone would ever look." Me: "what?" Sands: "we have to dig the money out! Siyoyifuna ku Sis Nolitha!" Me: "I am going no where." Sands: "oh but you are Lil sis. You're the only one that knows where that grave is. Wear something you don't care about. I'll wait in the car with the shovels." he smiled. I finally saw the devil's look in his eyes.....

Chapter 68

The car stopped at the graveyard. The night was dark with a little fog that looked like steam in the air. My heart was racing in my chest. Sands: "let's go." he got out the car and opened the boot. Me: "I can't go there Sandile." Sands: "Spho, you have to." Me: "I can go to the bank and explain that I'm his wife." Sands: "seniyile kwa Home affairs? This will be quicker. I promise." Sibulele got out the car. Dumisani had to stay behind. How I envied him right now. Sands: "which way is it?" he held the shovels in both his hands. I walked quietly and carefully as to not wake the dead. If that's even a thing. I was just scared qha. There was nothing normal about this. Me: "what if the security guards come?" Sands: "I took care of that." we arrived at Nolitha's grave. Me: "what if there's a body in the coffin?" Sands: "then there's a body in the coffin. Sizothini ke? Move the stone Sibulele." Sibulele: "how?" Sands: "am I the only one willing to go through with this? I'll be sure to tell ubhuti how his family treats him." Sibulele: "I've never moved a tombstone before! How the hell am I supposed to do it?" Sands: "knock it over. Funeke ibese caleni when we dig so that it doesn't tip over when you're inside." Sibulele: "when.....when I'm inside?" Sands: "just do it." Sibulele tried to remove the stone, Sandile helping him. They put it aside and started digging. Me: "I'll be in the car so long." Sands: "Spho." Me: "I'm pregnant. Kunemimoya emdaka apha. I can't be in a cemetery!" Sands: "okay. I get you. You can go." I ran back to the car and locked it when I was

inside. Dumi: "benzani aba?" Me: "they're digging. Why would Lakhe keep money in a grave? That's insane Dumisani!" Dumi: "he is insane. It was the best way to keep it from the wondering eyes." Me: "he could've kept it at the house." Dumi: "Spho, don't think too much about this. At least now ninecebo lemali ye-bail." Me: "I don't like being here." Dumi: "neither do I. But sihleli sobabini, by tomorrow we'll be laughing about this. Don't worry. Just take deep breaths in." I took a deep breath. And again. Me: "its not getting any better." Dumi: "I know. I've been trying all this time. You want to talk at least?" Me: "about what." Dumi: "I admire how strong you are Spho. You dealt with this calmly and You've been keeping a level head." Me: "yeah well...I have to honor my vows. For better and for worse." Dumi: "now you're making me feel bad." Me: "for what." Dumi: "I feel like I'm abandoning her. Is it so bad that I left her after she'd tried to kill me? I also did her wrong and I don't know what I would've done if I was the only one that did wrong. She would have forgiven me." Me: "what do you feel in your heart?" Dumi: "I still feel resentment. Anger." Me: "and how do you think she feels." Dumi: "I don't know." Me: "Dumisani. You were in a relationship with another woman. It wasn't just casual sex. You let your side chick, to be in your life. Abe yi second in command xa engekho uZingi." Dumi: "she also slept with Sandile. And other men too." Me: "what she did was wrong, nangona ifana nelakho ityala. I think the both of you should go to therapy and let out all your feelings and frustrations, not only for yourselves but to be able to continue raising your children together. All this tension and anger isn't good for the kids." Dumi: "I don't trust her though." Me: "I know. Its going to be difficult but uzothini ke? Christmas is a month away, how are you going to separate yourself from your kids and your kids from her?" Dumi: "I don't know. I haven't thought about it yet." Me: "just see a doctor together. Mna, Andiyazi shame ndingathini because I love the both of you very much. Its not nice to see you apart like this. I'm sure your kids don't enjoy it either." Dumi: "I know..." 2 and a half hours later Sandile walked to the car with a big block of plastic. Sands: "this one block is probably a million Rand if not more." it was 200 Rand notes stacked neatly. Me: "that is impossible. Probably half a million." he put it in the boot. Wayolanda ezinye ezimbini. Sands: "we're almost done guys." Me: "how big is this coffin?" Dumi: "I know right!" we waited another half and hour babuya. Sibulele didn't look very well. Sandile drove us home. When we arrived Sibulele took Dumi inside. Sandile took the plastic blocks of money. Me: "Sibu." I knocked on his door. He didn't respond. Me: "Sibulele?" Cwaka. I went to Dumi's room. Me: "Dumi?" Dumi: "ngena." I went in. Me: "Uphi uSibu? Is he okay? He didn't look fine." Dumi: "Inoba uyavasa. Uthi he's leaving tonight. He's going to his mom's house." Me: "do you think something happened there? At the graveyard." Dumi: "I'm not sure. He didn't say anything to me."

Me: "Dumi I'm worried about him." Dumi: "Sphosenkosi, stop worrying about everyone in this house and go rest." Me: "Dumisani, everyone that lives in this house is my family. I have to worry about them! I'll go wait in his room." I went to Sibulele's bedroom and sat on the chair. His room was always neat and clean. Unlike an average male. No clothes lying around. Bed always made. Dressing table spotless. He walked in the room draped in a towel and wasn't even surprised to see me. Me: "what's wrong?" Sibulele: "I just spent an hour of my life in a grave. Something about it doesn't seem natural." Me: "I'm sorry you had to go through that." Sibulele: "it's okay..." he opened his wardrobe and looked through the ironed, folded t-shirts wakhupha three. Sibulele: "the whole time I was in there bendicinga about utata. What he might've looked like, what kind of person he was, where he could've gone.....then it hit me." Me: "what hit you?" Sibulele: "what if he's dead..." Me: "but...how?" Sibulele: "what if my mother killed and hid his body? Now she can't live with herself because of it." Me: "Sibulele that can't be the reason." Sibulele: "I don't know what to think anymore Spho! Andiyazi!" Me: "okay, get dressed and ready. I'll drive you to your mom's place. At least sibenyazi uba Uphi. I have a feeling you might not want Sandile to come-" Sibulele: "I don't." Me: "I'll wait in the lounge." I walked out. Ndiyolinda elounge with a bag of chips. Sands: "you are really murdering the snack cabinet, aren't you." Me: "Sandile." Sands: "what did I do now?" Me: "nothing..." maybe Sibulele wouldn't appreciate me talking about him being uncomfortable ku Sandile. Men can be a bit cray cray too. Sands: "am I gonna have to tickle it out of yo-" Me: "I will stab you dare you try." Sands: "then tell me yintoni ngxaki." There's just so much going on in this family. Especially between the three boys. Why couldn't they sit and talk it out? Dumi can't talk about his personal problems because Sandile is part of them. Sibulele naye unengxaki and can't talk about it either. Sandile is the only one ophole inqentsu apha. Is it possible that he's a bully? Sands: "I don't like the way you're looking at me." Me: "I don't like how you forced us to go to a graveyard at night." Sands: "What?? Excuse me, but who is this helping? All of us want Lakhe aphume pha! Kodwa funeke ibendim ndodwa osebenzayo? Ayikokunya kengoku oko?" Me: "There's no need for you to be rude. You could've paid someone else to do it." Sands: "This is family secrets Sphosenkosi Sobukwe. It remains in the family. If we don't got each others back. No one else will! I did what Lakhe asked of YOU to do, if anything, Nguye o-suppose umqumbele not mna!" Sibulele: "I'm ready." he walked out the door. I followed him. Sands: "so that's it ?? You're leaving? WOW." I started the car and drove out. Sibulele: "he does have a point." Me: "I know. I just don't know why I'm mad." Sibulele: "you have two brains inside you, they're not always gonna be in sync." Me: "hehe..." Sibulele: "enkosi for having me in your house. I really felt close to you. Felt like family." Me: "you still are. You're welcome home anytime you

want." Sibú: "enkosi.." Me: "Sibú, does Sandileforce you to do things?" Sibú: "things like what?" Me: "just anything." Sibú: "No." Me: "so you don't feel obliged to do things because of him." Sibú: "turn left here." Me: "Sibulele..." Sibú: "Sandile has been nothing but good to me. I don't feel obliged to him. He's my best friend." Me: "something about that makes me very uncomfortable Sibulele. If There's anything at anytime that you want to get off your chest, never hesitate to call me." Sibú: "ok." after a long while, we drove into Zwíde. He directed me. I wasn't really sure of this place but it scared me a little. It was very dark. The street lights were one for almost every street. Me: "Sibú u-sure ufuna uhlalapha?" Sibú: "yeah. You can stop at the third house." I made a U-turn and parked. Me: "okay ke. I'll text you when I'm home. Do you need anything? Cash?" Sibú: "no I'm sorted. Thanks. Drive safe. Don't stop for anyone." Me: "okay. Nawe ke ambongena endlín kqala." he got out the car with his army green bag and went to knock on the door of the small house. There was no response. He knocked again and again. A small light, probably a candle lit up inside the house. Me: "Sibú, cela uthathe umamakho siyendlíní. It'll be better for her there." Sibú: "Spho, Go Home. Go." I didn't like the idea of a candle being lit in the middle of the night by umntu onengxaki yotywala. Why couldn't Sibú let me help him!! Sibú: "Sphosenkosi." Me: "fine." I started the car. the door finally unlocked and the old woman opened. I looked at her then quickly looked away. Sibú: "I'm in!" I drove away like the wind was blowing my car. I had tears in my eyes. The woman who had raised me, who had let her husband abuse me, who'd ignored me was Sibulele's mother. My heart hurt so badly. After everything I'd forgotten, she was a vivid painful memory of my childhood and I could still feel the hatred in my heart. I parked the car outside my house. The front door opened. I got out the car. "Spho..." I opened my eyes and took in my surroundings. Me: "Oh God, no..." Simphiwe: "what happened?" he hugged me. Me: "I'm married!" Simphiwe: "WHAT!!!" he let go. Simphiwe: "Why!!!" Me: "I was inlove. Am inlove....I don't know... Simphiwe, I don't know what's happening to me." one of his friend's came out of the house. "Simprah fethu. Huzet ngok?" Simphiwe: "Svig. I'm gonna need you to leave. Khathethe ne bra's awtiyam." Svig: "Hi Spho. Uright?" Me: "I'm fine." Svig: "ok. Ndizothetha namajita, khululeka." he walked back in. Me: "Simphiwe, what happened. Ndicela uthethe inyani... I don't want lies." Simphiwe: "I cheated on you. I emotionally abused you. I embarrassed you. Took you for granted. And you left me. Even after you left, I tried by all means to break you ndingafuni wonwabe. I wanted you to come crawling back to me. And instead, almost sent you to your grave. I remember ndithetha nawe on the phone and exchanging texts. Kwecwaka afterwards. Didn't hear from you again. Until I heard ubukwi ngozi and you'd lost your memory." the guys came out the house. They said their goodbyes. Simprah:

"I'm sorry guys, can we reschedule?" Svig: "no problem mninawa. You'll call when you're ready.." bakhwela kwimoto and left. Simphiwe: "come in." I followed him inside and sat on the kitchen stool. Me: "I saw my mother." he boiled water for tea. Simphiwe: "Unjani uSis Zama? I miss her and your cooking on Sundays xa ekhona." Me: "not uSis Zama. My biological mother." Simphiwe: "what did she want." he stopped moving. Me: "she didn't see me." Simphiwe: "wena umbone phi?" Simphiwe: "There's a friend of my husband that lives with us. I offered to drive him ba makayobona umamakhe. He said she wasn't coping. When I dropped him off. I saw her open the door." Simphiwe: "so this guy is your brother. Lo brother ubungayazi wayaphi. That is hectic Spho." Me: "I drove away as fast as I could. I can't face anyone. I'm so scared Simphiwe. I don't even know how I drove all the way here! Andizazi ndifike njani apha." Simphiwe "Spho...when we met, you told me that azange wakwi serious relationship and awuyifuni. Later in our relationship, you told me your story. Wena xa sowucinga why do you think you're here?" Me: "I don't know!" Simphiwe: "this is the first place you found comfort in after you left sis Zama's warmth. This was your independent self. You bought this house ukhululekile and feeling safe from everything. Inggondo yakho is taking you back to your comfort zone dear." Me: "you never used to be this smart." Simphiwe: "ouch. Your tongue burns more than this tea." he gave me my cup. Me: "sorry man...Uphi umamekhaya." Simphiwe: "she left. Took the child too." Me: "why." Simphiwe: "it wasn't working out. Then, Svig, invited me to a Brothers Union." I giggled. Me: "what is that?" Simphiwe: "a group of guys that get together twice a week. We discuss our problems and give each other advice on how to deal with them. I've been taught how to treat women, how to take care of my living, no more alcohol. Its been difficult but I'm coping. Kamandi uyabona nawe ku-clean kodwa kugqibo phuma amadoda." Me: "I'm sorry I ruined your evening." Simphiwe: "you didn't ruin my evening. I've spoken about you, they understand." Me: "I have to go now. It sure feels good to have my heart rate back in its place. Thanks for having me." Simphiwe: "Spho..?" Me: "yeah." Simphiwe: "I never got to say I'm sorry. From the bottom of my heart I truly apologize for everything I did to you. Sphosenkosi, you're a gift, a blessing to anyone you come across. You are warm, caring, God knows you want to save the world and you have that strength about you.....that I've always loved. I lost half my mind when I lost you. Ndandi dom Spho. I should've married you when I had the chance. Lakhe saw the opportunity immediately and didn't take it for granted. Tell him I say, congratulations, the best man really did win. Wonwabe Spho emtshatweni wakho, as much as he makes you happy. Stay the respectful, caring woman you always have been." Me: "Enkosi Simphiwe. Kiss Buhle for me the next time you see him." he checked the time. Simphiwe: "I'll do so." I

walked to the door. Simphiwe: "and one more thing.." Me: "what is it." Simphiwe: "please sell the house. I can't stay here anymore. It rightfully belonged to you and it was wrong of me to take it in the first place." Me: "Simphiwe, its okay. Keep the house. Your son must have a safe place to come visit you in." Simphiwe: "its not about that Sphosenkosi. I genuinely can't live here." he had tears in his eyes. Simphiwe: "I don't even sleep here. Do you see how spotless this place is? My car is parked on the lawn because after these meetings I leave!" Me: "why?" Simphiwe: "Just...please. Sell it. You still have the title deed. Lakhe only paid the balance qha." Me: "Simphiwe I'm getting confused now." Simphiwe: "I have to go, you have to go too. Just sell the house." he switched off the lights ndaphuma phandle, getting into my car. Me: "I'm not leaving until you tell me what's going on." Simphiwe: "its nothing." he locked the house. Me: "Simphiwe! What's going on? Is it because of me?" Simprah: "No. Its not you." Me: "kanti Yinton." he looked into the dark passage that led to the back yard. Simprah: "Spho..." Me: "what?" I tried looking but didn't see anything. He climbed into the passenger seat engcangcazela. Me: "Simphiwe are you okay?" it looked as if he was hyperventilating. I looked around the yard, in the far corner I saw a shadow quickly pass. Me: "what the hell was that." Simprah: "drive." I started the car and drove away from the house. Me: "kwenzeka ntoni pha Simphiwe." Simprah: "this is gonna sound crazy." Me: "tell me." Simprah: "kukho umntu ohamba in the back yard during the night. He grunts and makes noises." Me: "you can see him?" Simprah: "No. Akabonakali." Me: "how do you know its a he." Simprah: "no woman grunts like that. Ingathi ngumntu that's upset or angry. It always starts after midnight. Xandivuka ksasa when I still stayed here, bekubakho footprints on the paving. When my brother came over once, wayeyotshaya phandle Uthi he saw someone ohleli ngase thangweni. When he moved closer, he disappeared." Me: "when did this start?" Simprah: "a few months back. Bendihambe nomama ka Buhle siye ePort Alfred. We left the gardner a key for the gate azosebenza. When we came back a few days later.....ingca yase back had been removed ingumhlaba wodwa. I haven't been able to get a hold of him till today." I swallowed. Me: "where do I drop you off?" Simprah: "at my mom's. I'll fetch my car ksasa." Me: "Simphiwe....what do you think happened?" Simprah: "Andiyazi. Maybe undibekele umuthi? But why though? Ndamenza ntoni?" Me: "what if he died there...and nguye lo umvayo." Simprah: "what do you mean." Me: "what if someone killed him....." Simprah: "you think he's buried in my back yard? No, that wouldn't make sense. Wonke umntu bemthanda latata. He gardened for everyone at our street. Who would do such a malevolent thing?" Me: "I'm just grasping at straws here." I parked at his mom's house. Simprah: "so...what do you suggest I do? If ndibiza amapolisa to dig and they really find his body

there bazothi ndim. Oh my God..." Me: "Calm down. How about first ubize umntu." Simprah: "umntu otheni Spho!" Me: "umntu onyangayo. They'd know better. Tell your mom. She might know what to do." Simprah: "I'm sorry I involved you kulento. I thought I could keep it in. I just can't take it anymore." Me: "talk to your mother. She'll know best what to do." Simprah: "okay. Enkosi. Drive safely okay? Kusebsuku." Me: "I will." he got off the car and went inside the house, I drove home.

I walked into my house just before midnight. Sandile was on the couch. Sands: "Sibulele has been looking for you." he said while staring at the TV. Me: "I had errands." Sands: "I thought he was your errand." Me: "Sandile, I'm sorry for the way I spoke to you earlier. You did this for the family and I'm grateful because I couldn't stomach it. I was upset for no reason." he looked at me. Sands: "where were you." Me: "I went to see a friend." Sands: "all your friends don't know where you are. We were all worried sick. Ubungaphenduli phone. It is literally the middle of the night." Me: "I left it in the car by mistake." Sands: "so which friend is this." Me: "I can't talk about this right now Sandile." Sands: "oh so you'd rather wait until Lakhe gets here." Me: "xa usazi ndisuka phi undibuzela ntoni?" Sands: "I don't know, ndibuza kuwe." Me: "I'm tired." Sands: "we all are. Midnight just struck. Uyangena endlini. Who is this mysterious friend." Me: "I can't say." Sands: "so its a man." I crossed my arms. Sands: "I'm not as judgemental as you think I am Spho. I thought you knew that by now." I sat down. Me: "you remember I told you I ran away from home at a young age." Sands: "yes. Ubaleka utatakho." Me: "Yes. I haven't seen my biological mother since that day all those years ago.....until tonight." Sands: "are you serious? Where? What Did she say?" Me: "Khange andibone yena. I recognized her immediately, I don't know how." Sands: "umbone phi?" Me: "she's Sibulele's mom too." Sands: "Sibulele wam?" Me: "wethu. Yes. She opened the door for him and let him in." Sands: "does he know that?" I shook my head. Sands: "so you're brother and sister." I nodded. Sands: "and in your little caucus meetings, this never came up?" Me: "nope." Sands: "what did you do next?" Me: "I drove away as fast as possible. I was crying. I was hurt. My heart was burning with hatred. By the time I realized, I was parking my car in my old driveway. Simphiwe came outside and found me there. Hysterical. We spoke for a while, until he started acting weird. Almost emotional." Sands: "what else is new." Me: "Apparently. There is something that walks in his back yard at night. An unsee-able man." Sands: "unsee-able? How? If he's unsee-able umazelaphi ba yindoda." Me: "he says, 'it' grunts and makes noises. He wakes up to foot prints on the paving. He doesn't even sleep there anymore." Sands: "serves him right. Its not even his house. He'll be fine." he clicked on the remote. Me: "you don't think its weird?" Sands: "what is?" he looked absolutely

impervious by this entire story. Me: "that There's a ghost in Simphiwe's house, you know what else is funny? Months ago, Simphiwe and his girl left for Port Alfred bashiya istixo se-gate ku tata we ghadi. When they came back, days later, the entire back yard didn't have grass, it had been removed. Ingumhlaba wodwa. The old man was nowhere to be found. Now this." Sands: "I'm sure the old man is fine wherever he is." Me: "what if he was buried in the yard?" Sands: "its not the gardener that was buried in that yard." Me: "but if its not him, where is-wait, what did you just say." Sands: "you heard what I said." Me: "SANDILE!" Sands: "its late. You need to get some sleep. Uyabuya umnyeni wakho ngomso. Go rest." Me: "you know something!" Sands: "I'm not going to repeat myself ke mna. Andinguye uMasilakhe." he got up and went to his room.

Wednesday morning I was still sitting in bed. I hadn't slept a wink trying to digest what Sandile had said. My head hurt so bad. 'Its not the gardener that was buried in that yard.' Then WHO! He knew!!! That's why he wasn't surprised. Dumi: "Spho." he knocked on my door. Me: "what." Dumi: "are you ready to go?" Me: "ndiyaphi?" Dumi: "uhm, to court." Me: "go without me. I'm not feeling well." Dumi: "do you need anything?" Me: "No. Just wanna be left alone." Dumi: "okay." I heard him wheel away. I honestly didn't feel like seeing Sandile. He just frustrated me. I waited until I heard the car pull out then ndaphakama. Ndayovasa, ndanxiba gown and went to find food in the fridge. Everything I had to make from scratch. Bendingayifuni nalo English breakfast. I took my cookies left from yesterday ndayongena back in my bedroom. I wonder how Sibú was doing. I haven't responded to any of his messages. A part of me envied him. He grew up away from the torment and pain. I had to endure it on my own. I had no relationship with ibele lam and he could. He had the chance. I couldn't allow that chance because it hurt. Good God, this is so complicated. My phone rang. It was him. What now.. Me: "hello." I answered. Sibú: "hey. I was worried sick about you, Spho." Me: "I'm fine. Unjani wena?" Sibú: "I'm good. Just wanted to check on you, use court?" Me: "no I'm at home. You?" Sibú: "I can't. I'm calling hospitals and visiting morgues today. I'm trying to find my father. I guess its inevitable now." Me: "inevitable?" Sibú: "Spho, nobody just disappears without a trace like this. I should start accepting it... From people I've asked, its unlike him to vanish." Bawo wethu osemazulwini. Malingcwaliswe igama lakho. He didn't!!! Sibú: "Spho?" Me: "I'm...here... Sibú, I have to go." Sibú: "okay. We'll talk later then." I hung up and went to the bathroom throwing up in the sink. I shook my head trying to get rid of the image. I washed my mouth. 'Its not the gardener that was buried in that yard.' I heard Sandile's voice again in my head. Me: "No..." 'Its not the gardener that was buried in that yard.' Me: "NOOO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

Chapter 69

In the afternoon, after I'd cleaned the whole house. I was in the kitchen ndipheka umphokoqo. I was craving it for some reason and I hadn't had it in a very long time so ndamenza wamninzi. I had my earphones on while cooking. I tasted the fluffy maize meal. It was perfect. I turned around to take out a bowl, almost having a heart attack when I saw Sandile standing by the door. I took a deep breath and took out my bowl without saying a word. Sands: "so you're just gonna ignore me now?" the song I was listening to had just ended and that's the only way I could hear him. Me: "as you can see ndifake earphones Sandile. I'm not superman." Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "babe?" I ran to him and hugged him tight. Lakhe: "bendikhunjulwa kangaka kanti. I was worried when Dumi said you're not well. Couldn't get me out soon enough." Me: "I'm okay. Unjani?" Lakhe: "I'm fine. I just need a shower and food. Haven't slept or eaten in two full days." Me: "uzoty ntoni? Ndizenzela umphokoqo mna." Lakhe: "ndiyafuna nam. Ndiphakele babes, you'll find me in the bath." he kissed my lips and walked out. I took out the second bowl ndaphaka and put everything on a tray for the two of us. Sands: "Spho." Me: "can you please just stay away from me from now on. Please." Sands: "we live in the same house, How will that work." Me: "then I guess its time for you to leave." I took the tray to the bedroom. Lakhe was in the bath. Lakhe: "baby is that you?" Me: "yeah." Lakhe: "God, the conditions in that place are repulsive. Sies." I mixed amasi ndafaka nobisi. Lakhe: "hun?" Me: "I'm here." Lakhe: "is everything okay? You believe I didn't do it right?" Me: "I know you didn't do it Lakhe. I trust and believe in you." Lakhe: "okay. Cela uze ngapha. With my food please. I'm dying of hunger." I took his bowl to him. Lakhe: "aren't you gonna keep me company? Kutheni ingathi awukho right nje? Are you still sick?" Me: "yeah, I'll be fine wethu. I need to get sugar." Lakhe: "sugar for what?" Me: "umphokoqo wam. It tastes better with sugar." Lakhe: "I think I just threw up a little in my mouth. Sugar baby? Hayi kodwa." Me: "I crave all kinds of disgusting things, things that make you throw up in your mouth, just an hour ago, I had a peanut butter and gherkin sandwich. So the last thing I need, is for you to judge me. You made me like this..." I walked out. Dumi: "Spho? Cela undiphakele umphokoqo please." I took out a bowl and dished for him ndamnika. Me: "amasi ase roomin ka Masilakhe." Dumi: "are you okay?" Me: "I'm fine. I just need some fresh air. I'm suffocating." I walked outside the house. Sandile was standing at the far end of the yard. Next to the garden. He stared at me like a hawk. The gate buzzed. I went to answer. "khanindivulele." it was Rob. I opened the gate and went back to the bedroom to tell Lakhe his daddy was here. Me: "Lakhe.." he was already out the bath. Lakhe: "something is obviously wrong. I sense that you're probably

untrusting of me and awufuni nto idibene nam because I spent a few nights in jail. Baby, I didn't kill Dez. I didn't do it, I swear." Me: "I know you didn't. You're not that kind of person." Lakhe: "then why are you mad at me?" Me: "I'm not mad at you." Lakhe: "kwenzeka ntoni ke. Why do I feel a vibe?" Me: "your dad just arrived." Lakhe: "this is not about my dad. Is this another one of those pregnancy moods?" I gasped. Me: "so ucimba its a hobby for me to switch it on and off? Good God, Masilakhe!" I opened the door and walked out. Rob: "Heyyy!! Ninjani makoti and my baby booboo?" Me: "Siphilile tata. Can I get you juice?" Rob: "no, I'm fine. How's the baby?" for the second time. Really?? Me: "the baby is doing well. So far. Unjani wena tata? How's things?" Rob: "things are fine. I finally managed to file for divorce. I'm officially single and ndine date namhlanje." Me: "so quick?" Rob: "I've been waiting all my life. I'm so excited. I want you to help me." Me: "with what tata?" Rob: "I haven't been on a date in decades. I'm not sure what's the in thing." Me:

"tata there is no in thing. You just need to be yourself." Rob: "honey, you're the only woman that finds me interesting. I need Tips! Come, sit with me." So we're really doing this. I sat down with him. Me: "first tip, always compliment her about how she looks. Whether its her hair, her dress or her face. No sexual talk on the first date, you have to be a gentleman." Rob: "okay, so I tell her she looks beautiful. Noted." Me: "Ask her how she is doing, what she has been doing all day, be interested in hearing what she has done. Find something in her day to pick a topic on. Let's practice. You walk in." he stood up and pretended to walk in. Rob: "hey there..." Me: "No." he went back again and tried. Rob: "good evening miss." Me: "Molo bhuti." Rob: "how are you?" Me: "No." Rob: "what's wrong?" Me: "Looks before feelings." Rob: "Oh!! You look beautiful, I love your hair." Me: "it sounds a little gay." Rob: "you look stunning. How are you?" Me: "thank you so much. I'm fine wena Unjani?" Rob: "Ndiphilile. So, what have you been up to all day?" Me: "oh nothing much, ndise abantwana to school and came back to iron my laundry from yesterday. Then Queenie from next door asked me to help her hang her curtains, which I did. I went to the salon to have my hair done afterwards so ndim lo." Rob: "and the hair suits you well. Umhle yazi. Really captivating." Lakhe: "excuse me? You couldn't even wait for me to die tata?" Rob: "dying is a bit strong don't you think?" Lakhe: "why tata are you hitting on my wife?" Sands: "he did what?!!!!" Rob: "as loud as these two are, they sure as hell move like cats." Lakhe: "don't change the subject!" Me: "he wasn't hitting on me." Lakhe: "I know what I heard." Rob: "its not what you think. We were rehearsing. I didn't wanna tell you, I'm going on a date and I don't want to discuss it with you." Sands: "and me? Why? I'm your favorite." Rob: "You are, son, but this time I just don't want the both of you involved, Spho knows how

to make me cool." Lakhe: "I'm not sure what part of that confession hurts the most. Thanks dad." Sands: "but she's a woman." Rob: "that is the key reason why I chose her, now scooch. Go." Lakhe: "Spho hasn't eaten. So... Unfortunately I can't scooch until she does. Ina baby." Me: "what did you put in this." Lakhe: "love and forgiveness. I'm sorry I was insensitive earlier." Me: "it still doesn't have sugar." Lakhe: "Sandile, sugar." Sands: "hm?" Lakhe: "ambolanda iswekile?" Sands: "oh I thought uyandibiza." he went to the kitchen. Lakhe: "so.... he's your favorite." Rob: "you're all my favorites Masilakhe, come on. You know Sandile is unstable. Drop it." he whispered. Dumi came in. Dumi: "so this was nice. Molo tata." Rob: "hayini Uphi owam umphokoqo?" Me: "nobody has ever said in this house ufuna umphokoqo yazi tata. Ndiphekele mna nomntanam." Lakhe: "nomnyeni wam." I looked at him. Lakhe: "wakho. Sorry again." Me: "stop apologizing." Sands: "Sugar for my sugar." he gave me the sugar bowl. If he thinks I'm gonna pretend to be sweet phambi kwabantu. He has another thing coming. I started eating my food bencokola about Rob's date. I just wanted to get out of here. I received a message on my phone ndayifunda. Lakhe: "please meet me in the bedroom." I looked around, when did he go? I went to the bedroom. Lakhe: "I can't take this anymore. What is wrong Spho and please don't say nothing. If unaar ndim, I'll understand. Just please tell me. I promise I won't get mad." Me: "its not you." Lakhe: "Okay. Okay.. Then what is it? Is it Peanut? Is she making you uncomfortable?" Me: "No." Lakhe: "is it my dad?" Me: "no." Lakhe: "should I go through the whole register now?" Me: "its me." Lakhe: "why are you mad at you?" Me: "I'm not mad at me." Lakhe: "now I'm confused. What's happening mntu wam? Please let me in." Me: "I found out last night that Sibub is my brother." Lakhe: "omphi uSibu. Our Sibub?" Me: "Yeah." Lakhe: "how?" Me: "I offered to go drop him off kumamakhe last night and I did. The woman that opened the door for him is the woman who brought me into this world." Lakhe: "are you serious? Did you get to talk to her?" Me: "I have nothing to say to her. I left. I ended up kwi driveway yase bluewater bay. My old house." he kept quiet and stared at me. Me: "Simpfiwe came outside and we spoke for a while." Lakhe: "what could you possibly speak about." Me: "well, for one, my past. I told him what happened. He understood and tried to calm me down. He then apologized for how he treated me." Lakhe: "of course he did." Me: "he told me to tell you Congratulations on marrying me, the best man won." Lakhe: "indeed he did." Me: "then....something happened." he breathed slowly. Lakhe: "what is something." Me: "he started acting weird. Almost scared. Rushed me out the house into my car. Then all of a sudden wakhwela naye telling me to drive away. I did. In the car he told me that a few months ago he went away with uNoma, eshiyele utata weghadi istixo se gate. When they came back a few days later, they found all the grass in the back yard

removed, ingumhlaba wodwa. The gardener can't be found anywhere. Ever since then he's been hearing things ebsuku, grunts and noises ingathi kukho umntu ohamba eyardini. Xa evuka ksasa kukho footsteps zodaka. Xa ekroba ebsuku, akaboni mntu. He decided to stop living there. Uhlala kokwabo ngoku." Lakhe: "this is a whole load of bullshit. You know that right? Yonke lento is a way of trying to get into your head and bring you closer to him. Do you Really think this is true? Its crazy!" Me: "I told Sandile this story." Lakhe: "and let me guess, he says its stupid too." Me: "actually no. He says, it serves him right." Lakhe: "and it probably does." Me: "I said maybe the gardener was killed and buried in the yard. Perhaps by mistake or someone covering it up." Lakhe sighed. Lakhe: "There's no such thing Spho." Me: "Sandile said. Its not the gardener that was buried there." Lakhe: "See??" Me: "you're not understanding this sentence Masilakhe." Lakhe: "I understand it perfectly. You're starting to sound crazy." Me: "Masilakhe. Sandile buried my father in that yard, didn't he." Lakhe: "pardon?" Me: "the dead body I found in the lounge months ago. Sandile buried it there. He knew what he was doing, getting rid of it and making it Simphiwe's problem because he hurt me." Lakhe: "is that such a bad thing?" Yoooooh! yangathi ndibasiwe ngomlilo wezulu. Me: "Masilakhe. A dead body. How is it a good thing to put a dead fuucckking body in my ex's back yard!!!!!!!!!!!!!! HOW!!!!!!!!!!" I screamed. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi, I'm gonna need you to calm-" Me: "I'm not gonna fucking calm down!!!! How is it a good thing!!! Tell me!!!! I let go of him months ago!!! Why couldn't you just let it the fuck go!!! Instead you had to fucking torment him!!! WHY!!!!!!!!!!" Rob: "what the hell is happening!!!" he rushed in. Lakhe: "I have no idea tata. She just started screami-" Me: "You know!!!! You and your brother did this. And you know! You made me go to a cemetery at night to dig a grave for money! Who the Hell does that!!!!!! Why !!!!! You're siiicck!!!!!! I can't even look at you right now!" I almost ran out of oxygen ngumsindo. Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "Don't." Sands: "what's happening." Lakhe: "get out." Sands: "bu-" Lakhe: "Get the fuck out!!!! Both of you! GOOOO!!!!!!!!!!" I packed a bag. Lakhe: "baby, please listen-" Me: "I don't want to hear a word, Masilakhe." Lakhe: "you can't just leave me like this. Spho, I didn't know what Sandile did. I swear." Me: "because I'm the idiot in this family." Lakhe: "you're not. Uxolo mntuwam. Please don't go. Spho please." Me: "Why. Why would you put money in a grave and introduce me to it? Why me? Why couldn't you do this with your brother!" Lakhe: "because I didn't think it through. What if Sandile got in trouble with me? Then who would kn-" Me: "don't you fucking give me that! Masilakhe, something vile is hanging on you. I don't know what the fuck it is, but the minute I figure it out. I am not staying a second longer. And I swear solely on my dead father's fake grave." I zipped closed the bag. Lakhe: "baby uyaphi-" Me: "I'm not going any damn where. You Are. Ina. Get out!"

Lakhe: "you're throwing me out of my house?" Me: "is that the attitude you want to keep?" he took the suitcase and walked out. Sands: "and now? Where you off to?" Lakhe: "she kicked me out." Sands: "I'm probably next. Sendiyifumene first warning." Rob: "Hahaha... Exciting times. I've heard pregnancy makes them go coocoo. That's why I took the easier road with you two." Lakhe: "you may want to lower your voice before you join me at the hotel." Rob: "uyahamba kengoku?" Dumi: "I used to sleep in the spare room. For about 3 months before Zimi was born." Lakhe: "she said I disgust her. You heard her scream at me like a.....crazy person. I'm not going to wait for her to stab me in my sleep. Sandile can we talk outside." Rob: "if you leave, its gonna be another fight. Trust me. Just stay in the spare room, keep out of her-." Me: "didn't I tell you to leave?" I walked into the lounge. Rob: "Yeah. You should go. I can't believe what you've done." Sands: "Geez Lakhe. How could you?" Lakhe: "Sandile. A word." he walked out. Sandile followed him. Sands: "WOW. What the hell did you do!" he whispered. Lakhe: "why. Why did you have to bury that bastard in that house!" Sands: "which bastard?" Lakhe: "utaka Spho damn it!" Sands: "how did she...." Lakhe: "she is not stupid! She figured it out! What's wrong with you!" Sands: "kodwa I warned you mna bhuti, I told you way before you caught feelings ukuba Spho is going to figure you out like a Maths Lit textbook. She is going to outsmart the shit out of you and find things out-" Lakhe: "she said she would leave me. Sandile the look in her eyes when she said it. She wasn't joking. You have to fix this!" Sands: "Me? Why?" Lakhe: "because you started it!" he got into his car and drove of.

A few days later, it was a beautiful Saturday afternoon. Around 1pm. I was going to meet the girls for lunch and catching up. I looked through my wardrobe for a dress to match this beautiful summer's day. I was so happy and delighted. I don't know why. Maybe yellow? No, too bright. I could feel my bump had grown a centimeter or two but it was really unnoticeable. To everyone else. Everyone else except me. I felt like a whale. I couldn't fit into my favorite jeans and I was still hungry. I sat in my closet crying for God knows what. Sands: "Spho?" he knocked. Me: "what you want!" Sands: "I brought you someone to cheer you up." Me: "that better not be your brother." Sands: "its not my brother. No....uhm..... I'll be in the lounge." Sibü: "you don't have to push me." Sands: "arg, you're fine." the door closed. Sibü: "Spho? Uphi?" Me: "in the closet." he walked in and looked around at the mess. Sibü: "Unjani." Me: "I'm fat." Sibü: "really? I think you look gorgeous. As usual." he sat next to me. Sibü: "what's the matter." Me: "I threw Lakhe out." Sibü: "I heard." Me: "I miss him so much." Sibü: "why don't you call him?" Me: "because he's never going to take me seriously ever again." Sibü: "Oh..." Me: "he didn't even try coming back." Sibü: "I'm sure he's giving you your space. He'll be home soon,

he'll ask for your forgiveness and you'll?" Me: "accept it." Sibú: "good. So why are we sitting in a closet." Me: "I can't find anything to wear. I have to go see my friends for lunch. I'm so hungry but I've been eating all day. My jeans don't fit me and I don't look like I've gained weight. My life is so-" Sibú: "okay.....shhhh....take a deep breath." I took a deep breath. Sibú: "we can only deal with one thing at a time. Firstly, kushushu phandle for a jean. You have beautiful dresses. For instance, this one. Here's another one. What do you want to eat?" Me: "we're out of gherkins." Sibú: "what is that?" Me: "small pickled cucumbers." Sibú: "you don't want eggs and chees-" Me: "I want a gherkins and peanut butter sandwich." Sibú: "I'll go get them then. Try on a few dresses so long. I'll be back." he left the room. I tried on a few dresses for almost 15 minutes. Most of them were tight fitting. I found one that was loose and comfortable. It was my navy and white boob tube dress. I loved it so much. It made me so happy it brought tears of joy. Sibú: "and what's happening now." Me: "I love this dress." Sibú: "its absolutely beautiful. Here's your sandwich." Me: "where did you get the gherkins?" Sibú: "bendiyozithenga." I ate my sandwich delightfully. Uggqiba kwam ndenza intloko. Sibú: "you're gonna be late for lunch." Me: "I have to clean up first." Sibú: "No, you don't. Nxiba i-sandals zakho. Sandile will sort this out. Come." I followed him out with my bag and keys. Rob: "Wow!! You look so stunning." Sands: "absolutely love your dress girlfriend." Me: "its not too much?" Sands: "No!! Its perfect." Me: "Thank you. Ndimnkile. Bye guys." Rob: "bye sweetheart. Have fun." I left the house and drove off. Sandile sighed. Sibú: "I could've sworn she was breeding Anaconda's the way you were so terrified on the phone asking me to come help." Dumí: "you weren't here these past few days." Sands: "yeah you don't get to judge." Rob: "I've never held my breath in for that long." Sands: "that baby is definitely a mini Lakhe. It is aggressive as hell!!! Zange ndayibona intwenje!" Rob: "my grandchild is not aggressive. He's just excited." Sands: "manyan nyan tata? Like his dad?" Rob: "yeah I can't even sell that. Dumisani, you've had kids before, You've dealt with pregnancy. How come you're still clueless." Dumí: "all I know is, I did what I could to survive." they all laughed. Sands: "God, I'm glad I'm never having children." Rob: "why not? They're a blessing." Sands: "I cannot deal with This." Sibú: "come on guys. Its simple. Give in to your woman. Its a bit uncomfortable for yena, all she needs is support. No questions asked." Sands: "I so wish Lakhe was here to hear you say that about his wife so we can prove my aggression theory." Dumí: "so what did Lakhe do wrong?" Rob: "he doesn't even know." Sands: "A bunch of topics were thrown at him. He's still confused till this day. I spoke to him in the morning." they laughed. Sibú: "when is he coming home?" Sands: "he's scared!!! The fuck you talking about coming home? I would stay in that hotel forever amen if I were him." Sibú: "I spoke to

Spho, like a human being. I was calm and respectful and she said to me she missed him. This is his gap to make things right." Dummi: "and fuck up some more." Sibuh: "this is absurd. If he doesn't try, he stands the chance of ruining it even more." Rob: "unyansile nyana. Khanimfowneleni. Let's help turn this house into a romantic apology." Sands: "I'll do the cooking. I'll call him just now." Dummi: "I will try to decorate." Rob: "me too." Sibuh: "I'll sort out the closet, ndibuye ndizoncedisa." Rob: "I've never done this before in my life." Sands: "Sibuh will guide us. He's the only one that has experience in these things." Sibuh: "because I appreciate women, I don't even have to do these things." Rob: "nice time to rub that in son."

My lunch with the ladies was going well. We were at Salt, seated on the outside having healthy conversations and food. Me: "I swear guys. They drive me fucking crazy. They tip toe around me like I'm some grenade ready to explode! My goodness! Everytime I walk in, they sit up straight and stop talking. Don't they understand that treating me like I'm crazy, makes me fucking crazy!" Fez: "spoiler alert, you ARE crazy!" they laughed. Fez: "girl, why'd you throw your man out?" Me: "because he treats me like a child." Zintle: "its all in your head and your tummy. This baby is making you crazy." Zingi: "guys sometimes men actually do things on purpose to make us snap. You don't understand, you're not pregnant. Dummi used to annoy me shitloads when I was having Zimi." Fez: "what is so annoying! I don't get it." Me: "everything. I tell him a story, which I was there to confirm, and he says I made it up. Why would I tell it to him in the first place if its made up? Its not like we run out of topics." Zintle: "hayi sisi, wena you have a difficult man kakade, you brought this on yourself." Me: "oh but his brother is even worse. He would literally be on the floor laughing, xandingena acime ingathi usisbane. How offensive is that! He is laughing at me behind my back." Zintle: "hahahaha! No. He doesn't want you to feel bad xa ehleka so he keeps quiet." Me: "then why doesn't he tell me why he's laughing?" Zingi: "because men are cruel monsters." she stuff garlic bread in her mouth. Me: "I just want them to be normal again. Jonga today, they brought back uSibulele to come talk to me like I'm some zoo animal." Fez: "you are a zoo animal. You're being delusional. You have to take deep breaths, focus on youuuuuuuwho is that hotty standing over thuurr." we looked that direction. Me: "oh my God." I hid my face. Fez: "and then? Ke mang?" Me: "some guy I met in East London." Zintle: "you're not even married a month, to a guy you haven't known for a full year. WHERE and HOW do you meet these men?" Zingi: "Good Jesus, he looks like James St Patrick on Power." Zintle: "but lighter. Oooh." Me: "guys stop looking!" Fez: "he's already coming over. Is my make up fine? And a 1, 2.....beyonce hair flip. Hey You.." Zintle and Zingi burst out laughing. Me: "Why Fez. Why."

Siya: "Hey stranger.." Me: "Mr Yaya." Siya: "so, I've been waiting for your call, friend." Me: "I've been busy." Siya: "I see that." Fez: "join us." Siya: "I'd love to. Unfortunately, I'm meeting my fiance here, and there she is. My friend, please call me." he smiled and walked away. Zintle: "WOOOW, Hook. A bitch. Uuuupp!" Me: "he has a fiance. Uyambona nawe." I stared at her. Fez: "so?? This is what friends are for." Zingi: "I find it strange that he didn't introduce his friend to his fiance." Zintle: "I don't care. I just want him in bed. Lord have mercy." Fez: "he is a dream." Zintle: "a very wet sexy dream." Me: "aren't we late for our movie?" Zingi: "oh no, honey we have two hours to go. Akasandikhabi lo." Zintle: "is it a boy or girl?" Zingi: "Andiyazi. I don't mind either. You Spho?" Me: "I want a boy. Lakhe is adamant on a girl. Its funny, a month ago, uthe ufuna ikwekwe. Now all of a sudden, its she this and hers that. You see why he makes me mad?" Zingi: "you'll be fine. Whichever gender, it will make the both of you crazy happy. I swear." Me: "yeah, now I want a girl. The house is full of boys. Why can't Sandile find a stable girlfriend! So I can have someone to share this deep frustration." Fez: "ndim mos girlfriend ka Sandile, what do you have to worry about." Me: "I'm worried about this imaginary relationship." Fez: "he doesn't have to know. But we're a couple." Zintle: "doesn't couple mean together. Or something?" Fez: "yes. I go over to the house. We chill in the lounge." Me: "with me and Dumi." Fez: "he requested me an Uber." Me: "to get you Home as quick as possible." Fez: "he cares about me." Zintle: "did you have sex?" Fez: "No!" Zintle: "then he's not yours. Its in the commandments. If he doesn't put the vienna in the pan, he cannot be yours. He belongs to the world." Fez: "that is the stupidest thing I've ever heard. Firstly, Sandile's dick is nowhere near a vienna-" Me: "you have thus ruined my appetite." Zingi: "and where did you see Sandile's dick?" Me: "we're not having this conversation. Please guys." Zintle: "how big is it? Average size banana? Cucumber?" Fez: "Cucumber." Zintle gasped. Fez: "it folds before him like a kung fu belt." Zintle: "weapon of destruction!" Zingi: "again, where did you see Sandile's dick?" Fez: "he showed it to me." Me: "now why would he do that?" Fez: "okay, not on purpose. I was helping him choose an outfit on the wedding day. So he had to change his pants. His underwear is tight so..." Me: "you are sick." Zintle: "you're such a slut." Fez: "if he didn't want me looking he shouldn't have asked for help. Damn. As if I forced him." Me: "khome ndisayochama." Zintle: "uchanyiswa yi cucumber?" she laughed. Me: "oh please. I'm used to mountains not speed humps." they all gasped. Zingi: "whaaat." Me: "I'm going to pee." Zintle: "you're coming back to explain that." I went to the bathroom, I urinated, wiped, flushed and washed my hands. I checked myself in the mirror for a few seconds and then walked out. Bumping into Siya. Me: "Yaya." Siya: "my call." Me: "goodness. I don't even know what happened to your card." Siya: "Facebook name?" Me:

"why are you pushing so hard when you have a fiance." he looked behind me. Siya: "baby, come... I'd like you to meet Spho my friend, Spho, my future wife Babalwa." she smiled. Babsi: "hello Spho. Unjani." so I'm a big I idiot for thinking he had a crush on me. Not everyone is gonna want you angel. You're not that great. I scolded myself. Me: "ndiphilile Babsi, Unjani wena?" Babsi: "I'm great sweetie. Baby, I'll settle the bill so long vah. It was nice meeting you Spho." Me: "same here Babsi." she walked away. She was so sweet. Me: "sorry..." Siya: "for what? Not wanting to be my friend?" Me: "its awkward for a dude to just come and want to be friends. Genuinely." Siya: "Facebook name?" I told him. He searched and found me. Me: "bye Siya. Don't keep your girl waiting." I walked to my table. Me: "guys she is so sweet." Fez: "who?" Me: "Yaya's fiancée. I would never accept Lakhe's female friends and let them talk privately." Zintle: "because you's a crazy bitch. She knows you're married. She trusts her man. You also look trustworthy. Not a big deal." Me: "how would she know I'm married?" Fez: "its probably because your ring finger doesn't have a rock the size of my face." Me: "There's no need to be salty now." Fez: "just saying boo." Zingi: "guys our movie. Masambeni." we paid our bill. Zintle: "since we came in two cars, we'll have to separate." Me: "I'll take Zingi." Fez: "the two baby mamas. Let's go." we left for the cinema at the Boardwalk. After a great movie, we went to get ice cream. I received a call from Sibu. Me: "hello. I answered. I don't know when I'd break the news to him about our relations. I just knew it wasn't today. I was more scared of him shutting umamakhe out because of me, or even worse asking me to forgive her so we can be happy families. No, I can't. Sibu: "hey...how was lunch?" Me: "it was great. We watched a movie too, having ice cream now." Sibu: "amazing. I'm glad you having fun." Me: "ndiyagoduka kodwa ngoku. Are you still home?" Sibu: "oh no. Utata uRob took us out to dinner and then bowling afterwards. So you can have peace and tranquility when you get home just now." Me: "I would so love that." Sibu: "alright. Bye then." I hung up. The thought of silence and that bed sounded so good in my head. Worse ukuba Zintle and Fez were going out now, so we had to go home. Not really had to but it was appropriate. I was honestly tired. Zingi: "Spho will drop me off. You guys can use the car, you'll just drop it off ksasa." Zintle: "thank you my love." Me: "bye guys, have fun. Don't drink and drive." Fez: "bye grandma." we hugged and separated. I drove Zingi home and I went to my house. Nyani I could see they were gone. I parked my car and walked to the door. I walked in to a dimly lit lounge. Me: "where is my furniture?" there was a red check blanket on top of a think one on the floor near the fireplace. A short little table next to it with covered plates and juice. All around were red petals on the floor. What the hell was happening. Lakhe: "baby. Ndicela undixolele. I was wrong for ridiculing you. I was wrong for making you do things you

weren't comfortable with. I also apologize for the pain I caused. I'm sorry for not taking your feelings seriously. I love you and I can't be without you. You're my family and from now on, I'm treating you with the respect you deserve. I will be honest. I will be considerate and I intend to keep this promise. I miss you so much my queen." Me: "I hear you." Lakhe: "enkosi my love." Me: "I miss you too. I'm sorry I've been acting so crazy. Its like I'm losing my mind. You make me so mad." Lakhe: "whaat? Nooo. You're not crazy baby. It was a misunderstanding. I know better now." Me: "I am crazy. This baby is making me crazy." Lakhe: "maybe ebekhumbula utatakhe. Its been a while since I've been here. Its been a tough week. I realize I haven't slept next to you in our bed at all. Saturday, I left you at the hotel, Sunday you were at the hospital. Monday I got arrested. Wednesday I came home, and you threw me out." I hugged him. Me: "thank you for coming back." Lakhe: "I'll always come back for you my queen. Always."

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2 days later. Monday morning. I was in the office early. I had to start on my youth project. Luyolo: "molo Spho." Me: "hi Luyolo. What can I do for you?" Luyolo: "nothing. I just want to say thank you for the opportunity you've given me. I can't imagine what I would be if it wasn't for you. So, this is to say Thank you and congratulations on your wedding." he gave me a bunch of white lilies. Luyolo: "I picked them this morning in my garden." Me: "awww these are so beautiful. Its only a pleasure man Luyolo. And You've been working really hard ever since you got here, awuhlali ulinde for instructions, you just take charge and do whatever it is that needs to be done. So its great to have you here." Luyolo: "enkosi Spho. Let me get back to work." He walked out. I looked at the beautiful flowers. This is literally the sweetest thing. Lakhe: "hey." he was standing at the door. Me: "hello." Lakhe: "why'd you leave me behind?" Me: "you were sleeping. I didn't want to disturb you." Lakhe: "how could you possibly disturb me from waking me up for work?" Me: "you're always tired. I thought you should sleep in." Lakhe: "who's that from?" Me: "what?" Lakhe: "iblom ezi uziphethayo." Me: "oh, they're from Luyolo. He says thank you for giving him an opportunity to work with us. He has a garden." Lakhe: "I also have a garden." Me: "so you say. I'm going to get a vase." I got up and walked out to find one. Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "yes, my love." he followed me. I found a vase in the kitchen ndayigalela amanzi. Me: "what's wrong?" Lakhe: "nothing. I just miss you." Me: "we spent Saturday night, and the whole of yesterday together. Where's your family by the way." Lakhe: "they'll be back today. They went to Jeffreys bay on Saturday apparently. Uzomxelela nini

uSibulele?" Me: "I'm not ready to have that conversation with him." Lakhe: "how come?" Me: "I'm just not ready. The questions. The emotions. Everything." Lakhe: "don't you think that its going to keep getting harder for you to say something? Why not get it over and done with?" Me: "and what about utatakhe? What do I tell him? That Sandile has murdered him and buried him in my ex's back yard?" Lakhe: "well....telling him that would be your choice. Although I don't think it would be a good idea to let out the details. It would rock their friendship deeply." I walked back to my office. Lakhe: "hun." I set the vase by the window sill. Me: "I think these are my favorite flowers yet." Lakhe: "baby." Me: "I don't think I can keep that big a secret from him. Don't you think it already hurts that he's my brother. He's a sweet person. He has a good heart. I don't want to hurt him like this." Lakhe: "if he knew the reason why it happened, I think he would understand." Me: "I don't want to risk it. I like having him around me." Lakhe: "it was meant to be...don't you think?" Me: "what was?" Lakhe: "Us. Our brothers were best friends way before we met. So we're actually destined to be together." Me: "okay Mr Destiny. Your work is waiting on you. Can you get me something to eat so long? Fried Chicken wings would be best right now." Lakhe: "its not even 9am. I'll get you fruit salad and yogurt." Me: "argg...." Lakhe: "uzozitya later on ii-wings. You need to be healthy." Me: "okay. Let me work." Lakhe: "fine. I get it. I'm gone." he stood by the door. Lakhe: "but I was thinking maybe we could get lunch together. Noba siye Bocadillos?" Me: "I can't. I'm having a meeting during that time." Lakhe: "what meeting?" Me: "Pete and Tim are coming to discuss their account. I want to renew their contract but they have a few other issues they need to iron out with the company including the merger." Lakhe: "I didn't know about this." Me: "they contacted me personally. We have a strong working relationship." Lakhe: "I was still not notified. As CEO of the company you work for." Me: "I don't notify you with every small thing. That's why I'm here. To divide the work." Lakhe: "Pete and Tim are one of our biggest clients Spho. They're not a 'small thing' like you're implying." I looked at him. Me: "what is making you so mad?" Lakhe: "I'm not mad. I just don't like looking incompetent. If they had a problem with the merger, I am the CEO, they should've come to me." Me: "since when do clients pitch directly to the CEO?" Lakhe: "since you married the CEO. Everything runs through me. I don't care if the tea lady runs out of milk supplies, I need to know. Where is this meeting?" I was gobsmacked. Me: "I'm about to check our boardrooms availability and get back to them." Lakhe: "let me know when You've confirmed. I will be in that meeting." Me: "you don't have to be. I can handle it." he had already walked out. What??

It was 15:20pm when I was getting ready to go home. Lakhe: "honey..." he closed the door behind him. I breathed slowly. God knows I love my husband but today. Today he was being too much. Me: "what." Lakhe: "so I was thinking about an early dinner at that wonderful restaurant. Its a nice sunny day outside. The food is great. The scenery is amazing and-" Me: "You came to my private meeting and took over. You made ME look incompetent. Like I'm some intern in need of your help. I had everything under control, but you can't stand that can you? You hate it when I win. You hate it when I can do something just as good if not better than you. You just cannot Stand the possibility of me going great without you. This is the third time you do this. I have to sit back and watch the great CEO do his thing. Why Masilakhe." Lakhe: "baby...I didn't mean to make you feel that way." Me: "yes you did. You always do." Lakhe: "I don't." Me: "now I'm stupid. Is that what you're saying." Lakhe: "I just like being in the loop. You never let me peep on what you're working with. The only way I can get through to yo-" Me: "is if you stop treating me like a baby! I can walk by myself. I can work without fucking up. Hell, I've been doing it for years, this is why I'm where I am in my career. Bungekho wena all that time!" Lakhe: "well, I'm sorry." Me: "but why!!" Lakhe: "you just know more about our clients than I do. Its difficult Spho. I have to run through fire to impress these people but all you have to do is show up and its already a yes." Me: "bekutheni uzungatsho kengoku?" Lakhe: "its embarrassing." Me: "no its not! Everyone needs help networking with existing, new and potential clients. And you just gave me a hell of an idea!!! I love you and your insecurities." Lakhe: "why? What is the idea? Uyazbona you're shutting me out again?" Me: "We never formally introduced you to our clients. The media. Our market doesn't know you." Lakhe: "No. No media!" Me: "Masilakhe-" Lakhe: "NO Sphosenkosi!!!" Me: "Why not!" Lakhe: "I don't like my business out there." Me: "you own a big company and a lot of other entities. Your business is already out there." Lakhe: "Spho. I just don't want cameras following me around. I don't need that type of attention." Me: "you won't get that type of attention. Listen, I'm thinking of a launch. Formal dinner. An event. We invite all our clients and their reps. You obviously being the main focus will have to introduce yourself and let them a little inside your business history. What you have achieved and your visions for the future. Something that assures them comfortability when working with you." Lakhe: "There's gonna be the press." Me: "probably. Just a little bit." Lakhe: "what happens if someone leaks that I'm charged with murder and awaiting trial? What then?" I didn't think of that. That could do more ruining than you could imagine. Me: "I'm sorry. I got carried away." Lakhe: "its a great idea babe but its not the right time for me. Or the company. Can we go to dinner now?" Me: "its half past 3 baby." Lakhe: "oh shit. I have a meeting with Dumisani." I packed my

things. Me: "where?" Lakhe: "endlini." we went to the different cars. Me: "see you at home." I started and drove off first. He followed behind me sayofika endlini. I could hear laughter and noise from outside already. When I closed my car door, SILENCE. It did tick me off but I wasn't going to be crazy about it. Like they expect me to be. I walked in the house. Me: "molweni tata. Ninjani?" Rob: "ndiphilile ntombi yam. Ninjani nina? How's my pumpkin seed?" Me: "siphilile tata. He's doing just great." Lakhe: "She." he followed behind me. Lakhe: "so we have a family meeting at 6. Khame ndiyotshintsha." Sands: "Sibu isn't here." Lakhe: "Uphi?" Sands: "I told him. He can't leave his mom. So akazozza." Lakhe: "I'll go change." Me: "I'll start on supper. Nibawela ntoni tata?" Rob: "what I'd do for idumplings, and chicken stew." Me: "sinayo intlama?" Sands: "ewe, its in the fridge." I went to change ndabuyela e-kitchen. I started chopping the vegetables." Sands: "Spho." I got a little fright but didn't show it. Rob was right about them moving around like cats. Me: "what." Sands: "I'm sorry for what I did." Me: "are you? Or you're just saying something rehearsed so that you can keep the peace?" Sands: "I'm saying this to keep the peace. I don't regret what I did. That man hurt you and tormented you. It was not right and I would never be able to rest until he was dead. I had to protect you." Me: "has it ever occurred to you that this happened over a decade ago and my father, Khaya, protected me enough until now. The man you killed was not in my life. Not even once tried to come close to it ever again." Sands: "he couldn't get away with what he'd done." Me: "Simpfiwe yena? What did he do?" Sands: "he hurt y-" Me: "Sandile, you had no right. What if someone or anyone decided to dig kulandlu once its sold and found a dead body in the back, who do you think was going to be arrested? So just because Simphiwe cheated on me, he deserves to rot in jail for something he didn't do? Sandile you are wrong. You are wrong for jeopardizing someone's life like that. You are wrong for taking actions into your own hands because you think its fine. It doesn't work that way. You have scared Simphiwe enough, now There's someone's spirit lingering about that house. That is some deep serious shit. Sandile this isn't just someone's spirit. This is your best friend's father. Sibulele Right now is looking for his dad and can't find him. Ubuzova njani wena if he was the one that murdered Rob? Would you be able to forgive him?" Sands: "No..." I continued with my chopping quietly. Sands: "Spho." Me: "what is it Sandile." Sands: "please forgive me." these men knew how to play your emotions. They just had the method. Sands: "I can't go on if you're mad at me. I don't want you to hate me." Me: "I don't hate you." Sands: "you can barely look at me.." I stopped chopping again and looked at him. Sands: "I'm sorry..." Me: "its okay." Sands: "its not. Sibulele will never forgive me. He's the only friend I've ever had that understood me. I can't lose him." Me: "come here." I hugged him. Me: "you

have a good heart. Just that its buried deep inside a lot of dirt and nobody can see unless they dig deep enough." Sands: "so I must exhume the body." Me: "that is not what I said." Sands: "that's what I wanna do. I have to dig it out and confess." Me: "Sandile. You will lose him for good." he looked at me. Sands: "you don't want me to tell him. Why?" Me: "I didn't say that." Sands: "why don't you want him to know?" Me: "I don't want him to know because I don't want him to find out what kind of man his father was. That shouldn't be what defines him. The less he knows, the better." Sands: "Okay. I'll find a way to take it to the morgue. Keep it there for a few weeks and then they'll notify him." Me: "I do not want to know the details." Sands: "so me and you are cool?" Me: "we're fine." I went back to my cooking. He went to the lounge. In a few hours after I'd finished with my cooking, I dished up for everyone and took the plates to the lounge. Rob: "oh my....ndayigqibela nini le meal. I could just die." Me: "please don't." Dumi: "this smells wonderful Spho." Me: "thank you Dumi." Lakhe was half way through his plate. Sands: "and I'm the pig? WOW." Lakhe: "I've been starving myself all day because I wanted to take my wife out to a great restaurant but she refused. So ndiyeke." Me: "sorry my love. Eat up." I wiped his mouth. We had our dinner sagqiba and Dumi took the plates to the dish washer. Sandile took Boogie out for his night pee. I was left at the table with Lakhe and his father. I could feel the topic brewing and just before I could escape. Lakhe: "so, I got arrested." he blurted out. Rob: "What! Why?" Lakhe: "Dez is dead. They said I did it." Rob: "that is fucking ridiculous Masilakhe!! You are no murderer!! When did this happen! Why was I never told!" Lakhe: "its no big deal. Dumi has it handled-" Rob: "No. Masilakhe. Dumi is a great attorney. But this is some serious shit." Lakhe: "dad, I don't want drama." Rob: "You- you don't want what? I'm calling Ryan right now. He will bring his team first thing tomorrow." he got up and walked out. Sands: "and now?" he sat down. Lakhe: "he's calling Ryan." Sands: "urggg... smelly Ryan?" Lakhe chuckled. Sands: "I'm so not gonna be here for that." Lakhe: "why not?" Sands: "Why Not?? He smells like belly button juice and toe nail clippings. I can't go through that." I laughed out loud. Dumi wheeled in. Dumi: "what's the joke?" Lakhe: "my dad's lawyer. Sandile says he like belly button juice." Dumi: "what does that even smell like?" he laughed. Sands: "you'll be there to witness." Lakhe: "I told my dad about the case, he's already going wild. He's calling his team of lawyers, I hope you don't mind." Dumi: "mind? I am glad he did, not only will they help break this case, but I'll have the opportunity to work with the best attorneys in the country. I can't miss this for the world." Lakhe: "perfect. So that's what this family meeting is about?" Sands: "precisely. Dumi thought we should start to come up with a strategy. Build up on that, polishing your character and so forth." Lakhe: "for a slight second, I could've sworn you were the lawyer." Sands: "mpa." Dumi: "I guess now, its not

necessary because I'll be working with your father's lawyers. I do though, need to plan so I'll be in my bedroom office if you need me." my phone rang. It was Sibú. Me: "hello." I answered. Sibú: "Hi Spho. Unjani?" Me: "I'm great Sibú and you?" Sibú: "I'm good. Uhm. So I've decided to put umama into a rehabilitation centre. I just don't know where to start. Where I find correct ones, how I know they will be suitable to her because what I know is that, her surroundings are what's pulling her back. She goes behind my back hiding ngecawa and society meetings to go drink abuye enxilile. I can't be on hand anymore. I need professionals to look after her. Especially ngoku, I've got a follow up interview on Thursday. I can't deal with this stress. Can you help?" are you serious right now? Its like I could hear my own voice mocking me. 'if you need anything Sibú, don't hesitate to call me'. Nobody ever means that. Right? I'm not the only one. Please hesitate! Me: "I can look into some places for you. I'll give you a call or send you their contact details." Sibú: "okay. Thank you so much. Enjoy your evening." Me: "you too." I hung up and sighed. Lakhe: "what?" Me: "I agreed to help Sibú find a rehab home for umamakhe." Lakhe: "so?" Me: "I don't want to find her help. I just want her to suffer slowly." Lakhe: "you're not helping her. You're helping your brother. He wants her to be okay. As much as that would hurt you. It doesn't mean forgive her." Sands: "I have some stuff to go do-" Me: "Sit." Sands: "I really did have stuff." Me: "you're going to sit." he sat down. Lakhe: "Tell him... He already has a connection with you, just let him in. Let him know ungumntana wakokwabo." Me: "now is not the time." the gate buzzed. I went to open it. Nosi walked in the drive way erhuqa suitcase zakhe. Lakhe: "who is it?" Me: "your sister." Sands: "which one?" Me: "Nosi." Sands: "lovely! I missed her so much." he jumped up and went to the door. Lakhe: "please Spho..." he held my hand. Me: "I can already feel this is going to hurt him." Lakhe: "for a little while. Sibú is a positive guy, sooner or later he'll have forgotten and be interested in started new with you." Nosi: "hello family!!" Me: "hey sweetheart." Lakhe: "why are you here?" Nosi: "holidays bhuti. I'm passing anyway. I'll be in Miami and Los Angeles for the whole of December." Rob: "excuse me?" he walked in. Nosi: "hi daddy!" Rob: "Uthi uyaphi?" Nosi: "my friends and I planned a trip to the U.S. These are the two cities I'll be in for more than 3 days. Others I'm just going to hop in." Lakhe: "is this something I'm paying for? Again." Nosi: "because I have the best big brothers ever!" Rob: "nobody is going anywhere. We're having our first Christmas here together as a family-" Lakhe: "actually dad, Spho and I are having our honeymoon in Italy.....on Christmas." Rob: "Nobody is going anywhere! Do you understand me?" Lakhe: "Yes sir." Rob stormed off to his room. I've never seen him so pissed. Me: "so Italy?" Lakhe: "it was supposed to be a surprise." Me: "its not even happening. We're summoned to stay." Nosi: "well that sucks. I've already booked tickets." Lakhe:

"you have way too much allowance, young lady. Cancel those tickets. Dad is on to something, you do not want to make him mad." Me: "come, let's take your bags to your room. Get you settled in." I took one of her suitcases and helped her to her room. Me: "so, how's things?" Nosi: "well...they're okay." Me: "and your project? How is it going?" Nosi: "difficult. The artists aren't doing so well. No gallery is taking their work. Saying Apparently, I'm inexperienced and unqualified to be doing this." Me: "well, yes... So what are you going to do about that?" Nosi: "I don't know sisi. I'm not sure whether to study art, business or both." Me: "I don't know anything about art, except that if its pretty and I like it, I will buy it. What I do know about business is if you crack the secret of your industry, you're good to go. Whether or not you have the experience or qualification. Its a sure thing that you need the education to learn more about your industry, also most of the time, cracking the secret is in learning much more about your industry. So if you haven't gotten it by now, its time to consider being back at university and studying toward your dream." Nosi: "my dad and brother don't understand this. They don't think its a real career having a passion about art." Me: "your dad and brother are a bit old. They have the need to protect the rest of this family. They generate the revenue and that's the only thing they're passionate about. You're young. They have worked hard so that you can have the freedom to be what you want." Nosi: "my brother refuses to support another 'passion career' he thinks its a waste of time." Me: "Nosi. You need to look deep down inside and figure out what you truly want. Do you want to please your family and live the rest of your life hating your job. Or do you want to be content?" Nosi: "I want to be content." Me: "talk to your elders. Show them what you love about art. And remember art isn't only about paintings. Don't forget about poetry, story telling, plays, a whole lot of different types of art." Nosi: "I've been talking to them." Me: "how about.....talking to them with their level of talking." Nosi: "what does that even mean?" Me: "if they're not taking you seriously. Create a proposal. Pitch to them why they should support you. Make it a professional presentation and point out everything you love in a professional way." Nosi: "that could work.....but I've never done this before." Me: "I can help." Nosi: "this is gonna be so much fun!" she squealed. This should be a lot of fun and easy. Me: "so what else is new?" Nosi: "ahh...nothing much I guess." Me: "no boyfriend? Or potential?" Nosi: "well...." Me: "yes?" Nosi: "there is a guy." Me: "is it the one we bumped into in joburg-" Nosi: "God, no. Euw. This one is different. A good guy." Me: "oh? A good guy?" Nosi: "Yeah. He's kind. Very considerate. He's sweet. He's also shy. I have a massive crush on him." Me: "have you tried to talk to him?" Nosi: "well... A little. Its just, he's not really getting the point." Me: "well, invite him for coffee or milkshake. Get to know him and his favorite things. That won't hurt. At least you have his number right?" Nosi: "No, I have

him on Facebook. You know him." Me: "I do? Who?" Nosi: "ngu Sibulele." Oh No. Me: "which Sibulele? Your brothers' friend Sibulele?" Would it have killed you to acknowledge him as your own brother Spho? Geez. Nosi: "Yes." Me: "he's old...er. Than you." Nosi: "I know... Do you have any advice?" Me: "I've never dated an older person, and I don't think its a good idea." Nosi: "you're married to an older person." Me: "Lakhe is not that old. Besides, Sibulele won't be able to date you because you're his best friend's little sister." Nosi: "I like him so much." Me: "I'm sorry sweet pea." Nosi: "I'm going to take a bath." Me: "okay. Kukhona ukutya in the kitchen if you're hungry." Nosi: "thanks." I went to my bedroom. Lakhe: "finally. Yinton ishushu kangaka incoko." Me: "haven't seen her in a while." Lakhe: "what's the problem now? Little artsy projects again?" Me: "yazi Lakhe if you could stop insulting and just hear out other people's passions before you throw them down the drain! Just because you don't like it." I went to run the bath. Lakhe: "I hit a nerve. What did she tell you?" Me: "can you pass me the lavender salts." Lakhe: "you're trying to distract me. What is it?" Me: "nothing. Salts please." Lakhe: "this must be juicy..." Me: "she has a crush on Sibulele." he gasped. Me: "before you freak out-" Lakhe: "she's just a little girl!!!" Me: "Masilakhe!" Lakhe: "Sibulele is a grown man!" Me: "this is why I don't tell you things." Lakhe: "what is she doing chasing after grown men?!! Why can't she just focus on school-" Me: "or find a boy her age-" Lakhe: "NO BOYS!! School and nothing else!!" Me: "my love. Its nothing you can control. The only way you can try and control it is if you're open to it. The more you push, the further she goes into the wrong direction." Lakhe: "Spho, Nosi is a child-" Me: "whom you caught in your house with an older man. You need to understand that things will happen whether you like them or not. Confronting Sibulele won't help anything because akayazi yena kqala, confronting Nosi, will push her into his arms or any other man's arms for that matter. Children rebel at this age, just to get a reaction out of you." Lakhe: "so you want me to keep quiet?" Me: "I want you to be the cool older brother." he frowned. Me: "now you look like the dad..." I relaxed in my bath. Lakhe: "I am the dad." he knelt next to the tub. Lakhe: "Nosi is like my little baby. I cannot sit back and let her go down this route. The same way, I'll never let my own daughter." he brushed my tummy under the water. Lakhe: "my girls aren't toys for boys to play with. Especially grown men." Me: "not all boys play." I kissed his nose. Lakhe: "what if Sibulele likes her too? Then what? They gonna date in my house?" Me: "I have faith that Sibulele is not that stupid. He knows his boundaries and has self control." Lakhe: "I think she just kicked." Me: "who?" Lakhe: "the baby!" Me: "I would've felt it. Its still early. Relax." Lakhe: "I'm excited. I wish she could stay in this belly forever. The world is a cruel place." Me: "she has a father that will always protect her. And a mom who will always be there for her." Lakhe: "not if she encourages relationships and boyfriends. No daughter of mine is

going to have some man. I can't let that happen. Her life must be full of teddy bears and tea cups and dolls. Plus a lot of glitter, I want my room to be filled with glitter everywhere. Messy hair and a lot of swirling around..like a ballerina. She's gonna have ribbons of every color on earth just for her hair. Daddy daughter charm bracelets on her wrist. With real diamonds. Pretty chubby toes with pink nail polish that daddy has to apply every Sunday while we let our air tea cool off. Then we'd plant flowers in our garden, watering them everyday after school when we done ruining our appetites with Ice Cream. Well ice cream will only be on Wednesdays. Friday we'll have hotdogs." my eyes were burning with tears, they got me at air tea. I just couldn't. This is probably how my dad feels. That's why he's so upset and not talking to me. I do miss him and our talks. Hearing him ramble on about his work and helping people. Hearing him call me 'Princess'. I miss him now. Me: "Stop it. You're making me cry. We're going to keep her locked in our castle forever." he chuckled. Me: "I have to call my dad. Her princess left the castle." I got out the bath and walked to find my phone. Lakhe: "I want ice cream. I think Woolworths is still open. Ndiyabuya baby. You want anything?" Me: "what you're having." he walked out. I got into bed and called Papa bear. He answered the phone almost immediately. Me: "hello tata." Khaya: "Hi." Me: "how are you?" Khaya: "I'm fine." Me: "Tata, I just wanted to tell you I'm sorry for not telling you when I found out. I wasn't hiding it from you. You were the first person I wanted to tell. I don't know of anyone else who could've been more happy. I'm still your little girl." Khaya: "you're not my little girl. You're my princess." Me: "ndiyakthanda tata. Uxolo ngokuphoxa." Khaya: "awundiphoxanga mntanam. I love you too. With my whole heart." Me: "I miss you." Khaya: "I miss you too baby girl. Is everything going well emzini wakho?" Me: "ewe tata. Utat uRob is here also." Khaya: "I'll call him tomorrow." Me: "is everything okay tata?" Khaya: "yes my angel. Nothing for you to worry about. Undibulisele ku lkhaya uyeva? I love you." Me: "I love you too tata." zange ndaliva eli lika 'lkhaya' igama. Although it was part of Lakhe's name, I don't know why my dad would call him that. Lakhe: "baby. I hope you don't mind hey." Me: "I thought uya kwa Woolworths." Lakhe: "happened to have this in the fridge. 90% chance it belongs to Sandile kodwa I bought the fridge so its mine too." Me: "khayeke uba possessive. Learn to share." Lakhe: "what's wrong?" Me: "dad says hi. He calls you lkhaya." Lakhe: "hahaa! Awesome. Its starting to sound now. Izolo bendingaliva ncam." Me: "izolo?" Lakhe: "we talk. On a regular basis." Me: "how regular?" he gave the sippy cat look. Me: "I'm asking." Lakhe: "everyday.." Me: "you talked to my dad?? Whilst mna ndicimba ndiqunjelwe!" Lakhe: "well....he was mad, then ndacela uxolo kuye. We spoke and yeah." Me: "what do you talk about?" Lakhe: "everything. Like Sandile does with utata. I used to think it was weird, now...its like he's my -"

Me: "No. Not yours." Lakhe: "what was the saying again? Oh wait, 'Khayeke uba possessive, learn to share.'" I took the ice cream. Me: "Mine." Lakhe: "anyway, I think its crazy we even have the same name. It was really meant to-" Me: "if you say it one more time. I won't mean to be violent, I swear." he laughed. I took my iPad and researched rehabilitation centers and also caring homes for older women. We needed the options available. I saved the details of everything I found and made a list for Sibu ranging from the best to the average. Me: "he has a follow up interview on Thursday. So his interview last week went well. I wonder why engatshongo." Lakhe: "a lot was happening. He wasn't going to chime in like a chorus just because." Me: "yeah." Lakhe: "Dumi's side? Is he fine?" Me: "a bit. He's just struggling to talk about Zingi. I told him to see someone instead. Because of Sandile and doesn't want to bring out awkwardness-" Lakhe: "if anything, Sandile is the least awkward person I know. He doesn't even get embarrassed. Andimazi uphila kweliphi lizwe yena." Me: "well, if anything. He wants to fix his mess. My problem is cleansing that house off that spirit. Removing the body won't be enough." Lakhe: "I'm sure he knows that. So our household is still stable. Another day of great house management Mrs Sobz. I couldn't have chosen a better companion. Its time for your massage." Me: "also tell me more about our princess. What else you'll be doing with her.." Lakhe: "you mean when I teach her the ballet routine?" Me: "you don't have a ballet routine." Lakhe: "I do now." I smiled imagining him on his tippy toes swirling around and listened sleepily while he massaged me. Lakhe: "goodnight my love." Me: "don't stop..." I murmured. Lakhe: "I wouldn't dare sthandwasam. Shh..."

#71

Lakhe was up before 5am Tuesday morning. He walked to the kitchen and searched the cupboards. Sands: "what the hell is your problem. Do you have to wake everyone up at this time!" Lakhe: "I need water." Sands: "we have a tap and a fridge...wait, are you sleep walking?" Lakhe: "I'm...up." he poured cold water into a glass and gulped. Sands: "oookay. What's happening. Did she kick you out again." Lakhe: "no. Everything is great...better than great. I'm just tired." Sands: "then you should be sleeping." Lakhe: "I was woken up at 2. I don't mind. I'm just so tired....but I can't say no." Sands: "no? To what?" Lakhe: "its the best sex I've ever had. I'm not complaining but-" Sands: "I was not asking for details. My God! Don't even continue. Just Stop!" Lakhe: "I need to sleep." Sands: "go back in there lover boy." Lakhe: "hm..." Sands: "don't fall asleep on the counter. We eat here. Go have fun. You'll take a nap in the afternoon. I used to do that with Zingi. She would make me stay up all night. I

don't know where she channels that energy from, all I know is that I miss it."

Lakhe: "uphume ke k'lo TV ukuyo." Sands: "why." Lakhe: "her husband is your friend. Don't be that guy Sandile." Sands: "I've always been that guy. Besides, Dumi uze ngawe. You brought him into my life and made me like him." Lakhe: "and that like should be enough for you to stay away from his wife." Sands: "Ex wife." Lakhe: "Spho and I work very hard to make sure everyone in this house is catered for, safe and most of all happy. You're not going to ruin our family circle because of your urges. Find yourself a good woman that is yours. You don't have many friends. Don't chop away those that already like you. You don't want to end up alone." Sands: "I'll always have you. Besides, I won't do anything that will jeopardize my friendship with both of them. Things are already steamy with Sibulele." Lakhe: "you're fully dressed." Sands: "Yes. Now do you see what's wrong with you." Lakhe: "you weren't in bed were you? Uvelaphi?" Sands: "places." he walked away. Lakhe: "don't walk away from me Sandile." Sands: "uzandithini? Chase me? Please." Lakhe: "mxim." he took his glass and went to the bedroom. I was sitting on the bed waiting for him.

Me: "what took you so long?" Lakhe: "I was chatting to Sandile. You're still awake?" Me: "yes..." I smiled. Me: "why ume emnyango?" Lakhe: "oh....I kind of dozed off. I'm so tired." Me: "dozed off? You're standing." Lakhe: "you know?" he got into bed. Me: "you okay?" Lakhe: "yes love. Just thinking about today and all. My dad's lawyers are arriving. So I probably won't make it to work." Me: "ok. And our appointment?" Lakhe: "appointment?" Me: "Doctor. For Baby." Lakhe: "that's today?" Me: "I told you on Saturday." Lakhe: "ngoban ixesha baby?" Me: "at 2pm." Lakhe: "isn't Paul on vacation? I think I remember his email esithi someone else is going to be there in his place. A friend of his. Kodwa uzongena from 1pm till 5pm. Apparently he also has a surgery. Baby why singalindi uPaul? We know him and trust him." Me: "Masilakhe Ikhaya Sobukwe. I am not going to wait a month to see my baby mna! I booked this appointment for today, at the hospital they said I must go for a check up Today and I don't care if the doctor is an alien. I am seeing my baby. Do you know how long I've waited for this!" Lakhe: "a week." Me: "don't you dare act smart!!" Lakhe: "okay, fine. Singalala ngoku?" Me: "I'm not sleepy." Lakhe: "You've been up since midnight. Then you work all day. When do you sleep?" Me: "I'm fine. I'll sleep after my appointment." Lakhe: "okay." Me: "I don't even have much to do at work today." he snored. Me: "Masilakhe!" Lakhe: "yes baby." Me: "I'm talking to you!" Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi, God knows I love you with all my heart, kodwa ndidiniwe sthandwasam. Please. Ndicela just 2 hours of sleep before this hectic day begins." Me: "lala kaloku." Lakhe: "now you're mad at me?" Me: "I'm not." he turned to the other side and slept. Mxim.

I was at the office around 9am. Just to oversee a few things. Really, there wasn't much for me to do and I hated sitting still being useless. I'd spent only 2 hours working and I had already finished what I needed to do. Walking around would seem like I'm doubting my colleagues especially Lakhe engekho. I stayed in my office and decided to do some online shopping for me and Lakhe. I hope he likes this shirt. It was a little bright but I thought it was nice. After clothing, I looked for shoes. Okay, I was really bored. This was insane. Where were my clients? Why aren't they calling me? Are they happy with our services? My phone rang. Finally!!! Me: "Good day, you're speaking to Spho." Lakhe: "its me." Me: "Oh hi." Lakhe: "Unjani." Me: "I'm good.. Wena?" Lakhe: "I'm great. What are you up to?" Me: "just working." Lakhe: "on my credit card?" I smiled. Me: "it needed exercise." Lakhe: "I see. Yazi ndiyavuka ngoku. Dad's lawyers just arrived, basebenza noDumi. I have to go make an appearance then become a magician and disappear. Andicingi ndihlale nabo imini yonke mna." Me: "but its your case-" Lakhe: "they'll call me when they need me. How about abazali baka Peanut go and have some brunch very quickly." Brett walked in. Me: "khabambe kancinci babe. Yes Brett?" Brett: "the computers are shut down." Me: "what do you mean? I'm on my com-" I moved the mouse around. Lakhe: "kwenzeka nton?" Me: "that's weird. I was on the internet a minute ago. It just shut down. I can't even access files now. Okay Brett thanks for alerting." he walked out. Me: "My God, Lakhe. Something is wrong here. Where are my files!" Lakhe: "calm down. I'm coming-" Me: "you're gonna take too long. I told you to get an IT department but you like being superman!" Lakhe: "Okay. Now you're just lashing out. I'll be 30 minutes." he hung up. He really arrived 30 minutes later while I was addressing the staff. Me: "We'll be up and running again shortly guys. I'd like everyone to keep calm and continue with everything else. This is not a time to sit back. Okay?" I walked to Lakhe's office where he was doing something with his own computer. Me: "so what's happening?" he had a super serious, super angry look on his face. I didn't even get a response. Me: "baby I'm sorry I panicked. I really was lashing out unnecessarily." still nothing. Me: "do you need help? I can call Kylani IT services. We have partnered with them for IT." Okay. It was evident I was being ignored. So I tucked my tail between my legs and proceeded to walk out. Lakhe: "someone was in this office." I looked back at him. Me: "but who? Oko ndifikile akhomntu uze ngapha." Lakhe: "I've locked my computer from any other hard drive except my own. Nothing goes out of it unless its authorized by me. Should something slip, I've set the whole system to shut down. So, someone was in here." Me: "Harold akekho ke namhlanje. Yena mntu une access. Can we check the cameras?" Lakhe: "not yet. I will ask the staff. Give them a chance to come forward. If they don't, corrective measures will be taken." Me: "that will take all day Lakhe."

Lakhe: "I know." Me: "why don't we just check the cameras baby please?"
Lakhe: "Spho. Ndim i-CEO. I trust my employees to be honest and reliable. This is an exercise of integrity. Without me knowing, the culprit must bring him or herself forth. If not, I have to dismiss whoever it is because they would have breached their contract." Me: "Fine." Lakhe: "you don't have to be here if you don't want to." Me: "What if it was me then." Lakhe: "Was it you?" Me: "what would I want from your computer, I have my own." Lakhe: "exactly." he walked out. I went to the bathroom because I was feeling a bit queasy. I stood by the sink and breathed. Dololo. All of a sudden I was fine again. I went back out there. Lakhe was talking to the gathered staff. Lakhe: "now is your chance to come forward and confess if you tampered with my computer. I will be lenient but if I have to source you out then I'm afraid the punishment will be much worse. I do not have the time to play, and I don't take kindly to dishonest people." he turned and walked back to his office. Me: "hun. Don't you thi-" Lakhe: "Can you not. I already explained to you what I am doing and why. Do not question me." Me: "I'm not." I went to my own office and looked through my emails. I responded to a few and decided to leave for lunch and never come back. Until tomorrow of course. Before leaving I made sure everything of mine was in place, up to date and sorted which unfortunately for me ended up taking almost an hour. It was 11:45 by the time I was done. I took my bag and walked to my car. Lakhe's car had left. He didn't say he was leaving either. I went to buy Steers and drove to Zingi's place. I knocked on her door wazovula. Me: "hey. I brought burgers." I went in. Zingi: "why unhealthy food. I sent you emails on a great diet." Me: "and I deleted them. This has tomato, it has lettuce, it has cheese, a patty. What is unhealthy here?" I took a big bite. Zingi: "anyway, Unjani?" Me: "I'm good. For now." Zingi: "what does that mean?" Me: "that means, I'm waiting for something to derail my goodness." Zingi: "I don't know what's wrong with you." she took the burger and ate. Zingi: "so I spoke to Dumi, we're going for therapy next week." Me: "that's great." Zingi: "it still doesn't solve my problem. He says its not a good idea for me and him to have sex because it will complicate things. As if we're not adults." Me: "maybe he's afraid. Probably feeling a little less confident about himself because he's in a wheelchair. This is just a theory. I'm not sure." Zingi: "then what do you think I should do?" Me: "I don't know. Make him feel good about himself. Just don't remind him of the past." Zingi: "he won't even come see me." Me: "when you do see him. Make an effort." Zingi: "Unjani uMasilakhe?" Me: "he's fine. Just dealing with a crisis at work." Zingi: "and Sandile..." Me: "he's okay too. Just being himself. Oh and he owns a hotel now. Part of his new self building tasks. Not that there's improvement but hey." she smiled. Zingi: "he'll be amazing as usual. Sandile has a lot of talent and he's smart. He just hasn't figured out where to invest his

intellect. The minute he does, he'll be excellent. Don't rush him." Me: "WOW. You sound like his mom, actually, you sure you're not his mom?" Zingi: "eat your burger." Me: "okay." I chewed and swallowed quietly. Me: "so exactly, how would you know that he's smart.." Zingi: "we used to talk a lot. Stay up all night in between crazy sex-" Me: "I don't need to know that." Zingi: "we just spoke alot." I nodded. Me: "so I have to go. I just wanted to come eat with you. I have an appointment now." Zingi: "thanks for coming love. It really means a lot." I hugged her goodbye and went to the car. I texted Lakhe telling him to meet at the doctor's office. He didn't respond. I drove to my appointment ke mna, parallel parked my car and walked in. I was 15 minutes early. Receptionist: "Mrs Sobukwe, Mr Kusile is free now, so if you want to go in so long. You can." Me: "okay. If my husband comes please send him through." okay this isn't even my office and I order people around. I went in the doctor's office. Me: "Oh My God." he smiled. Me: "Siyanda? What are you doing!?" Siya: "I will pretend as though I'm not insulted. Unjani?" Me: "you said you.....Newton park.....medicine. What." I was so confused. Remember Siyanda? East London dude. Me: "are you stalking me?" Siya: "No... I'm just filling in for Paul, he asked me to. I have my own practice in Newton park like I said." Me: "you didn't say you were a doctor!" Siya: "I said I practice medicine. That's what doctors do." I was still confused for some reason. Siya: "Breathe in. Breathe out.. Relax." Me: "I am." Siya: "great. So what can I do for you." Me: "I'm just checking up on my baby." he stared at me. What was the look on his face? Me: "what." Siya: "you're pregnant?" Me: "yes."he nodded. Siya: "perfect." he sighed. Siya: "you can lay on the bed and relax." I did as told, also texting Lakhe again. Siya: "so is this your first." he applied the cold gel. It was my third. First, was forcefully removed. Second, I lost. Me: "Yes." this one had lasted this long. Siya: "15 weeks now." Me: "yes. Almost 4 months." Siya: "you must be happy." Me: "you're not." he looked at me. Me: "I don't even know who you are." Siya: "I thought we were friends." Me: "don't you think its odd that you look at me like that." Siya: "like what?" Me: "like I just cheated on you." he broke into a smile. Siya: "you want to know the gender of your baby?" Me: "uhm....not until my fiance is here." the door opened. Siya: "that him?" he stared at Lakhe. Lakhe stared back at him. And for a brief 5.2 seconds everyone froze except my baby's heart beat which was what distracted Lakhe. He walked to my side. Lakhe: "she's okay?" Me: "he's always been fine." he held my hand. Lakhe: "I'm so glad." Me: "baby are you okay?" he nodded. Siya: "has the baby kicked yet?" Me: "no, not yet. When do you think he'll start kicking ?" Siya: "usually around now it will be unnoticeable. The mother of my child used to say it felt like butterflies in her tummy. The fierce kicks start around 20." Lakhe: "So? The gender?" Me: "I wanna wait." Lakhe: "for what? I wanna start painting my princess' room pink." Me: "its too early for

that. We'll paint at 7 months." Siya: "would you be needing pictures?" Lakhe: "of course." he helped wipe off the gel and fix my top. Me: "what's wrong?" Lakhe: "nothing baby." he couldn't look me in the eye. Something was wrong. So I had to quickly finish here. Lakhe: "I'll wait in the car." he walked out. Siya looked at me. Me: "so how's your fiance?" Siya: "she's good." Me: "what does she do?" Siya: "she's a doctor." Me: "Really? So sweet." Siya: "she's mostly at the hospital but during the afternoons that I come here, she works at mine. We drew up a schedule." I gasped. Me: "a schedule? Adorable." Siya: "and then? Why you being fake impressed?" Me: "I thought it would go well with your foul expression to my pregnancy." Siya: "friends are never foul to one another. I'm happy for you. Having a baby is the greatest gift known to mankind. Well, according to me. I'd wish nothing but success and happiness with your new love. Trust me, you'll fall in love with her or him." Me: "thank you. That's sweet." Siya: "I'll get you your pictures and vitamins." I sat on the chair until he came back. Siya: "hopefully I'll see you again soon." Me: "probably. Enkosi." I took my things and walked out. Lakhe was in his car. I got into the passenger seat. Me: "what is it? And be honest." Lakhe: "my baby is growing." a tear rolled down his cheek. Me: "yes." Lakhe: "it feels so surreal Spho. Like some dream, and I'm so afraid, I don't want my dream to end. I like it." he was crying now. And I hated it. I couldn't even comfort him, I was just downright irritated. Me: "Masilakhe. You walked into that room and froze. As if you saw a ghost. Uyamazi uSiyanda?" Lakhe: "ngubani uSiyanda?" Me: "the doctor!" Lakhe: "No I don't. He was staring at me so nam ndamjonga. Can I see the picture?" Me: "are you gonna cry again?" Lakhe: "No." I gave him the picture. Lakhe: "she's precious." Me: "don't you dare cry!" Lakhe: "Let me be please." Me: "let you.....? You are in a parking lot." Lakhe: "I know its just....there's so much I'm feeling right now." Me: "give me that. Until you calm down." Lakhe: "I'm sorry. Okay, I'm quiet." he inhaled and exhaled. Me: "you're crazy. I'm going home to rest. I'm sleepy." Lakhe: "you can't drive usozela." Me: "you'll be right behind me." I got off his car and went to mine. Well, his also, but mine. I drove home with him behind me. We arrived at home and it was awfully quiet. I wonder where everyone was. I waited for him and we walked together to the door. I opened and there Sandile was. Sitting upright on the couch. For once. Lakhe walked in slowly holding my hand. They stared at each other. Kind of like at the doctor's office but this was more intense. Sands: "Masilakhe." he looked him dead in the eye. Me: "Hi Sands." you couldn't break the tension even if it was the screen of an iPhone smashed into a file. What was happening? Lakhe: "Get Out." he said in a low tone. Me: "haibo Lakhe!" Sandile got up and walked out only losing eye contact after he passed him. Which was very awkward. I was about to say something but..... Me: "what the hell is that smell!" I covered my nose and mouth. Lakhe:

"what smell?" Me: "Sweet Jesus. Can you not smell that revolting rotting smell! Its like a dead animal!" I ran to the bathroom. By the time I got in my room the nausea had left me. Again. Me: "what the hell happened out there? What did you fight about now!" more importantly, why didn't Sandile fight back? Lakhe: "we didn't fight." he poured himself a cognac. I looked at his hands. They were shaking. Me: "Baby? What happened? Whatever it is can be solved, love." he moved around the room, looking a little..... Nervous? Distracted? Confused? I've never seen this look on him before. Me: "Lakhe, talk to me honey. Kwenzeka ntoni? What did Sandile do?" he wasn't talking now. Me: "well, ndizoyombiza ke mna to explain him-" Lakhe: "That is Not Sandile Spho!!!! Its not him! Just..... Its not." he covered his mouth as soon as he said it. As if it was a deadly secret.....or was it?

#72

Lakhe: "so the security camera shows nobody was in my office? How? Of course I want to see the footage and I want to meet with your management!" so let's rewind a little bit. After the Sandile bomb shell, Lakhe's phone immediately rang as if he summoned it to. He quickly answered it as well. I was waiting for him to get off the phone because this was more important than some stupid computer and cameras and everything in that office! Lakhe: "No I will not wait. I won't. Jeremy, do what you may. I want that footage. From last week till today. Do you understand me?" he hung up his phone. Then he looked at me as if he regretted it. Lakhe: "so they say they don't see anyone walking into my office. Its been locked sinc-" Me: "wait a minute, hold on.....wait a whole minute. How- Wait- First of all, you're not gonna speed past our former conversation like you didn't just say what you just said." Lakhe: "Spho-" Me: "No. Tell me." he looked at me. Me: "Sandile has a clone!?" I gasped. Lakhe: "No." Me: "but you said that wasn't him." Lakhe: "Sandile is my brother and I love him very much." Me: "I know that but I didn't ask that." Lakhe: "He tends to....uhm...go in and out of a certain....character." Me: "what character? Disappearing Sands character?" Lakhe: "Yes. But this one is worst than that." Me: "Masilakhe stop talking in riddles." Lakhe: "this is a long discussion that I don't like talking about Spho." Me: "so you're gonna keep it a secret and let me assume the worst. And Sandile has a twin." I took my shoes off and walked out. Lakhe: "Okay Spho!!!" Me: "What? You hid from me that your brother has an ide-" Lakhe: "he doesn't have a twin!!!!" Me: "then explain!" Lakhe: "close the door." I closed it. Me: "so that WAS Sandile." he looked at me. Me: "its either Sandile. Or Not. That's it." Lakhe: "its Sandile." he swallowed. Me: "okay. So what happened between you two?" Lakhe:

"Nothing happened. Like I said before. Sandile has a character, well a few of those... Since he was young he had a condition. Since he was a child. It kept graduating as he grew and got worse. And..... has..... now been undiagnosed as SPD." Me: "what the fuck is SPD?" Lakhe: "Sadistic Personality Disorder." Me: "WHAT!!!!" Lakhe: "please don't freak out-" Me: "Let me get this straight, before you continue. Doesn't sadism mean gaining pleasure from seeing others undergo discomfort and pain?" Lakhe: "well yes but-" Me: "NO. This makes SO. MUCH. SENSE. He tortured my father and watched him burn to death, but the most terrifying part of all, is that..... He Enjoyed it?? WOOW." Lakhe: "he will never forgive me for telling you. Baby please. Don't treat him differently." Me: "or what? He's gonna snap? We are literally living with a breathing grenade." Lakhe: "he can keep it under control. He doesn't hurt family." Me: "I don't believe you at all. The look in his eyes when he saw you walk in. Heh." Lakhe: "can you please listen?" Me: "continue." I opened my laptop and hopped onto my good friend Google. Me: "what do you mean undiagnosed?" Lakhe: "well, you won't remember this but when we met, we once spoke about me having a doctor that helped me cope. Well that same doctor helped with Sandile, and helped him cope..while he was young but when Sands grew older he chose to stop seeing the doctor. He said he wanted to be himself a million times over. Which meant letting his brain change to whatever it wanted to be." I was staring at him wide eyed and mouth open. Was I dreaming? Pinch me. Lakhe: "so the doctor kept in touch with me and... I keep him updated, he explains to me on how I should deal with it and what it might be." I looked back at my laptop. I was fucking scared. Me: "this website says There's four types of Sadists. FOUR Masilakhe. According to me and probably a lot of other people, should a condition have more than one stage, it has reached dangerous, in this case savage levels." Lakhe: "four? What are they?" Me: "Apparently, There's the Enforcing Sadist." I read through it. Lakhe: "The controlling type. Mostly found in authority positions. Enforcing unnecessary punishment." Me: "then There's the Explosive Sadist." Lakhe: "unpredictably violent. Inflicting pain because of their own insecurities. What's the next one," Me: "Spineless Sadist. The coward.....oh God, no." Lakhe: "what?" Me: "He's tyrannical." Lakhe: "you haven't even read it yet-" Me: "I read faster than you. Look!" Lakhe: "the worst type of....." he looked at me. Me: "don't look at me. Read." Lakhe: "the most cruel sadist. He chooses his victims and enjoys tormenting- Spho, this is crazy-" Me: "No. Your BROTHER is crazy. This, is a medical study." Lakhe: "There's no reason to worry. Sandile can control himself, he's not an animal." Me: "he's tyrannical!" I shut down my laptop and walked out the bedroom. I was in the kitchen thinking of supper and I had the craziest craving for pizza. Where was Rob? Lakhe: "Sthandwasam..." Me: "what are we having for dinner?" Lakhe: "anything you

want. I'm sorry for all of this." Me: "we are going to have a baby Masilakhe. And his uncle is unstable." Lakhe: "his uncle is not dangerous-" Me: "Oh my goodness!!" Lakhe: "okay, he is. I'm sorry. He can control it. He can. I swear. One mistake, and he's out of this house." Me: "okay." Lakhe: "let me make dinner. Go lie down, ubuthe you're sleepy." Me: "can I get pizza first. I'll wait for it in the room though." Lakhe: "sure. I'll order your favorite." I went to our bedroom, undressed and got into bed with my laptop.

3 hours later, Robert and Dumi walked into the house. Dumi: "I'm starving." Rob: "something smells nice." Rob: "Spho hun." Lakhe: "its me dad. She's sleeping, so if we can keep it down a bit. Uphi uSandile." Rob: "Not Sure. Ryan went over your case son-" Lakhe: "Tata, I need to know where Sandile is first. This case is the least of my worries." Rob: "what happened." Lakhe: "we had a visitor.....him." Rob: "Again? Oh Jesus." Lakhe: "I need to know what happened before he left your sight. Did you fight?" Rob: "No. We didn't fight. We barely spoke. Uveske wathi uyahamba yena." Lakhe: "why!" Rob: "hayike ndizoyazelaphi mna." Lakhe: "I have to look for him-" Rob: "we both know that you won't find him. Just let him-" Lakhe: "let him what? Hurt someone? Let's wait then!" Rob: "I need a drink." he walked to his room. Dumi: "kwenzeka nton?" Lakhe: "nothing. I need to find uSibu." he took out his phone and made the call. Sibhu: "bhuti?" Lakhe: "tell me you've seen Sandile." Sibhu: "I haven't bhuti. Why?" Lakhe: "we have a bit of another him situation happening." Sibhu: "Oh....shit. I'll look for him. I'll see what I can do." Lakhe: "okay." he hung up. Dumi: "should I be worried?" Lakhe looked at him. Dumi: "why are you referring to Sandile as another person. Why is there all of a sudden another him?" Lakhe: "just....uhm... You know, a joke I usually share with Sibhu. When Sandile goes coocoo bird." Dumi: "coocoo bird? Like crazy?" Lakhe: "No. He's not crazy. Like aggressive." Dumi: "so he's aggressive?" Lakhe: "Dumisani. Its nothing. He just sometimes blows things out of proportion, gets angry and disappears to steam off. For a couple of days." Dumi: "so, he's not dangerous." Lakhe: "to us. No. Definitely not." Dumi: "and.....to other people." Lakhe: "it depends.... If." Dumi: "if what!" Lakhe: "if they tick him off." Dumi: "I think I know why he's angry. He's been disappearing the past few days, every night and reappearing in the mornings." Lakhe: "why is he angry?" Dumi: "ever since, he understood that Rebecca is the one feeding information to the cops, he's been restless.....almost, disinhibited around her." Lakhe: "has he, uhm....had an obsession with something, singing, a specific show, a specific object..." Dumi: "tractors. He's been staring at them everyday all week. Not the normal types, the ones that have spikes that kind of dig into soil. Why?" Lakhe: "is that all?" Dumi: "well, plastic. He's been playing with plastic. He

bought new types and filled it with water. Why is this relevant? You know Sandile is like a baby, he obsesses with stupid things." Lakhe: "oh Dumi." he hurried to the bedroom to fetch his keys. I woke up because of his rushing and mumbling. Me: "What now." Lakhe: "I have to go. I know where he is-" Me: "Calm down. Sit." he sat down. Me: "What is it?" Lakhe: "he's after Rebecca. Dumi says, throughout the week he's been leaving ngobusuku abuye ekuseni. I remember this because I went to the kitchen kusemnyama, I think ebefika yena. Also, he says he's been restless for a while now especially around Rebecca. I know Sandile Spho. He's like a serpent. Before he eats, he plans, he measures, he calculates. When he's done, he evaluates his mission, which is why he was here earlier, in that state he was in!! I'm almost too afraid to say this." Me: "he's going to kill her tonight?" Lakhe: "uSandile akabulali Spho." Ohhh shit. Me: "that means we're waking up to another body kengoku! Yuh hayi kodwa Lakhe! You said One mistake, this is it!!!" Lakhe: "I have to find him!" Me: "and then what! Heal him?" Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi. That is my brother." Me: "HE. IS. CRAZY." Lakhe: "he's not crazy!!!!!!!" he screamed. What the fuck was that? He stormed out. I was even more shocked now. Did he just scream at me? Ndaske ndabhidwa ke Yehova. Khawuphendule torhwana. What is this?

"Dark into the night.

My highest peak of life.

The moon shines on my scar.

And brings my pain to light.

I haven't slept in days,

I wander through the breeze.

Dark into the night,

Let this one go down in peace.

Tonight, I chose my one

She glows into my light.

My light being the pain,

That she will suffer in vain."

Lakhe: "Sandile..." he stood in a distance. The poem Sandile kept chanting, was actually his reality. The only coping mechanism, left within him was poetry. His whole being had changed. He didn't feel. He had dug a deep enough grave into the ground, sat on its edge, his legs hanging inside its darkness and played with his plastic bubble of water. Lakhe: "mninawa." Sandile looked up at him. Lakhe: "hey... What you got there." the breeze in the air was colder than usual. Lakhe: "Sandile." Sands: "what do you want." Lakhe: "I want to take you home." Sands: "I know my way home." Lakhe: "I know you do...but-" Sands: "you don't get to choose." Lakhe: "I know-" Sands: "you told me I could do it." Lakhe: "I did." Sands: "that it was my job." Lakhe: "of course." Sands: "why are you trying to take that away from me." Lakhe: "because this one might hurt." Sands: "who? Is it hurting Spho? Am I hurting her again? I don't wanna hurt her." Lakhe: "okay, okay... Then, maybe we can go home." Sands: "but I'm not finished." Lakhe: "Sandile you can't kill Rebecca!" Sands: "Why. You want her?" Lakhe: "I've never wanted her. You can't kill her because she's protected by police. Should she disappear, then my whole case escalates to something bigger." Sands: "I took care of that." Lakhe: "that's my job." Sands: "if you let me do mine, I'd let you do yours." Lakhe: "I'm not going through this with you again." Sands: "neither am I. Once the full moon peaks at midnight. The stars shining most bright. I'll take the one and bury her deep, her head above water and barely alive." Lakhe: "alive?! You're burying her ali-" Sands: "I'd leave if I were you."

#73

I was sitting in the lounge with Rob and Dumisani. Lakhe and Sibuh came in, with Sandile. His pants and shoes had mud on them and he didn't look very happy. My heart just ached. It wasn't his fault that he was like this. He didn't choose. Sibuh: "molweni." Me: "hey guys." I got up. I could tell Lakhe was pissed at me. I'm not sure why though. I haven't even said anything. Lakhe: "we're going to take a bath." Sandile followed him to the bathroom. Me: "can I talk to you?" Lakhe: "I have to make sure he's okay." Me: "I know. Do you need anything?" he just looked at me and walked away. It did hurt. I could feel it in my stomach. It was like butterfly- Oh my God. She's kicking! Me: "baby." he shut the door. Sibuh: "Spho..." Me: "yeah?" he was behind me and couldn't see the mess I was slowly becoming. I wiped my tears quickly. Sibuh: "what is it?" Me: "nothing. The baby kicked." Rob: "what!!!" he pulled my arm. Rob: "come

sit!! How does it feel? Put your feet up! Sibuy bring the camera!!" Me: "Tata. Its not that big of a deal. Hlala phantsi Sbu." Rob: "can I touch?" Me: "I don't think uzoyiva from outside." he held my tummy. Rob: "oooh. Its like little worms crawling in my hand." Not that dramatic I promise. Dumi: "Is Sandile okay?" Rob: "he's with his brother. He'll be fine." Me: "let me heat their food." I went to the kitchen to warm up their plates. Sibuy: "what's wrong." Me: "nothing." Something inside me kept saying 'TELL HIM'. But a bigger part said not yet. Sibuy: "okay. So umama ndimfakile kwi centre yakhe today. Thank you for finding out for me." Me: "its a pleasure. Any news on da- your dad." Sibuy: "No... I've decided to give it a rest now. Police would contact me if they find a lead." Me: "okay. So are you excited for your interview." Sibuy: "yeah. It would be nice to get something to do." Me: "Sibuy, are you okay?" he nodded. Something was off here. Plus it scared me a little. Why were his hands in his pockets the whole time? That was never a good sign. Me: "here's your food." Sibuy: "thank you." Me: "so I guess you'll be back here now." Sibuy: "yeah. I Was cleaning the house earlier. Making it nice. I'm thinking of renting it out." Me: "that's wonderful...but...where would your mom return to?" Sibuy: "I'll buy her a house. Somewhere far from there." I swallowed hard. Something was definitely wrong. He wasn't even blinking. Me: "great. I have to make a phone call. Please take this to Lakhe and Sands. I'll be in my room." I hurried out as quick as possible. In my bedroom I got on the phone immediately with my mom. Hey where the hell was uNosi? I'd have to check on her. Have to Start drawing a schedule now, the family is getting bigger, I cannot lose one. Mama: "Hello angel." she answered. Me: "hey mommy Unjani?" Mama: "I'm fine wena Unjani?" Me: "I'm great ma. So...I have a problem." Mama: "what have you done now." Me: "okay, why uzo assumer that ndim oyenze i- problem." Mama: "I'm sorry. What is the problem?" Me: "Mama, before you adopted me, the woman that I lived wit-" Mama: "your biological mother." Me: "well, Her. She happens to be Sibuy's mother." Mama: "Wow. Really?" Me: "Yes." Mama: "so ngu brother wakho." Me: "Yes. But he doesn't know and I don't want to tell him." Mama: "Why?" Me: "I don't want it to be a whole thing. I'm scared. I've never had a brother. I don't want one right now-" Mama: "honey, remember Mr Giggles." Me: "of course. My puppy." Mama: "remember how much you loved him?" Me: "I do. Then he got run over by a car and I can't do it ma. I don't want to." I cried. Mama: "stop crying baby. Sibuy is not getting run over by a car-" Me: "he was following me. I was walking to the shop. I left the gate open. And the car ran ove-" Mama: "Spho stop it. You can't avoid attachment with family because you're scared. These are things that are over powered by love. He has the right to know, you have the responsibility to tell him." Me: "You don't understand mama." Mama: "I know it hurts baby...and I don't mean the dog, I mean your childhood. You feel some

sort of resentment and its okay. Your brother isn't the one at fault." Me: "he's acting really weird now." Mama: "well... Talk to him." Me: "it seems like I have to talk to everyone today. Uphi utata?" Mama: "he's uhm...watching a rugby game at a friend's place." Me: "oh ok. Bye mama. Love you." Mama: "I love you too baby." Me: "oh and tomorrow, I'm taking you shopping. I found the best kitchen ware shop in the country." Mama: "oh no." Me: "Bye. Mwah!" I hung up. Lakhe walked in. Me: "I apologize. I realize I was mean, inconsiderate and disrespectful to your and your family. I just didn't realize that this was serious. I only thought of myself as usual. Sandile can't be without you, its clear that you know better than anyone how to get through to him and I'm sorry I judged him. It can't be easy." Lakhe: "you were right. I can't control him. He's getting worse Spho. I had to lie to him. I told him that this would upset you and bring back memories of the last thing he did. That's when he stopped. Lying only makes it worse. He cannot know." Me: "but its not a lie. Its true. It does upset me." Lakhe: "I don't know what to do anymore. But you were right. He's a danger here. Maybe we should look at options-" Me: "there are no options. He would be worse off anywhere else. At least here, he is supported and loved. The mere fact that he gained control and came back with you, that is a sign. He has to stay." he sat down on the bed. Lakhe: "I don't know what I'd do without you. Without him. You've opened me up to a whole new world Spho." I felt the little butterflies again. Me: "I have a surprise for you." I took his hand and he touched my tummy. Lakhe: "what?" Me: "wait for it." Lakhe: "she's.....she's kicking me." Me: "oh please don't cry. You're ruining it." Lakhe: "I've been on standby all day. Just leave me alone." he kissed my stomach. Lakhe: "I don't know what's wrong with me baby, everytime I hear about my baby or see her, I just tear up like a little girl." Me: "just this once. Quietly." Lakhe: "okay." he put his ear to my stomach. Lakhe: "hey my angel.... I guess you're no longer a peanut now. You have little chubby legs. You can kick me. I hope you're not hurting your mom. Your uncle doesn't like that. He made me promise. So can you promise?" he lifted up his head. Lakhe: "its like she's dancing in there. Uyamva?" Me: "are you serious? Get up." Lakhe: "let me spend time with my child." Me: "go eat your food." Lakhe: "you're already trying to separate us." Me: "Go Eat." Lakhe: "just so you know, if she was born I'd take her with me to the kitchen.." Me: "that's cute. Don't forget to wipe your face." he walked out. I texted Nosi and asked where she was, her response was, I quote "Took your advice. Out on Date. C U L&r." Lakhe was gonna kill me. I replied: "WHEN is 'l8r'? Your brother is about to hold a search party!" She: "Shoot! I'll get an Uber quick. Plz stol him." What the fuck is stol.....oh stall. Wow. What was so difficult in one more letter? And an a? Lakhe: "so....Sandile wants to talk to you." my breathing got stuck. Me: "what?" Lakhe: "he wants to talk. He's in his bedroom." Me: "alone?" he gave

me a sarcastic look. Me: "I'm sorry. I was kidding." I wasn't kidding. I was fucking scared. I got up and went to his room. Knocking on the door. He opened it. Dressed in a navy silk gown. Heaven help me. Sands: "Hi Spho." Me: "hey you. Unjani." I walked in. Sands: "So Lakhe told me, he told you what happened in the woods." Me: "oh that?" Sands: "I'm sorry I upset you." Me: "uh huh." Sands: "its just that, its my job to fix problems that hurt my family. Lakhe's job is to protect us." Me: "Can I take over both those jobs-" Sands: "No. You won't do what needs to be done. Confrontation does not work on everyone." Me: "I hear you." All I was hearing was that, this isn't his last time. Me: "so I heated your food and its ready for you." Sands: "thank you Spho." he hugged me. Me: "I'm just glad you're home. I hate not knowing where you are. You're part of this family and whether you like it or not. All of you are my kids." Sands: "Ndimdala nje kunawe." Me: "I don't care. You're still my baby boy. Okay? Don't worry me like this." Sands: "okay." I let go. Me: "so....have you called Khanya?" Sands: "No. Why?" Me: "sometimes its good to release some tension....in a loving manner." he smiled. Sands: "I hear you." he grabbed his phone. I walked out and sighed relief. That wasn't so bad. He was fine. Controllable. For now. I went back to my bedroom.

Wednesday morning I was up early going through my messages. Lakhe: "hey." he woke up. Me: "hey baby." I kissed him good morning. Lakhe: "what you up to so early?" Me: "I'm talking to Siyanda about my pregnancy." Lakhe: "ngubani kanene uSiyanda?" Me: "are you being serious right now?" Lakhe: "I honestly have no idea what goes on anymore. I'm like 20% clued up on things." Me: "you had an awkward staring contest with him yesterday!" Lakhe: "at work?" Me: "the doctor!" Lakhe: "Ohh. That guy. Wow." Me: "wow? That's it?" Lakhe: "What am I supposed to say?" I rolled my eyes. Me: "Anyway, I'm inviting him and his fiance over for dinner." Lakhe: "why!" Me: "because I trust Siyanda has the best interests for us and our baby." Lakhe: "he's a doctor. And so is Paul. It is their JOB." Me: "no, with Paul it felt more like an appointment. He was stiff." Lakhe: "stiff? Really? Wow!" Me: "at the risk of surprising you again. He sent me this video, look. Its so amazing." Lakhe: "Paul or Siyanda?" Me: "Paul doesn't wake up at 4am to text me back." Lakhe: "so.....You've been up since 4?" Me: "watch the video please." he took the phone. Lakhe: "its a pregnant woman sitting in a bath tub. Why am I watching this?" Me: "she's going to give birth." Lakhe: "inside the bath tub?" Me: "yes." Lakhe: "which she shares with her family?" Me: "that's not the point." Lakhe: "its creepy. I'm not going to watch a creepy video that's going to ruin my whole day. I won't be able to get that picture out of my head." Me: "so you're not gonna be there when I give birth to your child?" he smiled. Me: "I'm asking

you a question." Lakhe: "its a female process baby. Its not right for a man to be there-" Me: "we're in the 21st century!!!!!!!" I yelled. Lakhe: "okay. I'm sorry. Love, we have 5 more months to go. This is not necessarily a now discussion. I might grow into it. Give me a chance to grow into it." Me: "oh you better grow! It must fit you like a glove! No woman made me pregnant. It was You!" Lakhe: "I understand." Me: "so they'll be here for dinner at 7." Lakhe: "so we're having dinner with the doctor... How is this growing us?" Me: "I just think his wife is sweet and he's a great guy. You could hit it off. Nibezi friends." Lakhe: "but I have my status meeting at 7pm." Me: "Everytime I try and make us new friends, awufuni wena." Lakhe: "I have the exact right number of friends." Me: "we need couple friends. A healthy relationship that mirrors our own." Lakhe: "define healthy." Me: "are you trying to be funny?" he chuckled. Lakhe: "you yell at me at 6 in the morning." Me: "you deserve it sometimes." Lakhe: "I like the way you say sometimes." I looked at him. Lakhe: "I'm sorry. Kodwa baby, we have a healthy couple relationship. There's Babal-" Me: "Don't You Even Dare. First of all, that's not a healthy relationship, secondly, I don't even like him." Lakhe: "that's not his fault. He's been trying to prove himself to you. To apologize. To make up for before. You won't even give him a chance." Me: "If I give Babalo a chance, you give Siyanda a chance." Lakhe: "so can we invite Babalo to dinner as well?" Me: "I thought you had a status meeting. No. You're first going to bond with Siyanda. Like him." Lakhe: "I already know what I lik-" Me: "No. You don't." he pulled me to his body. Lakhe: "you sure?" he kissed my neck, holding my breast. Me: "show me." his phone rang. He ignored it. Me: "it could be the office.." Lakhe: "Andisakubaweli. Work can wait." Me: "Lakhe, focus. Answer that phone." Lakhe: "party pooper." he took his phone. Lakhe: "Sobz speaking..... No, not yet." he sat up. Lakhe: "right now?" he got out of bed. Lakhe: "most definitely. I'll be 30 minutes." he hung up the phone. Me: "and then? What happened to wcw?" (work can wait.) Lakhe: "my sweet, I have a contact from Tokyo, he was talking about expanding and he just landed at the airport. He has an hour to spare. I have to go meet him." Me: "expanding? Tokyo? Ndibhidiwe kengoku." Lakhe: "I'll explain later. Cela undikhuphele a very nice suit and shoes." he ran to the shower. I got up and took out his grey fitted suit. It just came back from being altered. I took out the white shirt and the pink. I wasn't sure which he would like. Maybe white with a navy tie and navy gentleman's slippers. In no time he was back in the dressing room. Me: "so..... expanding?" Lakhe: "it was something I've been thinking about-" Me: "Masilakhe, not to burst your bubble but You've barely come out apha inside your country. Why would you wanna go open up in Tokyo. That's gonna mean traveling!" Lakhe: "Sthandwasam, these are still talks. I've always wanted to go global and this is the one chance I have. We'll work something out." Me: "just.....please come home for

dinner tonight." Lakhe: "I wouldn't miss it for the world." he kissed my cheek and got dressed. Lakhe: "is my baby moving this morning? Good morning my apple. According to the internet, you're the size of an apple now. The apple of my eye." Me: "when did you find that out?" Lakhe: "I read sometimes. To get clued up. Well, this is my 20%. Baby, your tummy is starting to get big." Me: "its a little round. I still fit into my clothes perfectly. You can barely notice it." Lakhe: "I notice." Me: "you're my husband. You're supposed to notice." Lakhe: "next week she's gonna be an avocado. Avo ka tata." Me: "every week she has a new name? What will she be at 30 weeks? Daddy's little cabbage." Lakhe: "now you're just being mean." he kissed my tummy. Lakhe: "your mommy is jealous, apple pie." he wore his shoes and got up. I fixed his tie. Me: "I'm working from home today. I want to take a nap first and then ndise umama eBay West. I want to buy her pots to thank her for helping me with the wedding." Lakhe: "that's very sweet of you sthandwasam. While you're at it, undingenele kwa G Star, I need underwear." Me: "you have two drawers full of underwear." Lakhe: "Ndifuna ezintsha mos." Me: "okay. Go, you'll be late." Lakhe: "I love you hun." Me: "I love you too." he took his things and walked out. I went back to bed for my nap.

During the afternoon, I was with my mom. I bought her a set of red pots from Le Crueset and also cutlery. Mama: "isn't it a bit too colorful mntanam?" Me: "It looks stunning mama. These pots are everything. I think Lakhe would love blue." Mama: "I'm very sure Lakhe akanaxesha lembiza ke yena." Me: "unalo mama. He cooks." Mama: "are you serious?" Me: "ewe mama. Sometimes he cooks." Mama: "ayifani naye at all lonto." we walked to G Star to buy the undies and a jacket for him. It was gorgeous. He had to have it. After Raw, we walked around a bit and umama found a baby shop. Me: "mama. Its too early." Mama: "I know sweetheart but look at this baby cot." Me: "Lakhe is going to kill me if I buy that today. He says its early, asikathethi nangozala even." Mama: "its just a baby cot." Me: "maybe at 6 months ma." Mama: "okay. So what about ukuzala? Aren't you gonna pop in a hospital?" Me: "No...I want something special. I want a home birth." Mama: "a home birth? Why?" Me: "hayi mama wethu. I want to be comfortable endlinam mna. Not in some hospital with 60 other ladies." Mama: "not in a private room though." Me: "my house is already private. I spoke to uSiyanda about it. He says its a great idea. Lakhe is still growing into it." Mama: "I guess I have to grow with him. Have you heard the gender?" Me: "No, we're waiting." Mama: "okay baby." I went shopping for tonight's dinner. Me: "so how's dad?" Mama: "he's okay." Me: "just okay?" Mama: "Ewe. Just okay. Ude wathetha noSibu?" Me: "I can't mama. Yoh. I have this heaviness in my heart that just won't let go. I'm

not ready. I'm happy for him efumene umamakhe. That's it." Mama: "what about u-sister wakhe? Don't you think he's looking?" Me: "you think so? Is that why he's being weird?" Mama: "njani weird?" Me: "ever since he came back from his mom's house, he doesn't blink xa endijongile and xa ethetha he's less excited than usual." Mama: "don't you think perhaps he's tired?" Me: "then angalali nje." Mama: "once you get this off your chest. You will feel much better. Uhlala naye uSibu. Its not going to change anything except bring you closer." I didn't want to be closer. Me: "I don't want to be unfair. I don't want to rule our relationship on My terms only. Its best if I wait until I'm ready." she sighed. Mama: "fine." I paid for my items and we went to the car. Me: "sendidiniwe mna ngoku, my back is aching." Mama: "that is being pregnant love. Ndizok'ncedisa with dinner. Funeke uphumle wena as much as possible." Me: "its okay mama. I can manage." Mama: "are you sure?" Me: "I'm very sure. I'm going to exhaust you xasendityhala isusu. For now, don't worry." Mama: "okay sweetheart." after paying for my parking ticket, I drove her home. I then drove to my house. It was just before 3pm. I walked into the house and to my surprise everyone, being Sandile, Sibu and Dumi, were playing the damn play station. Nothing pissed me off more than the fact that, the bloody play station has its own room and flat screen. WHY. BRING. IT. HERE. And Uphi uMasilakhe! I told him to get rid of everyone. Me: "Sandile." he looked at me. Sands: "hi Spho-" Me: "Nenzanton?" Sands: "uhm...it was Dumi's idea." Me: "that is not what I asked." Sands: "Sbu." Sibu: "benditshilo mna." Me: "I am expecting guests! Bazofika njani kunje apha!! Why aren't you in the game room instead!!" Dumi: "I'm sorry." Me: "you're supposed to be at work! Uxolisa ntoni!" Dumi: "sendigqibile today." Me: "I don't like to yell and I don't want to. I hate being the grump. Please clean this mess you guys and disappear before 6pm." Sands: "on it!" I went to the kitchen with the plastics. I went back to the car to fetch Lakhe's paper bag ndayoyifaka in the bedroom. I went to the kitchen to start up on dinner. I was starting to get a headache. I leaned on the counter for a few minutes. Lakhe should've been back by now. Sands: "you okay?" Me: "just a headache." Sands: "why unga rest? We'll fix dinner." Me: "these are important people. I want to impress them, I think they'd make really great friends." Sands: "I can handle it. Uyayazi I'm a good cook." Me: "okay. Here's the recipe." I had a sudden urge for a chocolate milkshake. And I wanted it NOW. Sands: "go lie down." Me: "ndisayothenga milkshake kqala." Sands: "Sibu can go get that. Iya ebhedini. You're tired." if ndidinwa kanje ngoku what happens when I'm huge? Oh this is gonna be difficult. I went to my bedroom ndangena ezingubeni. Sibulele wazosabela ndifuna ntoni. Me: "a chocolate milkshake that's all." Sibu: "you okay?" Me: "I'm just a little tired." he nodded and walked back out. Hayini he was beginning to creep me out now. Maybe he knows? But how? Who

would have told him? Maybe Sandile noMasilakhe when they came back together! Why would they tell him! Its my thing to tell! I got up and stomped to the kitchen. Me: "you told him!?" Sands: "told What to who?" he was smiling at his phone. Me: "uSibu!" I whispered. Sands: "its not mine to tell. Why would I?" he finally put it down and looked at me. Me: "so nguLakhe?" Sands: "I don't think so. What makes you thing uxelelwe, did he say something?" Me: "he's being weird. He looks at me funny. Ingathi ndiyamdika or something." I peeped out the kitchen door. Sands: "he's already gone. What do you mean funny?" Me: "Sibu has loving soft eyes. These days, I do not see that love. Even xa ethetha nam." Sands: "maybe your mom told him?" Me: "That woman. Does not even know my name." Sands: "that's impossible. Look, just ask him. Then you'll find out utheni enjeya toward you." Me: "okay. I'll ask." Sands: "can you go back to bed?" Me: "Who you chatting to? And why you so happy?" Sands: "I'm chatting to my friends. Can't I be happy now?" Me: "Ohh." I went to my bedroom again. Then started to rehearse my dialogue with Sibu. A dialogue wasn't going to work, he was unpredictable now. I didn't know what he would say. Maybe Lakhe could help calm my nerves. I tried to call him. "Hi, this is Masilakhe Sobz. You've reached my voicemail, please leave your name and number I'll get back to you as soon as I can..." Are you being serious? Did this mean he wasn't coming to the dinner? Oh My Goodness, please do not embarrass me like this. I waited in my room, ingathi ndilindele uzobethwa. Why was I so nervous kanti? Where was Dumi? Maybe yena angancedisa undi-relaxer. Just before I got out of bed wangena uSandile. Sands: "why won't you sit still? Kuthen hleli nje ufuna uba ngu Dora with that stupid back pack that has an entire city in it? Sit. Lie down! I want you to taste this." Me: "I'm freaking out." I took the spoon and tasted. Me: "its lovely." Sands: "if you told him, you wouldn't have to worry." Me: "ubukhe wathetha noLakhe. His phone is off." Sands: "I'm sure he's fine. Don't change the subject." Me: "I'm not changing no subject. Andifuni qha uthetha ngalonto. I trust you guys will keep it down tonight. I have guests." Sands: "Inoba yi president lifikayo. Kunini usithi you have guests. I'm gonn put on my big boy suit-" Me: "you're not joining us. Ndim noLakhe, and our doctor and his fiance. I want to get to know them. It could be nice to have a doctor as a friend in case of emergency." Sands: "so basically, uyam'user. I did not expect that from you St Mary." Me: "okay Judge Judy, go get your gavel." Sands: "I'm just saying. You're taking more and more after me." Me: "izitshe net lambiza." Sands: "you know it and I know it." he walked out. I was so tired, why couldn't I sleep? I had to do something. Sibu: "Spho." he knocked. Me: "ngena." he came in with my milkshake. Sibu: "I also got you mini marshmallows. Ina." this is the Sbu that I know. Me: "that's so sweet. Enkosi." I took the shake and packet. Me: "so...uhm...Sibu. Are you okay?" Sibu: "I'm fine." his eyes didn't look fine. Me: "its

just that....You've been different. Ever since you came back." Sibú: "I'm fine." he said again. Okay, so it was evident. He was NOT fine. Me: "what's wrong? Is there something you wanna share?" Sibú: "I don't know, is there something that You wanna share?" Shit. He knew. Me: "no." I felt like a little mouse. Sibú: "well...me neither. Enjoy your snack." he walked out. I texted Sandile. "Something Definitely up!! He's PISSED." Reply ka Sandile bethuna: "Seems fine to me. Hey, undishiyele mini mar's vha. I'm coming." akekho serious lomntu. 2 hours went by. I went to shower then looked for an outfit. The time was 6pm. My guests were due any minute now. I took out a crisp white boob tube bandage dress which passed a full 5 centimeters below my knee. I wore my gown over it and started my make up. I always started with my eyebrows and then go on to foundation, conceal and contour. It worked much better for me. I did a Smokey eye shadow with a hint of gold at the beginning of my eye. Applied dark maroon matte lipstick ndayonxiba a gold strapped stilleto. After brushing my weave, parting it in the middle, I took off my gown and went to the kitchen. Me: "guys my guests are arriving any minute now. Please disappear." Sands: "but I'm hungry." Me: "take your food and disappear." Dumí: "you look gorgeous Spho." Sands: "didn't you say the dinner was here?" Me: "it is." Sands: "Wow. I wonder Uphi uMasilakhe before I take his place." I laughed. Me: "go guys." Sands: "I'm going to see a friend of mine. I'll be back late." Dumí: "two nights in a row.....must be some friend." Sands: "unje umntu wam ke xa endilinda. Ubane side comments. I Will Be Back!" Sibú: "we'll be in the game room." Me: "senityile?" Sibú: "yeah." he wheeled Dumí away. Dumí: "have fun." they disappeared. Me: "see?" Sands: "he definitely knows and he's definitely pissed. Khange aqalise nokuncoma. Which is unlike him. He's the nicest one out of all of us." Me: "what do I do!!" Sands: "thetha naye Spho. Explain to him. It will be over quick." Me: "Uphi utatakho?" Sands: "he's probably with Smelly Ryan. He's been obsessed with this case ever since he heard." Me: "uNosi yena uphi?" Sands: "she's at her friends house. She left around 2. I said I'd pick her up xandibuya later." Me: "alright." I tried Lakhe's cell again. Still off. Sands: "don't worry about him. You'll be great-" Me: "its not about being great, he knows he has to be here to get to know these people as well. I'm doing this for him too!" Sands: "calm down. I'm sure ubambekile somewhere." Me: "no he didn't want to come. He doesn't like uSiyanda." Sands: "Siyanda is the doctor I presume?" Me: "ya. Naba befika. Thank you so much for making dinner Sands. It was sweet of you." the gate buzzed. Sands: "I didn't mind. You know me. Do you want me to stay with you? I can go change quick...." Me: "you don't have to do that." I opened the gate. Sands: "I want to... You think I can't handle smart talk?" I laughed. Me: "I wouldn't know. You play too much." Sands: "I'm offended." Me: "seriously, its okay. You can go. I'll be fine." Sands: "sure sure?" Me: "goooo." Sands: "okay. Boogie is in

the back yard. He won't disturb you either. I'll see you later then." Me: "alright." my guests knocked on the open door. Me: "hi guys, come in." they came inside. Babsi: "WOW. Your house. You. Your husband. I don't know which one to start with!" Me: "this is actually my brother in law-" Sands: "don't ruin it. I was about to get a compliment!" Babalwa laughed. Me: "bye Sandile. Ungamlibali uNosi xa ubuya late." Sands: "okay. Enjoy." he left. Me: "welcome guys, umnyeni is still working. He's not home yet, he sends his regrets." I lied. I was really embarrassed. Siya: "he has to. For a house like this? I can't even imagine him falling asleep." Me: "oh stop." we sat down at the table. Siya: "what does he do?" Me: "a bunch of things actually. He is CEO at Gcell, he has two hotels which actually run themselves and a few other small entities." Siya: "that's amazing." Babsi: "ndiyayazi eyam indoda seyine man crush. He loves successful black entrepreneurs. Wena Spho Wenzanton?" Me: "I'm the MD. At Gcell." Babsi: "you're like a super couple." Me: "you guys are making me blush. So what kind of doctor are you Babsi?" Babsi: "I'm an obstetrician." Me: "what is an obstetri? Tongue tied." she chuckled. Babsi: "I'm a physician for pregnancy and childbirth, also combined with gynecology. How far along are you?" Me: "she's amazing! I'm 15 weeks." Siya: "yep...she makes me look like a cartoon character." I giggled. Me: "let me get our dinner guys. Can I pour you wine?" Siya: "please." Babsi: "just juice for me thanks." I went to fetch the special wine to pour for Siyanda and juice for Babsi. Then went to heat dinner while they had their beverages. I was a bit upset that I had to do this by myself. I wore the oven mittens and took the casserole dish that had roasted chicken to the dining table. I went back for the rest of the meal. Steamed vegetables and creamy mashed potato with a bowl of gravy. Healthy and tasty. Siya: "so...where did you meet the Mr." Oh My God. Why this question that confuses me silly? Me: "to be truly honest, I met him standing next to me on my hospital bed. I was in an accident the week before and in a coma. I lost my memory. According to him, we met at the mall, had breakfast and started dating." Babsi: "you lost your memory? That is hectic! At least he stood by you." Me: "yes he did. How did you guys meet?" Siya: "at med school. Ebengandifuni usiswakho, throughout our schooling. We only started dating 6 years ago." Babsi: "oh please. You were known all over campus." Siya: "I was a friendly guy nje." Babsi: "who wants to date a friendly guy?" ME. Siya: "everyone except you." Babsi: "Spho, this is lovely." Me: "thank you dear." Babsi: "I just moved here from Grahamstown. Maybe during our spare time you could show me a few boutiques." Me: "I would love to." something in my house started beeping. I looked around. Babsi: "oh sorry, that's me.." she checked a small device. Siya: "I thought we agreed to switch our pagers off." Babsi: "baby, I can't do that. uSibahle is almost 10 months pregnant and hasn't gone into labor, I have to do a c section." Siya: "ok."

Babsi: "I'm sorry Spho. Enjoy dinner guys. I have to get to the hospital ASAP."
Me: "its alright." Siya: "you can take the car, I'll get a cab." she took her bag.
Babsi: "thanks sweetheart. Bye Spho." Me: "byee." she rushed out the house.
Me: "so your pager?" Siya: "my work will never take over the personal time I have with important people in my life." Me: "you should understand she's a doctor. Its her job-" Siya: "your husband is not a doctor." he chewed on his meat. I didn't have a reply. I was just mute. Siya: "I'm sorry." Me: "its fine. You're right. I'm sure he's not even working, he just didn't want to come. Do you guys know each other?" Siya: "why?" Me: "that awkward look yesterday?" Siya: "he was the one that looked at me." Me: "uthe kum akakwazi. Couldn't even remember your name." Siya: "hmm." Me: "do you know him?" Siya: "never seen him in my life." he drank his wine. I wish I could sip some wine right now.
Me: "I feel like, There's something off.....with you today." Siya: "yeah. A little bit."
Me: "tell me." Siya: "today my son would've been 4." Me: "what do you mean?" Siya: "he drowned two years ago....didn't make it. A house of doctors, and he didn't survive." Me: "I am so sorry to hear that Siyanda. Do you want to talk about it?" Siya: "I don't know how. I never really have spoken about it. It just hurts and doesn't get better." Me: "perhaps if you spoke about him, it would be easier. I'm sure he wouldn't want to upset his daddy." he smiled. Siya: "he was playing in the lounge crawling and starting to get up and walk. He could, but he just preferred crawling. I came home from work edlala. I took him and kissed him. Then my pager rang.....and I left him with his nanny again. That was the last time I saw him alive." I held his hand. His eyes were glistening. He was trying hard not to cry, Hell I was near tears myself.
Siya: "apparently he'd crawled out the door and went to the pool. I don't know for how long he'd been in the water. Anyway...today is his birthday." he took a sip of his wine. Me: "did you visit his grave? Maybe it would help, say what you need to say to him." Siya: "I haven't been there since his funeral. Babalwa refuses to talk about him. I can't even put his picture in a frame, she gets so upset." Me: "I think you should see someone. This isn't healthy, you have to open up and feel." Why do I give people the same advice? Probably because I'm not a psychologist and I don't wanna ruin people's lives with advice." Siya: "enough about me. At least I got that out." he sighed. Siya: "I like this dress. I can see baby is starting to show herself." Me: "she's not giving me a choice this one." I wanted to avoid the baby talk but it seems like he wanted to get into it. Siya: "have you decided on anything yet? It would be nice to get a doula." Me: "what is that?" Siya: "an experienced woman who will help you throughout your pregnancy. Saves you the stress. I have a few I can recommend." Me: "so you're also an obstetr..." Siya: "obstetrician? No. I'm a GP." Me: "I thought GP's were a little older." Siya: "how old do you think I am?" Me: "I don't know.....36?" he laughed. Siya: "I'll take that as a

compliment." Me: "how old?" Siya: "I really like that 36. I'll keep it there." Me: "come on. Tell me." he kept laughing. Siya: "ndimdala Spho." Me: "you look like a 36 year old guy. Suppose futhi une convertible wena." Siya: "I am really liking this number." Me: "38 then?" Siya: "I'm 41." I gasped. Siya: "what?" Me: "you're old." Siya: "ouch." Me: "I'm kidding." Siya: "wena unangaphi?" Me: "27." Siya: "Wow. 14 years..." I collected our plates. Me: "GrandPa." he laughed. Siya: "uyathanda nje undikhubekisa wena. Unnecessarily." I went to the kitchen. He followed me. Siya: "this is a beautiful house. This kitchen is out of this world." Me: "can you cook?" Siya: "nope. Unless its noodles then yes." I chuckled putting the dishes into the machine. Siya: "who else lives here.." Me: "Lakhe's family. You met his brother, his dad came to visit for a while, his two closest friends and his little sister." Siya: "and you're okay with all that?" Me: "yes. They're a lovely bunch. This house is too big anyway." Siya: "true. It makes mine look like a shoe box." Me: "I'm sure you have a lovely house Mr GP." Siya: "Dr." I looked at him. He was staring back at me. My heart quickened and flustered. Something ticked. I don't know what but it was strange. Siya: "so, let me get going." Me: "yeah. I'll walk you out." we walked out the kitchen. Siya: "ohh shoot. I forgot I have to call a cab." Me: "its okay, I'll drive you." Siya: "I'm not inconveniencing you?" Me: "not at all. It would be nice to drive around." I took my keys and we went to the car. I drove him to his place with directions given by him. Besides that, the car was quiet. He lived in Summerstrand which made the trip even longer. I finally stopped in front of his house. It was a grey, double story with a long glass window showing a stair case inside. Me: "you have a beautiful house." Siya: "enkosi." the silence again. Not awkward at all. Siya: "Look....it was my first time opening up to someone about my pain. Its not a nice feeling to be emotionally naked in front of someone." Me: "I understand." Siya: "Thank you Spho. You make it easy for me." Me: "its okay." and it was quiet again in the car. Me: "so when is my next appointment?" Siya: "whenever you want. Just hop on over." I nodded. Siya: "let me get going. Drive safely uyeva? Text me when you're home." Me: "Thank you. I will." he got out of the car and walked to the house wavula icango and went in. I drove back home. I wanted to talk to uZingi. I dialed her number but the phone just rang to voicemail. I tried again and she didn't answer still. I wonder wenzantoni. Something was going on with me. I don't know what it was but I felt upset. I couldn't explain oluvalo bendinalo. Maybe there was something wrong with uSiyanda. I drove into my driveway and parked the car in the garage. I took my phone and sent him a message: "just got home." Him: "I'm glad. Hope you'll be resting your feet now." I got out the car and walked in the house. Lakhe was sitting in the lounge with one leg over the other, texting on his phone. Lakhe: "baby." he put down his phone. Lakhe: "I'm soo sorry about tonight. My battery died and I had to go to utata for this case." Me: "its

fine. I'm just tired, I need to lie down." Lakhe: "uhm....love?" Me: "yeah?" Lakhe: "you okay? Ibinjani dinner?" Me: "it was great." and it was... Lakhe: "I'm glad." I went to the bedroom. Lakhe: "honey..." Me: "yes?" Lakhe: "My hotel in Mozambique is in trouble. I can't seem to fix it from here, my manager is not coping and everything is falling apart. We lost the liquor license because of some illegal party. Anyway, I have to go sort that out." Me: "okay." Lakhe: "okay? I have to leave tomorrow morning." Me: "I'll start packing for you." I took off my shoes and went into the closet. Lakhe: "something is wrong. What happened?" Me: "nothing happened. I'm just tired." Lakhe: "you don't have to pack for me, I'll do it." Me: "I want to." I took out his LV suitcase. Me: "how long will you be there?" Lakhe: "I'll be back this Saturday." I took out a few shirts and pants. His new underwear. Shoes. Socks. Belts and toiletries. He was back on his phone and thank goodness for that. Inqondo yam ibidiniwe. After packing his bag, I took off my dress. I went to wash my face and came back to bed Lakhe: "I saw Sibulele and uDumi. Uphi uSandile?" Me: "he went to see a friend-" Lakhe: "what friend?" Me: "he didn't say." Lakhe: "Sandile doesn't have any friends Spho." Me: "maybe uye ku Khanya?" Lakhe: "uyothin ku-Khanya bengavani!" Me: "he seemed excited though-" Lakhe: "There's only one thing that excites uSandile Sphosenkosi!! His condition speaks for itself!" he went through his phone, dialing a number. Lakhe: "Rebecca's phone is off." Me: "do you think he....." Lakhe: "I don't know!!" he took his keys and left. Was it a bad thing I didn't really care? It just didn't matter anymore. I took his work bag to sort out for his trip. There were a lot of papers. Me: "what is all this?" Bank statements from some foreign account. Me: "what." The first had a balance of 25 million in dollars. The second one had 20 million also dollars. This meant he had over half a billion in Rands. No hotels and CEO position can give you this much money and why is it in dollars? It didn't make sense. I looked through the other papers. Payments. Millions worth of payments. To who!!! I took a picture with my phone. My skin was crawling. Where the hell did Lakhe get so much money from? "Wenzantoni." my heart stopped beating.....

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Me: "Sibulele..." Sibulele: "why are you shocked? Who did you expect?" I swallowed. Sibulele: "Spho." Me: "bank statements." Sibulele: "ohhh.... You finally saw the problem." Me: "I'm sorry." Sibulele: "for what?" Me: "I don't know. I'm so confused. Where does this money come from? Why is it in dollars?" Sibulele: "if I were you...I'd pack all that back wherever you found it. Lakhe is not kind to snooping." Me: "you know something." Sibulele: "I told you weeks ago. I'm not

going to repeat it again." Me: "you let me marry into a drug cartel!" Sibú: "if I said anything. It wouldn't change anything. You wouldn't have listened. Look, just let it go. Don't ask questions." Me: "don't ask questions? Are you hearing yourself!" Sibú: "Sphosenkosi...its safer for you to turn a blind eye." Me: "oh my God.... Is that why Loco was here?" Sibú: "when?" Me: "months ago...there was a shoot out. Lakhe said he took care of it." Sibú: "you were here? During the shootout?" Me: "yeah. How could I have been so blind?" Sibú: "you need to calm down. Spho, Masilakhe is an internationally dangerous man. Every-fucking-where. Do Not ask questions. Do you understand me? And never EVER tell anyone, Noba ngumamakho or utatakho, absolutely NO ONE about this. This dies with you." I started crying. Me: "he's going to be my baby's father!!!" Sibú: "I know Spho but..... Fuck it, I don't know. Andisayazi nam ngoku." Me: "and you? You're in this too? You're a drug dealer?" Sibú: "I'm not a drug dealer. I just help with shipment, sorting, meeting...." I stared at the window. Sibú: "we should put these away. Pretend you never saw them." I put them back in the bag and threw it on the couch. Me: "I'm surrounded by liars." Sibú: "I never lied to you." Me: "not you. I'm just....I'm scared." Sibú: "he married you. I don't think he'll ever hurt you." Me: "he told me before...that he had a drug selling past. He said he'd close down." Sibú: "I'm sorry." he hugged me. Me: "Sibú...." Sibú: "yes?" the door opened. Lakhe: "what's going on?" I sat up straight with my heart beating out my chest. Sibú: "nothing. Just talking.." Lakhe: "about what?" Me: "the baby." Lakhe: "oh." Me: "did you find Sandile?" Lakhe: "yeah. Turns out he really is with a friend. Ndibafumene behleli at Zest having drinks. His name is Vuyani. I remember him from high school. Ndisayovasa." he disappeared into the bathroom. I heard the shower turn on but the door wasn't fully closed. Sibú: "don't worry too much about the baby. As long as you're getting rest when you need it. And also ease down on the workload." he was typing while talking. Then he handed me the phone, the message read: 'Keep talking as conversation and read this.' Me: "I will. Its just that, I don't trust people with my work." I read the rest. ('you sure you're gonna be okay? If you feel uncomfortable we can work something out.') Sibú: "I know that but Spho you're having a baby now." I typed while he talked. ('I have to stay, I don't want him to be suspicious. I'll be ok.') Me: "I know Sibulele." Sibú: "Promise me you'll be fine? Call me if you need anything?" Me: "I will. Thank you bhu-" I stared at him. Sibú: "pardon?" he stared back at me. I pretended to laugh. Me: "Sibú. I mixed the 'si' with the 'bu'. Sorry." he smiled. Sibú: "okay. Goodnight." he walked out. I got into bed and waited. What was I going to do? A few minutes later the shower switched off. He walked in the bedroom again. I couldn't breath. He looked moredodgey. Lakhe: "what." Me: "huh?" Lakhe: "you're staring.....did I gain weight?" Me: "uhm..no. You look very sexy baby." Lakhe: "Nyani?" he smiled showing his light dimple

that creepily never showed usually. But tonight there it was. Perhaps this was a genuine smile. Me: "I hope uSandile akazomlibala uNosi. He said he'd fetch her ugqiba kwakhe with his friend." Lakhe: "I'm sorry baby. I should've trusted you. Its just that, Sandile is unpredictable and also has a pattern. He has a norm of doing things, that's his pattern, but you never know when, because he's unpredictable. So I have to keep on my toes." Me: "I get it. I understand. I'm just glad he's doing well and being social." he got into bed. Me: "I honestly thought uku Khanya mna. The way he was smiling at his phone. And uDumi uthi he wasn't home yesterday either." Lakhe: "I can't think about this anymore." Me: "how did Tokyo dude go?" Lakhe: "very well actually. I think we might be looking into a global future soon." Why did he need to do illegal dealings? He had cash, he had a great job. WHY! Me: "that's great love." Lakhe: "I thought you weren't happy about it." Me: "I hadn't grown into it." he kissed my shoulder then neck. Me: "baby I'm not feeling too well. I think I'm gonna be sick." Lakhe: "aww...sorry my love. You know the BabyCentre blog is cool. How about we check it out for morning sickness treatment?" Me: "its at night. This isn't morning sickness." Lakhe: "morning sickness isn't only in the morning baby. Its just more frequent ksasa." Me: "can I check it in the morning?" Lakhe: "okay. Can I massage you?" Me: "every night baby?" Lakhe: "I made a promise. I'm a man of my word. Besides.....I love it when you fall asleep under my hands." that sounds scary. Me: "okay my love." the thought of making love to him did not sit well with me. It hurt me because eventually it was going to be questionable. I didn't have to do it tonight though. I had to digest. Plus I had a few more days to myself. Lakhe: "still haven't told him?" Me: "who?" Lakhe: "Sbu." Me: "I wanted to... I couldn't." Lakhe: "okay...ufuna ndimxelele mna?" Me: "I'll do it tomorrow." a few minutes later, I pretended to snore lightly. Lakhe: "goodnight sthandwasam...." he whispered into my ear. Lakhe: "I love you." then he cuddled me. This was gonna be a long night.

Thursday morning, I woke up and went to make him breakfast. His flight was at 8, he had to leave the house at 6am. Ugqiba kwakhe unxiba, he came to breakfast. Lakhe: "what?" Me: "the egg." it was making me nauseas. Lakhe: "suka ecamkwalo kaloku baby. Thank you." I went to sit on the couch with my cereal. Lakhe: "I feel like you're mad at me. You can't be this tired." Me: "I am mad at you Masilakhe. When I needed you, you dropped me. When you need me, I'm always there. This one thing I ask of you and you had to let me down." Lakhe: "Baby, ndicela uxolo. Ndinike number ka Siyanda. I'll call him and we'll meet up when I'm back. I promise you." Me: "it doesn't matter now." Lakhe: "you know that ndizomkhangela ndimfumane right?" I stared at his playful smile. Lakhe: "I already know where he works Spho. Don't look so

surprised." Me: "just do what you want. Its what you always do anyway."
Lakhe: "Andifuni ke uhamba ndixabene nawe." Me: "andixabenanga nawe mna." Lakhe: "but you're mad at me." Me: "I'll be fine. Travel safely. Undixelele ufika kwakho." he kissed my cheek. Lakhe: "andizokwazi mna uhamba unje. I can postpone my flight to afternoon. So that we can go get coffee with uSiya ke." Me: "he's probably working. Your effort is noted though but you're trying to impress me." Lakhe: "uxolo my love. I will make it up to you." Me: "okay. Ungabi late Masilakhe." Lakhe: "I love you." Me: "I love you too." he kissed my lips and went to fetch his suitcase. He was a completely different man to me ever since my discovery. He rolled out his suitcase to the car. Lakhe: "I'll call you everyday baby. I love you." Me: "I get it honey. Nam ndiyakuthanda. Bye now." he got in his car and drove off. Finally, I switched on the TV. I'd barely slept last night. Actually, I didn't sleep at all. Dumi: "Spho?" Me: "hey Dumi. Unjani?" Dumi: "I'm good. Wenzantoni ekuseni apha?" Me: "Lakhe just left for Moz. I'll have to get ready for work soon. So bendisazimamele." Dumi: "oh okay." Me: "have you heard from uZingi? I tried calling her izolo, akaphenduli." Dumi: "ukokwabo ezilalini. She left yesterday morning since izkolo zivaliwe and took the kids. The reception there sucks ke shame." Me: "oh... That makes sense." Dumi: "do you need anything?" Me: "no, I just wanted to talk to her." Dumi: "I'm here...you can talk to me." Me: "its pregnancy stuff. Stuff she knows about." Dumi: "Oh. That's fine then. Leave her a message. She'll get back to you." Me: "I will. Do you want breakfast?" Dumi: "no. Just need some water, ndiya emsebenzini." I nodded. He went to fetch his water wabuyela eroomini yakhe. Sibuyela also came to the lounge area. He was already dressed ke yena. Me: "Are you ready?" Sibuyela: "yes I am." Me: "you look great, I know you're going to be amazing." Sibuyela: "enkosi. Are you okay?" Me: "I'm fine. I have to get ready for work as well.." he was doing that staring thing again. Like he expected me to say something. I couldn't say it now. He was going to a job interview and I didn't want to rattle him. Me: "so what time is your interview?" Sibuyela: "at 9am." Me: "lovely. When you're done uzokwazi uzojikela by the office." Sibuyela: "Okay. Utyile?" Me: "I had cereal. Egg is now my enemy." he smiled. Me: "khame ndisayovasa. I'll see you later." Sibuyela: "alright." I bumped into Sandile in the passage. Sandile: "I wonder ungxolela ntoni Spho." Me: "but I haven't said anything." Sandile: "Shhh.." Me: "utywala abuyo tshomi yakho." Sandile: "mxim." I went to take a shower when I was done, got dressed in a blue wrap around dress and black strap heels. All that was on my mind was yesterday's revelation and my stupidity. Just thinking about it made my skin crawl. The last thing I wanted was to be involved with a man hat does illegal things. Ibuye ngam lonto. I took my bags after I was ready ndaphuma. On my way to the office, my phone rang ingu Zingi. Me: "hey hun." Zingi: "hi sweets. Unjani?" Me: "I'm good. I tried calling you yesterday." Zingi:

"ndifumene message ye missed call ndik'xelele. I'm at the bundus. I cannot fucking wait to come back home." Me: "I thought you loved the bundus." I laughed. Zingi: "I do. Pregnant Zingi didn't get the memo. Everything here irritates me crazy." Me: "uzobuya nini?" Zingi: "I'm coming back tomorrow. I have a session tomorrow with uDumisani and a doctor." Me: "your counseling starts? That's nice. Also, I wanna see you. I have a problem." Zingi: "why? What happened?" Me: "nothing happened. I just need someone I can trust to talk to. Pregnancy stuff. I hope." Zingi: "You hope?" Me: "just tell me when you're here please." Zingi: "okay. Ndizobuya before 1pm. So we can have lunch at our secret place." Me: "okay babe. Bye." Zingi: "bye hun." I got to the office ndayongena as quick as possible. Lakhe sent a message that he was boarding and that the security company would arrive at 8:30am. I also had a meeting with Brett at 8:30am. I rescheduled Brett for 9am then but my 9am was a conference call with Victor from Telkom. So I had to put Brett after 9:30 and that might take a while. At 11am I was to see Judy at Finance. Today was officially a hectic day. Luyolo, Lakhe's intern. Left stranded again, walked into my office after two knocks. He had a plant pot with him. With an actual plant in it. I was so surprised. Is this gonna be a thing now? Luyolo: "Molo Spho. How are you?" Luyolo: "I'm great Luyolo. And yourself?" Luyolo: "I'm good. I made this for you." Me: "oh you didn't have to Luyolo." Luyolo: "I wanted to." Me: "Enkosi kakhulu bhuti. Its beautiful." just so we're clear, I'm not a plant person. Me: "have you spoken to Lakhe about your salary." Luyolo: "no I agreed to work for a few months free to prove myself." Me: "that's madness Luyolo, uzoza nganton apha all these months. I'll talk to Judy at Finance remind me at 11 okay?" Luyolo: "thank you so much sisi. I'll get back to work now." he disappeared out of my office. Thank God. 8:30 came, I spoke to the security company guys. They still had no lead for us as to what happened in Lakhe's office. 09:00am, I called Victor and his team. I was done by 9:45..... When Sibuy walked into my office. Me: "hey." Sibuy: "hi." he closed the door and sat down. Me: "I'm not going to waste your time. I know you know." Sibuy: "I know what?" Me: "uhm...about me." Sibuy: "about you?" Me: "Sibuy, you know I'm adopted. My biological mother was....unfit to raise me. And I was taken away.....I just recently discovered, that my biological mother is the woman that opened the door for you the night I dropped you off." Sibuy: "you're right." I thought I was telling the story. Me: "huh?" Sibuy: "You're right. I do know. I'm just wondering why, you never bothered to tell me. You kept it from me like a disgusting secret. Like you hated that I'm your blood." Me: "that's not the case." Sibuy: "then what is." I couldn't find it in my heart to tell him everything but..... Me: "my father abused me. Every time. Umama knew that and she never protected me from him. I had to run away like a thief and almost die to get away from them. I didn't have a childhood Sibuy and thats not your fault. I

just didn't want you feeling different about your parents. You found your mom and you were happy-" Sibu: "I wasn't happy. She abandoned me. Ndiyi first born yakhe....then kept you. Do you think I deserved that?" Me: "No you didn't." Sibu: "I get that you got hurt Spho. And I'm so sorry about it. What I can't understand is why you'd keep a secret like this from me . Why you'd tell everyone else.....but me. I've tried with the little information that I had to scrape through to find my lost sister kanti yena uhleli kulendlu ndikuyo unbothered about how I'm feeling." he had tears in his eyes. Sibu: "I am so sorry you grew up like that... But I can't forgive you for hiding this big thing from me. I can't." he walked out. My heart sank. I was honestly expecting hugs and kisses and none of that happened. I guess I deserved it. It was selfish of me to keep him in the dark all this time.

The rest of my day was a slow, draining, tiring process. By the time the day was finished, I myself was finished. Most people at the office had left, it was around 5pm. I didn't even want to drive home. I took my phone out of the charger. I had a new message from Siya. Seeing his name on my screen.....I don't know....I felt better. Message: "I'm done at work, finally. Had a crazy day. Hope yours went better than mine." Me: "baaad day. :(" Him: "Talk over ice cream?" Me: "I have to get home." Him: "aww :(" Me: "just one hour." Him: "great. Meet me at the boardwalk entrance." I took my bag and went to the car. Ndakhwela ndayiqhithwa ukuya eBoardwalk. I parked and saw him standing in a distance leaning on a pole with his hands in his pockets. I walked to him. Me: "hey." Siya: "hey." we walked to Wakaberry. Siya: "are you okay?" he felt my forehead. Me: "I'm fine. Just overwhelmed." we got our cups and poured ice cream. Siya: "by what?" Me: "Everything. Work. Home." You. Siya: "so, what's happening at work." Me: "its crazy. Someone got acces to Lakhe's computer but nobody was in the office and akubonakali niks from the cameras. I've been back and forth the the security company and abayazi yenzeke njani lonto." Siya: "what if nobody went inside?" Me: "that's what it looks like. But someone connected to his computer. He knows this because he programmed it to shut down the entire building should anyone try." Siya: "Well.....maybe it was hacked. From outside." it was like a lightbulb went on in my head. Siya: "IT geeks have a better chance of finding the culprit. Very quickly futhi. Itsho kwi department yenu." Me: "I didn't even think of that. You're quite smart aren't you?" Siya: "uyathanda undikhubekisa ne?" Me: "it was a compliment. Relax." after paying we went to sit down at the small table by the window, watching people pass by. Siya: "what else is stressing you.." Me: "my brother." it was starting to sink in. I actually had a brother. Me: "we got into an argument earlier. Probably have to get home to

his sulking face. And its my fault. He has every right to be mad at me." Siya: "I find it difficult to think that anyone could be mad at you." I smiled. Me: "people get very mad at me kanti. Kubenzima ngakum." Siya: "I don't think I'd last a day." Me: "you're just saying that. Unjani uBabsie?" Siya: "I don't know. I haven't seen her since izolo. She didn't come home." he picked the chocolate covered wafers in his ice cream. Me: "why not." Siya: "she says she was busy." Me: "you don't sound convinced." he looked up at me. Siya: "She probably was. I wouldn't know." Me: "is there something you wanna tell me?" Siya: "its nothing." Me: "talk to me." Siya: "Babalwa is amazing. She likes to help people. She does that a lot. I loved that about her but...now, she ignores me. She's barely home, always working. We have to book appointments to see each other. Its something I never saw myself doing. I might be a little spontaneous at times but I always do right for the people I love, I make picnics, I take them to the beach, I write her lovely things, I'm planning our wedding, just about everything to prove to her ndiyamthanda." Me: "have you spoken to her?" Siya: "I did. But she dismisses that kind of talk." Me: "I'm sorry to hear this Siya. I don't know what to say." Siya: "its okay." Me: "can I have your sour worms though?" Siya: "I've seen you eyeing them this whole time." I giggled. I took the sour worm. Siya: "how's the Mr doing?" Me: "he's okay. He's in Moz for a few days for his hotel." Siya: "Wow. Must be nice." I smiled faintly. It wasn't nice. At all. I was to a drug dealer. Siya: "you know ndisemncinci. I wanted to own an ice cream shop. And funny enough that dream never died down. There's something magical that happens to me when I eat ice cream.....in movies that's how people find their soulmates." I laughed. Me: "by eating ice cream?" Siya: "not just by eating. Its the feeling you get when the flavor sticks to your taste buds and it slithers down your throat into your stomach....then when you open your eyes....see a wonderful sight. I had it all planned out. I'd decorate my walls with a scenic 3D wall paper that would make my store seem out of this world." Me: "that.....is...amazing." Siya: "pipe dream..." Me: "its still cute." Siya: "I grew up with my mom and sister. So I'm a bit of a softie. Don't laugh..." Me: "I won't." Siya: "my sister bethanda undiflerha and put on one of her t shirts andifake i-figure belt when I was a kid. She wanted me to be a girl." I giggled. Siya: "yabona ke." Me: "I'm sorry..." Siya: "we should get you home, ku-late ngoku." we got up and walked to my car. Me: "thank you for this. I feel a lot better." Siya: "me too." we stood by my car. Siya: "enjoy spending time with you Spho." Me: "same here. I wish you the best with Babsi." Siya: "we'll be fine...enkosi for being a great friend and listener." Me: "that's Spho for you." Sands: "so this was nice." andothuka I almost choked! Me: "Sandile!" Sands: "heeyyy. Siyanda right?" Siya: "Yes. Hi." he shook his hand. Sands: "I was looking for this lady actually. Bye Siyanda." Siya: "uhm bye.." Me: "I'll call you when I'm home."

Sands: "same here." Siyanda smiled and walked away. Sands: "he is soo nice."
Me: "What did you do!" Sands: "nothing." Me: "Saandile!" Sands: "I promise
you. He's sweet...." he stared after Siya. Sands: "it would be sad to hurt sweet.
Keep. Him. Close.....for me."

#75

When I got home that evening I went straight to my bedroom. I was tired and my back hurt really badly. It already had been a long day. Sibu was tense engathethi nam. Sandile yilo wireless iveske iqhawuke ndingayazi ndicofe phi. Dumi and Rob were busy with the case with Smelly Ryan. I just wanted to be alone. After bathing I went straight to bed. I checked my phone for messages. So I sent one. It was obvious to who. Nothing made my heart beat faster when I saw his name on my screen. What was happening to me? He replied: "Hey... I'm Cooking dinner. Slow on texts." Me: "I thought you couldn't cook." he sent me a picture. Ndaphela yintsini. Me: "khupha amanzi embizeni Siyanda!!" Him: "hewethu ndilambile mna. Andinaxesha lalonto. Have you eaten?" Me: "not yet. My back is breaking." he called immediately. Siya: "what's wrong?" Me: "its just my back. I'm not dying." Siya: "Hold on, nanku Babe. Explain to her." Me: "guys..." Babsi: "hi Spho." Me: "hey Babsie. Its just back ache. Nothing much." Babsie: "but you're still in second trimester. Listen, do some exercise. Being in bed will not make it better. Stretching exercises, prenatal yoga, swimming and pelvic tilts. I'll make you a daily list okay?" Me: "okay." Siya: "and tell her not to work too much." Babsie: "Oh ndiyakwazi ke wena ngomsebenzi. You think smiling pays the bills." she gave him the phone. Siya: "apparently smiling pays the bills." I giggled. Me: "niyadika nobabini." Siya: "eat something. Awuzokwazi ulala ungatyanga." Me: "I'm going to the kitchen right now." Siya: "ufote ndibone okukutya. Ingathi kanti yi-grape eyi 1." I laughed. Me: "bye Siyanda. Usile shame." I hung up. I got out of bed ndanxiba gown ndayolanda yogurt and fruit. Sands: "I bought Nandos for dinner." Me: "ndi-sharp." Sands: "uzohlutha yi-yogurt?" Me: "ya." Sands: "are you still mad at me?" Me: "I'm not mad." Sands: "that's what you say when you're mad." Me: "okay Sandile." Sands: "I'm not gonna hurt your friend. He's harmless mos. Ndizamthin lamntu mna?" Me: "how do you know he's harmless?" Sands: "he smiles a lot. That's for sure-" Me: "so do you." Sands: "yeah that's true." he smiled. Me: "If anything should happen, to Siyanda or his family Sandile. You will see the way Hell is set up. I promise you." I went to my bedroom and locked myself inside it. I took the picture as I was told and ate my food finished. I crawled under blankets and instantly drifted off.

My eyes shot open. What time was it? 06:05am. Friday. The dream I just had..... Wow. I just wanted to go back to sleep. Getting up was hard. I stood up and went to shower ndayonxiba. I checked my phone. No messages. I needed to be back in bed badly. My phone rang ndayiphendula. Me: "hello." Lakhe: "baby wam." I breathed slowly. Ndaveske ndonyanya. Me: "yes?" Lakhe: "I'm sorry I didn't call you when I landed. How have you been?" Me: "don't you already know? Niiyancedisana kalok nomninawa wakho in stalking me." Lakhe: "what are you talking about?" Me: "I know you asked uSandile andijonge xa ungekho. He just appeared out of nowhere ndise Boardwalk with uSiya." Lakhe: "I didn't tell Sandile anything. I'll talk to him babes. Uxolo man." Me: "I have to get to work." Lakhe: "okay. I love you." I never thought this would be so hard to say. Lakhe: "Spho?" Me: "when will you be home?" Lakhe: "I'm flying in tonight." Me: "great. We'll talk then." I hung up. I took my bags and walked out to my car. Rob was here for once. Ebukele TV drinking his coffee. Me: "molo tata." Rob: "hi my angel." ingathi naye bekweyakhe inyuva. I went to my car, driving to work. I called my dad ndisendleleni. I can't believe I never listened to my father when he warned me. Khaya: "hello?" Me: "daddy..." Khaya: "Oh no.... Whenever you call me daddy, something is wrong." Me: "Is it possible to fall out of love.....very quickly." Khaya: "yes." Me: "how do you know you don't love someone anymore." Khaya: "it can be very complicated. Abafani abantu. Maybe you don't like certain things about lomntu, maybe this person hurts you, what happened?" Me: "Tata, I've messed things up. There's this guy...uSiyanda. He has really shifted my focus." Khaya: "who?" Me: "uSiyanda Kusile. He's also a doctor but akekho sesbhedlele." Khaya: "he shifts your focus how?" Me: "he's always on my mind, he's well being is my priority, I enjoy spending time naye and then....I get so upset when he has to go." Khaya: "oh my." Me: "its bad. I can't even look at uLakhe. He just revolts me." Khaya: "yeah its bad... You need to sit down with yourself mntanam and analyze what you really want. Figure out what revolts you ngoLakhe, is it hormones or just generally uyakudika. This Siyanda, understand his intentions, and so forth. For now, lock yourself up and listen to Spho's heart." Me: "okay." Khaya: "whatever decision you come with, as long as its sensible. I will support you. I don't want you uncomfortable because ucimba uphoxa mna, this is Your life. You need to know what's good for You before anyone else. Sumamela wonke udofi olapha phandle. Okay?" Me: "thanks dad." Khaya: "okay my princess. Let me go my hun, ndilapha in my office already. I have to work.." Me: "bye bye tata..." he hung up the phone. (In Khaya's office.) Khaya: "why did it take you this long to get here? I literally took 1 and a half days ndisuka all the way across the world, usuka just here ke wena. What is wrong with you?" Siya: "uxolo tata. I had things to tie up before I came here again." Khaya: "kodwa

uyandihlupha Siyanda shame. Too much." Siya: "can we go back to my problem now?" Khaya: "I told you to let her go, Babalwa akakufuni. Myeke! End of discussion." Siya: "why don't you like her-" Khaya: "YOU don't even like her. Get up Siyanda. Go to work. Deal with it like a man. Do not call umamakho and sob about this. Its over. Okay? Go." Siya: "Wow. The prince doesn't even get healthy advi-" Khaya: "because you're a man! Not a prince!" Siyanda walked out.

I sat in my office all morning, locked away from the world. I prayed, I cried. I got all out of my system, except Siya. He was a parasite on my side. Something was up. He hadn't called or texted all morning. I went back to my work. Someone knocked on my door. Me: "come in." Sibú walked in. Me: "hey." Sibú: "Hi." he put down a cup. Sibú: "I brought chocolate milkshake." he took out of his pockets mini marshmallows. Sibú: "you didn't have breakfast at home." Me: "Thank you Sibú. This is swee-" Sibú: "its for the baby. Not you." he walked back out. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Ebendinyisa shame hayi nje kancinci. I drank the milkshake ndifake the marshmallows inside. Zingi called. Me: "hey." Zingi: "hi...ndisandofika ngoku. Can we go to lunch?" Me: "yes sure. Mandiphume kule office. Its driving me crazy." Zingi: "I'll meet you at the spot." I hung up and packed all my bags. Bye Felicia. Ndemnka. Our secret destination was a park. We bring junk food and a blanket sihlale under a tree. I remember this is where Zimi first stood up and started walking. All important convos happened under this tree. It was my happy place. After buying enough food for two pregnant ladies I went to the tree ndalinda phantsi kwawo kude kufike uZingi. She arrived okwakhe ephethe ezakhe izinto. Ezi healthy. Me: "you are so lost." I started eating my chicken. Zingi: "ithini ngxaki sisi." Me: "first of all, I want to say sorry I ever judged you." Zingi: "when did you judge me?" Me: "when you cheated on uDumi." Zingi: "you didn't judge me. You just told me to stop qha." Me: "I might have judged you a bit." Zingi: "Yinton ingxaki Spho?" Me: "I think I have a crush on someone else." Zingi: "Sandile?" Me: "euw no." she laughed. Zingi: "what's so euw about him?" Me: "ndiyazelaphi man. Its just euw qha. Anyway not yena. Ever." Zingi: "Sibú?" Me: "you won't know this guy. He's a doc-" she gasped. Me: "what now." Zingi: "you looove doctors." Me: "its not even like that." Zingi: "does he know?" Me: "No. He doesn't." Zingi: "Lakhe yena?" Me: "urr..." Zingi: "If you weren't married, I'd say go for doctor guy. But you are, SO, stay away from him. This is the same advice you gave me! Do not even entertain doctor guy, block him." Me: "okay." Zingi: "your hormones are running wild. If you just stay away from physical danger. Everything will be fine." Me: "physical danger?" Zingi: "Yes. He is physical danger. Buuut, you might dream about

him..." Me: "I already did. Last night." Zingi: "keep it to yourself love. Doctor guy is just a fantasy. You love Masi, he loves you back. That's your reality and you need to take control of it." Me: "I hear you. And I fully agree." I drank some water. Me: "so Sibú is my brother." Zingi: "I beg your pardon?" Me: "undivile ke kanti." Zingi: "your brother? How?" Me: "we have the same biological mom.....I found out before he did and I kept quiet. He found out later now he's mad that I kept it from him. Ingathi uxelelwe ngumntu." Zingi: "well kodwa tshomi, bekutheni uzungatsho nawe when you found out?" Me: "I wasn't ready Zingi. I hate bringing up my past. I hate having to explain it." Zingi: "but he's your brother." Me: "it doesn't make it any easier. I just don't want to talk about it. I don't want pity and hugs and 'I'm sorrys'. You know I hate it." Zingi: "I get you. Mnike ixesha. He will come around soon enough. Sibú is so sweet." Me: "I thought so too. He came to my office before ufowne wena ephethe chocolate milkshake. He said since ndingatyanga endlini, he brought this. Xa ndisithi enkosi, he said its not for me, its for the baby. Andakhubeka." she laughed. Zingi: "that's funny. Let him cool off man." my phone rang. Siyanda. I rejected the call and switched off my phone. Zingi: "is it doctor guy?" Me: "yeah." Zingi: "I'm proud of you mna tshomi. You have more resistance than me. I know you wena." Me: "what you saying is making sense in my head but not my heart. But I am married whether I like it or not. I can't play the field anymore." Zingi: "that's good." As much as I hate it. I couldn't see Siyanda again. After an hour, Zingi had to go to her appointment with Dumi. I had to go home. I'd kill for ice cream but I'd rather stay out of jail. Zingi: "babe. Don't be so sad." Me: "I'm not sad." Zingi: "Spho, don't forget that ndiyakwazi. Whatever you're thinking of is hurting you and ufuna ukhala." Me: "I don't!" Zingi: "you bite your lower lip everytime ufuna ukhala." I let go of my lip and the tears started to threaten my eyes. Me: "I can't." I bit it again. Zingi: "Okay. Fine. Call me ufika kwakho endlini." I nodded. I got into my car. If my talk wasn't with uZingi, I'd probably drive to Siya's office right now. But Zingi was older and wiser. More experienced emtshatweni and experienced this mistake. She would not stray me to physical danger. So I drove home and parked my car. I wasn't in the mood to see anyone. If I could just get back ubuthongo bam from ksasa. I took my bags and left over snacks into the house and to my surprise, nanku Masilakhe Sobukwe. By surprise, I mean I almost fainted. I was waiting for him abuye ebsuku. Like he said. He stood there looking at me. Lakhe: "hey." was he reeally a drug lord? He didn't look like it. With his tight grey pants and a white shirt tucked in neatly. Shaping his worked out body. It was unbuttoned half way down his chest and the sleeves rolled up to his elbow. Did he get a hair cut too? Me: "hi." Lakhe: "are you gonna come in?" only then I realized ndime emnyango this whole time. I went to the bedroom. Wandilandela. Me: "I thought You'd be back tonight."

Lakhe: "I could feel something was wrong, I couldn't wait till then. I sold the hotel." Me: "Why." Lakhe: "its not as important as you. I know something has changed Spho. Please tell me." Me: "remember when I threw you out this house?" he nodded. Me: "when I said, there was something dark hanging on you that I don't like....and when I find out, I'm not staying a second longer?" his whole neck was exposed so I could see his muscle working inside when he swallowed. He didn't say a thing. Me: "do you remember?" Lakhe: "baby...please." Me: "do you remember?" Lakhe: "I do...but I can explain-" Me: "explain what?" Lakhe: "Spho, you can't just leave me." Me: "why not?" Lakhe: "you just can't!!" Me: "Or what? You'll shoot me? Like you did Loco? You'll burn me? Uzondithini?" Lakhe: "I will never hurt you Sphosenkosi. I've told you everything about me." Me: "No you didn't." Lakhe: "is this about Dez?" Me: "I didn't mention Dez. Is there something you want to tell me about Dez?" he swallowed again. Me: "I found statements in your bag. When I was packing. Where does that money come from?" Lakhe: "Spho, cela undimamele mntu wam. Nothing I do, will ever hurt you-" Me: "Masilakhe, uyifumana phi imali engakaya." Lakhe: "Spho I can't tell you. You know that I love you-" Me: "but you're still selling drugs." he opened his mouth to say something then closed it. Me: "look at me." Lakhe: "I'm sorry." Me: "u-sorry yintoni?" Lakhe: "I thought I could keep you away from it all. Its my life, I can't give it up-" Me: "you understand that we're about to have a baby right?" Lakhe: "yes." Me: "akho tata womntanam ke mna ozoba ligintsa or ozothengisa iziyobisi for fun. Unayo imali Masilakhe. Problem yakho unyolukile. If you think, I'm going to sit and pretend I'm okay with this, Unyile. I'm telling one last time. Shut this shit down. Or you will never see me, or your child ever again. And andiyi ndawo mna. Nguwe ozohamba. Ndiyakuthanda, I do. But don't ever think I'll turn a blind eye kwi kaka. Sivene?" he nodded. I took off my shoes. Lakhe: "I love you too." I went to the closet. Lakhe: "Spho.." Me: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "I promise I'll do better. I'm going to make you proud baby." Me: "for your sake, I pray to God that you do." after changing my clothes I took the washing basket to the laundry room. Ndafaka impahla, after sorting them out, in the machine. After it was on, I went to the kitchen to start with dinner. Lakhe: "honey. I was thinking maybe if we could have braai tomorrow with our family and new friends. Maybe I can get to know Siya. I know I didn't give him a chance before so I want to give it a try." Me: "you don't have to. He's out of our lives. Your brother doesn't like him." Lakhe: "sizova ngoSandile kengoku? Hayi wethu babe." I had to crash this idea. Siyanda was past. He cannot bring him back. Me: "its fine Lakhe. You were right. We don't need more friends." Lakhe: "ok, something is going on. Did something happen between you two?" Me: "nothing happened. He's just secretive and I don't trust him."

Lies. He will see right through those lies. Lakhe: "I'm a better judge of character. He's coming to the braai. I'll call him."

Saturday morning. My heart was racing. I don't know why though. The baby was really restless too. I got up ndayovasa. Maybe if I drove to Jeffreys bay, switched off my phone and came back on Sunday? After my shower. I searched through my wardrobe. Lakhe: "heeyy.." he hugged me from behind. I was still a little uncomfortable with him but at least he was trying and I was going to meet him halfway. Me: "so, how did it go last night?" Last night was his deadline to close his shady deals and he left here around 6 wabuya e-frustrated and tired after 10pm. Lakhe: "it didn't go too well. Kodwa, I found someone to sell to. We'll meet tomorrow morning when he lands." Me: "it'll have to be in the afternoon because tomorrow morning siyecaweni." Lakhe: "babes, these aren't the type of people you want to make wait. Its best ndiyenze xa efuna." Me: "fine. As long as its done." I took out my yellow maxi dress. He was playing with my bulging tummy, poking and pinching it. Me: "my parents are arriving at 1. Itshomi zam probably a little earlier to help set up." Lakhe: "okay. I got you something though. Vala amehlo." I closed my eyes. He shuffled around for a bit. Lakhe: "you can open baby." Me: "what is this?" I opened the pink paper bag. Me: "this is sooo cute!!!" Lakhe: "do you like it? When I saw it, I went crazy." Me: "are you kidding? I love it!" it was a white Burberry baby onesie. Me: "Burberry?" Lakhe: "I know its a little too m-" Me: "the shoes!!" it came with the cutest brown print Burberry shoes. Me: "kodwa umntana uzonxiba igama from head to toe?" Lakhe: "her dad does, why can't she?" he kissed my forehead. Me: "its adorable." Lakhe: "the day she's born, she can wear that." Me: "No, uzoyinxiba when she goes to church for the first time." Lakhe: "then uzonxiba uBalmain on her pop day." Me: "does she have to?" Lakhe: "You've accepted that its a she.." Me: "because she's as dramatic as you." Lakhe: "I am not dramatic..." I rolled my eyes. Me: "help me zip up my dress." he zipped me up. Lakhe: "you pop in yellow." Me: "too much ne?" Lakhe: "Nope...its the most beautiful sight." Me: "you're just being nice." I wore my comfortable sandals and brushed my hair. Me: "which room will be our nursery?" Lakhe: "uzolala nam owam umntana. I want her inside this bedroom." Me: "having her own room is better. She won't have to depend oko. That's how you teach a child independence. Whilst emncinci." Lakhe: "I want her to depend on utatakhe. She must understand that I am there for her no matter what." Me: "I hope you'll have the same sentiments when you pull her down from a stripper pole at 18." Lakhe: "strippers are the nicest people I've ever met." Me: "You did not just say that." Lakhe: "my child will never be a stripper, and she's sleeping in

our bedroom until she's 10. That's it." That's not gonna happen. I went to the kitchen to make myself something to eat. After eating I started with putting out the marinated and seasoned meat bowls. I made the first salad. My friends arrived to help. Fez was outside with Sandile ebasa umlilo. But we know the real reason why she's there. To take selfies with him. Lol. Ndine picture yezo caption bawo. Fez: "guuys." she walked in. Me: "did you get enough pictures?" Fez: "sendenze ne folder yakhe. I have 24 pictures of him." Me: "What?" Zintle: "How!" Fez: "ndine methods kaloku mna. Andilipholi ikhwapha sana. I work for what I want. Tshomi aninayo iMbororo? Andisenxanwe." Me: "nguSandile umntu wembororo tshomi." Fez: "ookay!!" she rushed out. Zintle: "I need the bathroom." she left the kitchen. Sandile walked in. Sands: "Spho." Me: "now is not the time." Sands: "Hi Zingi." she carried on with her chopping. Sands: "Zingisa ndiyabulisa." No Response. There was an awkward silence in the kitchen. Sandile did not move. Which scared me a bit. Sands: "Zingisa." Zingi: "What!!" woahh! Sands: "I'm saying hello. Good God, yintoni ingathi ndicela isonka?" he walked to me. Sands: "Spho." mission yakhe was to come irritate aha. Chances are udikwe ngu Fez phandle. I was not going to be part. Me: "I think I heard the gate." I went to the lounge and almost felt my heart jumped out my chest. Siyanda looked at me then broke into a beautiful smile. Lakhe: "hey, you made it." he went to him. Siya: "hi." they shook hands. Lakhe: "I'm getting you a beer, Spho introduce him to everyone. Show him around. Ndiyeza." Me: "I have to co..." he disappeared outside. Siyanda moved closer to me. Siya: "why are you ignoring me?" Me: "I love my husband." Siya: "then why are you ignoring me? If you love him so much." Me: "its inappropriate. Ndingu mfazi womntu. Where's Babsi." Siya: "she's not coming." I saw my dad's car pull up. Me: "this is my father in law. Mr Rob Sobukwe." Rob: "Hi." they shook hands. Me: "tata, this is my doctor. USiyanda." Rob: "lovely to meet you. Excuse me, ndisayolanda utatakho Spho." Me: "he just pulled up." he went outside. Me: "that is Sib. My brother." Siya: "is he still mad?" he whispered. Me: "Yep." he chuckled. Me: "that is Zintle, my friend." she stopped to look at him. Zintle: "hey." Siya: "hi. I'm Siya." he smiled. Zintle: "its nice to meet you." Siya: "same." Me: "come this way. Uyamazi uSandile, that is F-" Sands: "Hey! You came! Come, izohlala nathi." Me: "andikagqibi um-introducer." Sands: "don't worry. He'll be fine. Come Siya. You can help me ngenyama." he pulled him outside. Waphuma noLakhe. I went to my dad and hugged him. Khaya: "Aha! My baby girl." Me: "Daddy." Khaya: "I am barely inside the house. What's wrong?" Me: "he's here." I whispered. Rob was out of range but I felt I had to whisper. Khaya: "who?" Me: "uSiyanda. Lakhe invited him." Khaya: "don't worry about uSiya. He's probably here to make friends." Me: "ok. Uphi umama?" Khaya: "she's on her way. I left first." Me: "why?" Khaya: "she was taking her time. Kuddala ndi-

ready." Me: "tata what's really going on?" Khaya: "nothing mntanam. Rob is calling me. Go mingle." he left me there. I went to the kitchen. Zintle: "sooo....Where's Siya's so called fiance?" Me: "she isn't here." Zintle: "he's such a bad boy." Me: "inyama ikhutshiwe?" Zingi: "yes. Bellboy Sandile took it." Fez: "102 likes! Can you believe it?" she walked in. Fez: "anyway, Mr Hotpants is here!" Zingi: "who's Mr Hotpants?" Me: "Siyanda." I whispered. She was still confused. Me: "doctor gu-" she gasped. We gave each other the look. It meant disappearing together. I took the duck food ndaphuma, she followed me. At our private spot. Zingi: "what the hell!! You invited him?" Me: "Lakhe did! I tried everything I could to stop but he didn't budge." Zingi: "Lakhe knows?" Me: "Siya is our doctor. They met at our appointment." Zingi: "Spho this is bad." Me: "I will ignore him at all costs." Zingi: "please do." we went back inside the house. Before I walked in, on the other end I saw two shadows. They were standing next to the wall, talking. I tip toed closer. Siya: "but I don't understand tata why ndilapha. Why can't I just go back to joburg? There's nothing for me here, and I hate lying to her. You know how much she means to me and I don't want her hurt. Its best ndihambe." the other shadow just walked away. Why didn't it reply!! I went into the house, across the living room and scanned who was missing. Lakhe: "baby, have you seen uSiyanda?" he stood in front of me. Me: "Why?" Lakhe: "you were right. He's a great guy! We have a few stuff in common and he said he'd take me to golf next week." he was genuinely smiling from ear to ear. His dimple showing. He was so happy. Me: "there he is." Lakhe: "are you okay?" Me: "yes." Lakhe: "baby... I know ubusithi awumthembi. Kodwa he's not suspicious. He's open with everyone. Plus incredibly easy to talk to." Me: "I'm glad. I have to go get water." Lakhe: "okay." I went to the kitchen ndayozigalelela amanzi. Me: "I think I have a bit of a headache. I'm going to sit for a while." Zingi: "okay babe." I walked to the lounge ndahlala phantsi kwi couch. Maybe Rob was Siya's dad. Which meant that Siya is Lakhe's older brother? It didn't make sense though. But it did. Robert had Vuyiseka with uDubs, meaning he is able to have kids. What if.....he had Siya before he got married. Siya never mentioned his dad. Only his mom and sister. Sibu: "Uright?" he was standing next to me. Me: "I'm fine." I was not in the mood for him ke namhlanje. Sibu: "you don't look fine." Me: "who told you about me?" he looked surprised. He was not expecting it. Sibu: "Why is that important?" Me: "it is." Sibu: "its not." Me: "K." he kept quiet for a couple of minutes. Sibu: "ngu Simphiwe." Me: "whaat!" Sibu: "he didn't want to say anything. I forced it out of him." Me: "Why!" Sibu: "because he knows everything about you." Me: "you could've asked me." Sibu: "and you would've told me?" Me: "you didn't have to drag him in this." Sibu: "who's that guy?" I looked outside. Me: "ngu Siyanda. Masilakhe's new best friend." Sibu: "and apparently your dad's too." Me: "he

doesn't even know my dad. I didn't introduce them." Sibú: "they seem pretty close to me. Whatever they're talking about.....its big." Me: "There's no such thing. They're both doctors so...." I can't even explain it. I looked at them closely. Siyanda looked very frustrated but his mouth was shut. Kuthetha utatam yedwa. What was happening here? Me: "Lakhe..." he was passing by. Lakhe: "hm?" Me: "what's happening there?" Lakhe: "where?" Me: "my dad." Lakhe: "he's talking to uSiya. What are they talking about?" Me: "I am literally in the same space as you are. I know what you know." Sibú: "seems cozy." Lakhe: "abazani nje....ohhh wait, now I got it. Siyanda said that when he was an intern doctor, he was under the guidance of a man that shaped his life the best way possible. It must be Khaya!" I sighed in relief. Me: "when did he tell you this?" Lakhe: "about 30 minutes ago." Me: "you're already that deep?" Lakhe: "I invited uBabaló babe. Is that okay?" I avoided rolling my eyes. Me: "okay." he got up waphuma. Sibú: "do you really believe that?" Me: "ngeyip-" Mama: "Spho..." Me: "hi mama...." she looked outside. Mama: "Oh Nkosi yam. Is that Siyanda?" she rushed out to him. Mama: "my baby boy!!" she hugged him. Khaya: "Zama!" Mama: "what?" he just stared at her. Siya: "hello ma." I was astounded. What. The. Fuck. Is. Going. On!

#76

My baby was being restless today. I was a little crampy and the last thing I wanted was to go stress myself ngabaya abantu. I don't care anymore. I just don't. Sibú: "I did not see that one coming. Two brothers. How lucky are you?" I just got up ndayongena eroomin yam. I did breathing exercises like Babsi suggested in her email. I know what would calm my little apple down. A Chocolate milkshake. I had to go get it. I walked out of the house to my car. Babaló: "Spho? Uyaphi?" Me: "I'm going to get a milkshake." Babaló: "I can get it for you, I don't mind." Me: "No, I need the fresh air. And a silent drive. Thanks though." Babaló: "I hear you. Okay." I got into my car and drove away. After getting my milkshake, I went to sit under my tree. Sooner or later I'd have to go back to that house but I had to enjoy my thing first. A navy blue BMW parked next to my car. I could see from where I was sitting. Siyanda came out the car. I wish I could dig a grave and climb in it ndiphinde ndizigqumelele. How did he find me. Why u-Satan ethanda ukundihlupha? Zingi would never have told him. Ever. Siya: "hey." Me: "how did you find me?" Siya: "this is where we" he sighed. Siya: "I was working with utatakho, when I started as a doctor. I switched my specialty later yena wakwi psychology. We still spent time together. You then came to the hospital, some odd years ago. Your father ezobuyela eCuba. We first met then." I was

confused but decided to hear him out. Siya: "we spent time together for a while. We had our first date here. Our first kiss. It was under this tree. Then I got an offer to work in joburg. You encouraged me to take it saying You'd join me after ugqibile ngeskolo. I took the job.....and then we crashed. We didn't find time for each other, I was always busy, you had to study, so we called things off. Then you moved on..." Me: "Why did you then approach me as a stranger ufuna ukuba yi friend yam? How did you know I was in East London?" Siya: "Your dad contacted me a few months ago endixelesa about your accident. The day before he arrived. He also told me I had to come back here. That you needed me. This was before he found out about Lakhe and you." Me: "and East London?" Siya: "uthe mandidibane naye pha. He was the person I was waiting for when I met you. I just lost control ukubona kwam, I didn't know what to say." Me: "so he brought you here.....because?" Siya: "I think you should ask him that yourself. I don't want to cause any problems and I'm trying to distance myself but he knows me too well. He knows that I've always loved you but I'm just not a destroyer. You're happy with uLakhe. I just thought you deserved to know the truth." Me: "Siyanda, you took over Paul's office as well..." Siya: "that was not my intention, I honestly had no idea you were his patient. If it makes you uncomfortable, I'll find you another doctor." Me: "I thought my father liked uMasilakhe nje." Siya: "I don't think he likes him at all." Me: "but...." the dream!! Me: "Siyanda!" Siya: "what?" Me: "nothing. I'm just processing." The dream I had about him. Is similar to this story. This is fucking crazy. Are you trying to tell me that dream wasn't a dream but a memory? How did I not recognize him? Well I couldn't recognize uSimphiwe at first either.... Worse ke yena he was very recent. Me: "I'm sorry." I could not breath. My heart was doing the dance again. Siya: "its fine. Look I understand." Me: "You lived in joburg?" Siya: "yes." Me: "Uphi yena umamakho." Siya: "they came to live with me in joburg when I moved all those years ago." Me: "Siyanda, you left your family, your work, your friends.....to come back here? For me?" he looked at his hands. Siya: "I have to go..." Me: "stop running. Thetha inyani." Siya: "Yes. Sphosenkosi. I did that. I guess I should've first done my research." Me: "I'm sorry." Siya: "its fine." Me: "what about uBabsi?" Siya: "she left me. It was not working out." Me: "Siya I'm sorry." Siya: "its not your fault Spho. Honestly." Yeah. It was my father's fault. How could he do this to umntana wabantu? Siya: "your husband is probably worried, go home Spho." Me: "I don't want to go home" he looked at me. Siya: "why not?" Me: "I don't like being lied to. I vented to my dad, and he pretended he didn't even know you." Siya: "utatakho uyak'thanda Spho. He will do anything to protect you." Me: "as for pretending to accept my marriage? Participating? Knowing fully well akafuni? It would've been much better, had he been honest." Siya: "maybe if you talk to him. He will be." Me: "maybe I will." Siya: "what are you

drinking?" Me: "whiskey." Siya: "what!!!" Me: "I'm kidding. Its milkshake." Siya: "sugeza wena. Let me taste." I gave him a sip. Me: "it makes the baby happy." Siya: "so you're gonna be pumping out chocolate breast milk?" I laughed. Me: "awuphilanga ke." I put down the large cup. Me: "So.....will you be going back?" Siya: "I haven't decided yet. A lot waits for me back in Joburg. But a lot isn't that important anymore. I can't remember a time I was this content." Me: "I know. I just don't want you to hold on when there's nothing I can offer you." Siya: "I understand that." Me: "friends?" Siya: "yeah. Friends." Me: "so on Monday I'm starting prenatal yoga classes." Siya: "really?" Me: "yeah. I'm scared though." Siya: "There's nothing to be scared of. It'll be good for you and the baby to stretch out a bit." Me: "what are you scared of?" Siya: "from the top of my head? Knives." Me: "why?" Siya: "the thought of something being able to tear through my skin terrifies me." Me: "kodwa ungu gqirha? Hayi Siyanda." Siya: "I panic easily when it comes to imela. Shoot me instead. I think it comes from the fear that sekhe ndarajwa ngemela and this guy was threatening to tear my face. I couldn't risk my face for nothing." I laughed. Siya: "uyathanda undihleka ke. Wena woyika ntoni ?" Me: "cows." he laughed hysterically. Me: "its not that funny." Siya: "inkomo? Etya ingca? What could it possibly do to you?" Me: "the same as you, I have an experience nam. I was chased by inkomo. It was black, and crazy and it had big horns." he couldn't stop laughing. Me: "it really cannot be that funny." Siya: "wathini wena while it chased you?" Me: "I screamed obviously. Ndatsiba ithango lase khaya quickly because gate ibitixiwe and I tore my pajama pant, esi sonka bendiyosithenga flew in the air too sawa phantsi then amahobe la athanda Uhlala kwi electric fence flocked down in hundreds to peck the bread. I thought I was gonna die." he couldn't breath ehleka. Me: "what is so funny!" Siya: "this is the funniest thing I've everrrr heard in my life. I swear." he wiped his tears. Me: "mxim. Andiphinde ndiku balisele niks ke mna." Siya: "uxolo ke andiphinde ndihleke." Me: "but besides knives, what are you afraid of?" Siya: "I haven't established that. I love spiders. I used to collect them ndisemncinci. I had a snake pet when I was in high school. I adored bugs." Me: "a snake?" Siya: "yes I had a ball python. His name was Rory Black." Me: "you know that a snake is a reptile right?" Siya: "its actually a very sweet pet to have. If I had time now, I would probably get another." Me: "you ought to stay away from me with your Rory Black vhaa. Why can't you get a dog?" Siya: "everyone has a dog." Me: "Yeah! Because nobody takes walks with a snake!" Siya: "I'm just not a dog person." Me: "what did you do with Rory?" Siya: "I had to give him away. My mom hated him, he was all over the house. And he shed skin like foil." Me: "oh that is just disgusting." Siya: "let me guess, you had a dog?" Me: "I did, his name was Mr Giggles." Siya: "That is cute, leya isendlinakho yeyaka bani?" Me: "that's Sandile's Boogie. Lakhe got it for him on his birthday." Siya:

"ba-close ne." Me: "yeah kakhulu." Siya: "how are you feeling now?" Me: "I'm okay. Bendine cramps earlier on but now I'm fine." Siya: "what kind of cramps?" Me: "just light cramps. Its over now. Don't worry." Siya: "that's easier said than done. I don't want anything to happen to you or the baby. If at any stage you feel uncomfortable or something feels wrong, tell me immediately." Me: "okay Dr Yaya. I will do so." Siya: "its time for you to go home now. I'm sure Lakhe is worried. Come." Me: "you're right. Pull me up." Siya: "you're not that big. Subane drama sisi." I got up, laughing. Me: "you're coming with?" Siya: "No, I have to fetch umama at the airport, she's visiting for this week." Me: "have I met her before?" Siya: "Yep." Me: "so she knows who I am?" Siya: "Yeah." Me: "okay. Ndoyika nothi ithi ndithe hi, the situation we're in is not really ideal." Siya: "okay then." we walked to our cars. Siya: "I'll see you when I see you vha." Me: "goodbye Siya." I waved and climbed into my car. I drove to my house with a lot of questions in my mind. Questions I had no answers to. Funny enough, these questions could only be answered by me. Why was my brain doing this to me?

I arrived at home and got out my car, taking a slow walk to the door. Everyone was inside the lounge laughing and having a drink. My father ehleli nomama bezincokolela very cozily. Which confused me a bit. Weren't they fighting. Oh Nkosi yam. Thank you for not giving me enough strength to be bothered. Outside Lakhe was with uBabalo and Sibub, kuseliwe kumnandi with some guy I don't know. They didn't even realize I was missing. I can't lie, I was expecting worried faces manyani but again, sweetie you're not that important. I went to the kitchen with a smile on my face. Everyone else was having fun- Zingi: "Where the hell have you been!!" I got such a fright. Me: "I was at the spot. For fresh air." she sighed. Zingi: "Great. I thought you'd left with doctor guy." I took out a tub of ice cream. Zingi: "what's happening to your face?" Me: "what?" I checked my reflection on the fridge. Zingi: "you can't stop smiling. Its weird." Me: "what do you mean? I always smile." Zingi: "not like that. Why you so happy?" Me: "I just am." I giggled. Me: "khandiyeke wethu Zingisa. I'm going to the mini cinema vha." Zingi: "Spho.." Me: "what!" she followed behind me. I opened the door ndangena ndahlala phantsi. Me: "what is your problem?" Zingi: "you left with doctor guy!!!" Me: "I did not. Babalo saw me leave by myself." Zingi: "doctor guy left after you!" Me: "tell me something. How did we discover our spot?" Zingi: "the tree? When we met you said it reminded you of someone special, and you wanted to share it with me, why?" Me: "nothing." Zingi: "Spho!" Me: "okay fine. Don't freak out." Zingi: "I can't promise." Me: "doctors are not my fantasy." Zingi: "I'm not following." Me: "I thought of it being my fantasy because of something I lost a

long time ago." Zingi: "I don't understand." Me: "I met Siyanda, years ago. Before he told me this, I dreamt of it. He was part of my life. Then he left for joburg to go work and we lost touch." Zingi: "I've never heard you speak of him." Me: "it was before you and I met." Zingi: "so you still have feelings for him?" Me: "No." Wow Spho. You're getting good at this. Zingi: "Good, because Lakhe is a good and honest man. That's what you deserve. Not someone who'll jump at the opportunity of working far from you and leaving you behind." Me: "I encouraged him to go Zingisa. I told him I'd follow. I didn't. Don't blame him-" Zingi: "then why is he back here! To win you back? After all these years behlelele nton?" Me: "my dad. He forced him to come back." she looked confused. Zingi: "forced? Why!" Me: "because Zingi, my dad has been lying and pretending to like uLakhe. I should've known he wouldn't mysteriously just be his number 1 fan. He never liked him from the start." Zingi: "so uthini uSiyanda?" Me: "he's trying to move on. I think. I don't know." Zingi: "forget about him Spho. Focus on uMasi. All this, is messing up your perfect life. Look at all of this. This house. A filthy rich man that loves you. Uzophinda uyifumanephi lonto? Do you know how many people want to be in your position right now? Don't be stupid please." Me: "ndicela uba ndodwa." Zingi: "I'm being-" Me: "Get Out Zingisa." Zingi: "mxim." she left the room. I sat by myself. Everyone thought this was perfect. Obviously from the outside it was. I was on the bloody inside. I was the one that had to keep secrets. See dead bodies. Dig graves for money. Stupid filthy rich my ass. She didn't know what she was talking about and I wasn't even talking about letting go. What does she know about good and honest? Where has she seen that because akamazi nanjani uLakhe. Why would she assume that bullshit? Khona bubomi bukabani obu? Jesus, abanye abantu are out there to test my patience. I ate my ice cream in silence. The door opened again. Khaya: "Princess." Me: "Not now tata." Khaya: "Now actually." he sat next to me. Me: "you lied to me." Khaya: "I didn't lie." Me: "excuse me?" Khaya: "I didn't lie mntanam. You didn't ask if I knew Siya. Therefore I didn't say so, nam." Me: "are you really going to play that card tata? Why didn't you just tell me!" Khaya: "I didn't want it to sway your decision." Me: "I'm married tata!! What decision? I don't have a decision! I made a commitment!" Khaya: "My heart, I'm sorry I hurt you-" Me: "why tata? Why did you bring uSiyanda apha?" Khaya: "I thought it would be nice for you to see him." Me: "why are you always trying to pimp me out?" Khaya: "I am not pimping you out!" Me: "first it was Brandon! Now ngu Siyanda. Its like you deliberately dig people from my past to come in between mna noLakhe. Who's next? Simphiwe?" Khaya: "There's no one next Spho. I want what's best for you-" Me: "I have Lakhe." Khaya: "that's not what's best." Me: "you like him! You call him by your name!" Khaya: "Spho. There's a certain change in a man when he is in love. That change never leaves him

again. Uhlala eyilandoda itshintshileyo forever. I don't see that kuLakhe. He is exactly the same as he was before he married you. You're one of his possessions, not his equal." Me: "tata. I love my husband. He loves me. I AM his equal." Khaya: "then why does he undermine you and your work? Why are you always being sidelined and left in the dark?" Me: "its his company! It has nothing to do with our relationship." Khaya: "Spho. I know what love is. Lento ukuyo, that is not love. It is the idea of love. Don't tell me you haven't seen things that you hate about him. Things that make you uncomfortable. Hm? Do you really think its just going to die down and you'll get used to those things? My love, it will only get worse." I ate my ice cream. Why couldn't he just leave me alone! Khaya: "Siyanda kudala wakuthanda, you see the way he lights up whenever he sees you. His whole being is controlled by you. How do explain someone leaving his life behind just to be with you? Spho, do you realize that he was head of that hospital in joburg? When he came here he demoted himself to start from scratch. Just to be close to you." I had tears in my eyes. Me: "that's all on you. You are the one that dragged him here. Not mna." Khaya: "I didn't have to drag him. He willingly let it all go." Me: "I'm not going to be with uSiyanda tata. I don't care how much you love him." I wiped my tears. Khaya: "I know you love him too." he got up and walked out. Me: "I don't!" I cried. Me: "I don't love him. He means nothing to me." I felt like ripping out my heart and buying a new one that I could program. All the money in the world couldn't give me that. I hated being torn apart like this. Its like I was created to suffer. Now is not the time to feel sorry for yourself. Get up girl, go to your man, and love him. Like you already do. I went to the bedroom to freshen up first then went to look for him phandle. Me: "baby." Lakhe: "hey." his friends were still here. Dumi, Sandile noSibu nowhere to be found as usual. Me: "I want to talk to you." Lakhe: "now babe?" Me: "why? U-busy?" Lakhe: "kind of, I was going somewhere in a minute." Me: "oh...okay. When you're back then." he kissed me. Lakhe: "the best wife ever. I love you babe." Me: "love you too." he and Babalo plus the other guy I didn't know left the house. I could feel my father staring at me. Lakhe bengazonga hambani netshomi zakhe. That doesn't mean he didn't have time for me. Me: "Tata." Khaya: "I didn't say anything." Me: "You didn't have to. The mere fact that you 'pretend' to like him but behind his back you're ruining his marriage? That says enough. If that were to happen to you, ubungazoyithanda." Khaya: "maybe I'd change the thing about me that isn't attractive. Anything to keep my woman." Me: "Dad. Please leave my house." Khaya: "excuse me?" Me: "Ndicela uhambe tata. And please do not come back until you respect me and my husband. I love you, kodwa I cannot take this scheming. I'm going to work hard on my marriage. So I don't need negativity and schemes behind my back." Khaya: "Mntanam, I was just doing what's best for you." Mama:

"what's happening here?" Khaya: "our daughter is throwing me out of her house." he walked out to his car. Mama: "what!! Uphambene Sphosenkosi!" Me: "he is trying to tear my marriage apart." Mama: "there is no such thing! Utatakho akacingi ayenze into enjalo!" Me: "Mama, uSiyanda? Uzokwenza ntoni apha uSiyanda?" Mama: "he came to visit. He's always been close to our family." Me: "Mama. He is my ex. It is inappropriate. I didn't know this. Utata took advantage of it. Had he respected uLakhe, he would've done everything that's anything to keep Siya from here." Most of it is your fault though. But she doesn't need to know that. Mama: "ndizothetha notatakho. Kodwa uSiyanda is a sweet young man, he will never be the one to come between you and uMasilakhe. Trust me on that. I'll talk to you later okay?" Me: "okay mama." she hugged me and left also. Fez and Zintle were still in the lounge. Robert left with my dad and mom. I walked back inside the house. Me: "Uphi uZingi?" Fez: "she went home. Unqabe phi mfazi." Me: "I'm just around. Nihluthi?" Zintle: "like the cookie monster. My tummy is so full I look like you." I laughed. Me: "Mpa tshi. Uyephi uSandile?" Fez: "to get more booze. I hope you don't mind us staying a few more hours." Me: "akho ngxaki tshomi. When I'm tired I'll go lie down." Zintle: "soooo....where did Mr hotpants go?" Me: "igamalakhe ngu Siya and he went to fetch his mom at the airport." Zintle: "undifakile pha tshomi?" Me: "what about Sibuzi?" Zintle: "please don't remind me. Uyandazi mna andingumntu wothando and he looks very vulnerable." Me: "trust me. He isn't. Girls pull each other's hair over him and akabethelwa nangu Doh ka Dorothy.." Zintle: "really?" Me: "yeah. He's just one of those chilled asses." Fez: "uyi fuck boy uSibuzi! Oh My word!" Me: "aniyivanga ngam." as if ubizwe wathi gqi umfo esiya e-kitchen. Fez and Zintle stared at him. Sibuzi: "what." Fez: "nothing." he continued walking wayongena ekitchen. Fez: "when did he become suddenly so sexy." Zintle: "I know right!" Me: "you guys are crazy." A couple of hours later, I went to bed. My back was aching again and I was sleepy. After soaking myself in the relaxing bath, I came straight to bed. Just as I was about to fall asleep, the door opened giving me one hell of a fright. Lakhe: "hey baby." he whispered. Me: "hey." he undressed and got into bed. Lakhe: "so today was great. Siya is a cool guy. He left early, ebeyolanda umamakhe at the airport." Me: "okay. I'm glad you had fun." Lakhe: "so...you and your dad? Ni-right?" Me: "We're fine." should I tell him what happened? He is my husband after all and deserves to know. Also, my dad is still very much loved by me. I don't want to cause vibes. Lakhe: "really? He just sent me a text esithi umgxothile apha." Me: "He did. Didn't he." Lakhe: "what?" how do you tell your husband that your dad is pretending him without hurting his feelings? Lakhe loves him to bits, he even said its the relationship he never had with his dad. Kodwa utata uyenza njani into enje? Me: "I just don't think you should be investing so much

into this relationship with my dad." Lakhe: "he's my father in law. Why would I not want to invest in a relationship with him?" This is hard. Me: "My dad does not like you. He tolerates you because akana choice." Lakhe: "that's good enough for me. At least he isn't hostile and unresponsive." Oh God please help. Me: "I don't want you to be uncomfortable and I don't want to hide anything from you. You know I hate secrets." Lakhe: "I know." Me: "I just discovered today that uSiyanda is my ex from long ago. I didn't know that. My father and him happen to be extremely close. Like father and son. That's why I don't want you to have high hopes for my dad." Lakhe: "I know. Baby, do not worry yourself. I spoke to your dad and yes, he has reservations and doubts but I assured him we'll be okay. Siyanda isn't here for you." he giggled. Me: "I'm glad You find it funny." Lakhe: "come on baby. I know I haven't been paying attention to you lately and you feel a bit neglected. There's no need. You're beautiful and I still love you." Hesana. How did my dad pull this off? How did he convince uLakhe to be sooo calm? Ohh.....He knew I was going to tell him so he did it first. Oh Dad. You have climbed new levels of scheming. It was actually quite scary, I was shivering at this precise minute. All I could think of was, what the hell was he planning to do next?

#77

3 weeks later.

One week before Christmas. Seemingly everything was back to normal. The past few weeks had been.....well, okay. Apart from two days ago. This is when Masilakhe went mute. I cannot make this up. He literally never said a thing for the past two days. I've decided to just let him be. I had the Christmas dinner to organize and the presents to collect anyway. My tummy was really visible now. I was big. I felt big. With only 18 weeks which is almost 5 months. I don't know what's going with utata walomntana shame and his withdrawal symptoms. I was waking up and feeling a bit hazy. As usual, Lakhe was on his phone. Staring at it like it was about to explode. So I proceeded to struggle up to a sitting position then pulled myself up and paddled like a penguin to the bathroom. I hadn't heard from Siya since the braai and I was actually feeling much better about that than I thought I would. After the bathroom stop, teeth, toilet, shower. I was back in the closet. Lakhe: "I'm leaving for Japan tomorrow." I thought I heard the TV or something so I didn't respond. Then for a few seconds it was dead quiet. Me: "did you say something?" ndakroba out the door. Lakhe: "I'm going to Japan." my mouth was dry. Lakhe: "Bill Sullivan asked for me." Me: "Who is Bill?" Lakhe: "Tokyo guy." he got up and walked out. I felt like screaming. What the hell was going on!! Me:

"Masilakhe!!!" I couldn't exactly follow him since I wasn't even dressed. I slipped on pajamas and then followed by the time I got to the lounge the car was pulling out the driveway. Me: "Breath in. Breath Out." Sands: "why are we breathing?" I got a short fright and turned to look at him. Me: "Get Out Of My Face." Sands: "sorry." I stomped to the bedroom. When I sat down on the bed I tried to recall from the day before he went quiet. Every conversation. Every touch. I hadn't done anything wrong. Why was he so mad at me that he didn't even want to spend Christmas here? Ndenzeni mna? Sands: "Spho!" he knocked on my door. Me: "Go Away Sandile. I do not want to talk!" Sands: "Its good for the baby.....as long as you don't hit me. Let me in." Me: "I don't want to let you in!" Sands: "I'm coming in anyway." Sibuy: "khome Sandile. Move aside. Spho?" Me: "Go Away!!!" Sibuy: "in 3...one, two-" Sands: "I'm not waiting for that." he opened the door. I picked up my laptop. Sands: "Okay, firstly, besides that thing being expensive, It has your work and you love it so much. Please don't hurt me." he pushed Sibuy in front of him. Me: "I'm checking my emails." Sibuy: "what's happening? We feel a vibe in the house. Its been different." Me: "who's been different?" Sands: "I didn't say anything." Sibuy: "You. You're different. You're moody. You throw things at Sandile and me. Only Dumi is safe in this house. Even uNosi has decided to go to East London. Something is happening." Me: "Nosi is on a road trip with her friends. She'll be back tomorrow. We text." Sandile checked his phone. Me: "and me being moody, in case you haven't noticed, I have someone inside me who is constantly angry and kicking me. I don't sleep anymore. Oh no. I only take 20 minutes naps at a time and pee 50 times a day. And you know that saying, that says 'you're grinding my nipples'. You know what it means? You're irritated to the point of physical pain. But the difference is, I FEEL that physical pain. There is a lot more, waaay more that I could lay out for you right now, but I'm already tired!!! And throwing things? What do you expect? When you treat me like I'm crazy. You push food toward me like I'm some zoo animal waiting to attack, which I will if you don't get the fuck out of my room in the next 3 seconds." Sands: "can I call Siya to-" Me: "2.....1." he jumped out the room. Sibuy stood still and stared at me. Me: "ungandi test Sibulele." Sibuy: "You can fight me all you like. As long as you just tell me What's bothering you?" Sands: "can I come back in?" Sibuy: "you chose your team. Stay out!" Me: "Lakhe isn't talking to me. I don't know what I did to him maybe its because I'm acting crazy and he's tired of me." Sibuy: "if its any consolation, he's never here when you act crazy." Me: "so now I'm crazy!?" Sibuy: "your words not mine." the tears were coming. They were starting in my nose. That tingly feeling. Me: "he hates me. He makes excuses about work. Now he's leaving tomorrow for Japan!" Sibuy: "he doesn't hate you." Me: "he's leaving before Christmas. Clearly he isn't going to be here ON Christmas." Sands: "maybe

you're coming with him?" Me: "he used the word 'Im' and referred to Bill wanting to see 'him'. Again, business." Sands: "oohhh....." Me: "Get in here. What are you oh'ing about?" he stood by the door. Me: "did he say something?" Sands: "uzandibetha kqala?" Me: "No." Sands: "Lakhe doesn't celebrate Christmas." Me: "that's ridiculous. He was planning on taking me to Italy." Sands: "for a honeymoon. Not Christmas. He was trying to get away from all this. The planning. The days leading up to the actual day." Me: "Are you telling me You've never celebrated Christmas kokwenu?" Sands: "well, we have.....but without him." Me: "Why." Sands: "I don't know. Only dad knows. He never told me." Me: "and where is dad?" Sands: "urrgh... With Smelly Ryan. I don't know if its old age but utata reeaaally needs to get his nose checked. They're in the study. You want me to break up their meeting?" Me: "No. I'll try talk to Lakhe kwakhona." Sands: "you're not gonna get it out of him. Trust me." Me: "ndithini ke?" Sibu: "I say ask utata uRob. He likes you. He'll tell you, kakade mos you're Lakhe's wife now. You have the right to know." Me: "I still can't keep him from going to Japan tomorrow." Sibu: "Go for a check up today and follow him to Japan tomorrow. As a surprise. Its romantic." Sands: "I'll call Siya." Me: "Leave uSiyanda Alone. I have another doctor. Her name is Babalwa." Sands: "aww... I thought ngu Siyanda. We had fun the last time. He's so cool." Me: "I'm going to book now. I'll see you guys later." Sands: "can I come with you? I want to see the baby." he smiled. Me: "No Sandile. I'll bring you a picture." he squealed and danced out the room. Me: "let me get dressed." Sibu: "okay." he closed the door behind him uphuma kwakhe. I went to my closet to go get dressed, calling Babsie to squeeze me in.

I got to the hospital in a little under an hour thanks to Lakhe's mean Audi RS machine, he'd taken my big car for some odd reason. Also, I had to change twice. I was running out of clothes. Actually, I ran out of them 2 weeks ago. I was down to my last maxi dress which means I have to buy maternity clothing. With directions from a nurse, I found Babsie's office and knocked on the door. Babsie: "come in." I walked in. Me: "heyyy." my breath got stuck in my throat when I saw him. Me: "Tata." Yes, my father. Was sitting on the far couch, with one long leg crossed over the other with both hands on his lap. Khaya: "My beautiful daughter. You look so-" Me: "No tata. Uzothini apha? Are you stalking me?" Khaya: "well... I came for a cup of tea, since I also work here." Me: "and I have an appointment." Khaya: "Unjani Spho? You know how I miss you. Especially ngoku ndingasakwazi ukuza kwakho. Can we at least talk?" My father knew me too well. If I said one more word. He would know something was up. Me: "ndingxamise yazi tata. I want to do a quick check up on the baby. Lakhe and I have a surprise trip to Japan." his face remained

the same. Smiling and kind. Khaya: "that is beautiful, my child. I wish you a safe trip." I smiled. Babs: "let's get you up on that bed and check you then." I sat on the bed. Me: "how do you know my dad?" Khaya: "ba-" Me: "ndibuza yena tata." Babsi: "your dad is Siyanda's fan. He came to ask for my forgiveness on his behalf and is exploiting my kindness." Khaya: "Kodwa Babsi. He loves you." she applied the gel on my tummy. Babsi: "its just too complicated. I'm 44, he's a baby. I can't be playing the happy family card anymore. I've understood and accepted that." Me: "he's only 41 nje." Khaya: "what?" Me: "he said..." Babsi chuckled. Me: "guys sanubanje." Babsi: "he's always been a bit secretive about his age kuba engafuni ujongwa funny that he's dating an older woman. Sekhe wabizwa as uBen 10 and he hates it." Me: "Wow. So how old is he then?" she stared at the screen. My dad looked at the screen too, which caused me to look at the screen. The heart was beating. But what was wrong? Khaya: "what is it?" Babalwa looked at me. Babsi: "do you see this bright spot?" Me: "yes." Babsi: "its called an echogenic focus. On the heart of the baby." Me: "is that bad?" Of course its bad!!!! Its affecting the heart! Babsi: "at the moment, No." Me: "but?" Babsi: "an echogenic focus can be a marker of chromosomal abnormalities in the fetus." I swallowed. Babsi: "it could also be nothing. A Normal variant. Don't worry too much about it." Me: "can you tell now, if its nothing? Is there a way?" Babsi: "Not from an ultrasound." I was just stuck. Like the world has come to an abrupt standstill. I couldn't hear anything anymore. I was not anticipating this. Khaya: "Princess? You okay?" he held my hand. Me: "Yeah. how can we find out then?" Babsi: "You can do an amniocentesis. Its a common procedure. We remove and test fetal cells. Then you'll be put on bedrest for at least 48 hours. Once the risk has passed, you will be able to carry on with your daily activities." Me: "Risk? What is the risk?" Babsi: "a miscarriage." the standstill world was now shaking. It was shaking and destroying me inside. Khaya: "Spho? Breath!!" Babsi: "she's having a panic attack." Khaya: "I know that! Mntanam, Take deep breathes. In.....and out. Let's do it together." I breathed deeply. In and out. I was trying to push my mind from it. Me: "is it because I drank? Before I found out I was pregnant? I didn't know!" I cried. Babsi: "No. Its not your fault love. Do not stress. Go back home and discuss this with umnyeni. When You've reached a decision, tell me and I'll set you up with an amazing doctor who has done this many times before, successfully." Me: "why not you?" Babsi: "I'm leaving town for the next month. If you're willing to wait till then....." I held on to my father. Khaya: "its okay baby. The child will be fine. He'll be okay." he wiped my tears. Me: "you said he..." Khaya: "I hope its a he. I'd love a grandson." my heart was too heavy and I could not put it out of my head that there 'may be' something wrong with my baby. I can't just 'may be' forget about it. Babsi: "I'll be back just now." she left the room. Me: "daddy I'm panicking!" Khaya:

"Don't. Babsi is calm, she knows what she's doing. Most of the time, these echogenic focuses are nothing." Me: "what if this isn't most of the time tata. What will I do if my baby has abnormalities? How will I live with myself?" I sobbed. Khaya: "firstly, you are going to love him and take care of him. He would be your joy, his abnormalities will not define who he is, and what he means to you. It will be okay. I'll be here, all the way. I will help you any way I know how. We're going to get through this." I was silently praying inside that Babsi would walk in and tell me she was joking. That nothing was wrong. That the computer made a mistake. Maybe it was December Fools day? God, please. Please don't hurt my child. Babsi walked in with a smile on her face. I was ready to hear the good news. It was nothing right? Babsi: "so here's your scan pictures. Give me a call right away if you do decide to do the test. Okay?" I looked down. Disappointed. Me: "what happens if I don't do the test?" Babsi: "then we will find out when you give birth. If everything with your baby is fine. Get some rest Spho." I got off the bed and fixed my dress. I had ready tears but couldn't let them out. Khaya: "I'll drive you home." Me: "No Dad. Its fine." Khaya: "No, I'm driving you home. Soze ndikuyeke uhambe wedwa unje." I had so many plans that have now grinded to a halt. I wanted to go clothes shopping. I had to go to Flight centre. I had so much to do. Japan was not even an option now. I didn't want to go. I sat in the passenger seat staring at my hands while my father drove me to the house. I didn't even realize when we arrived. Khaya: "pumpkin, please promise me you will not stress about this?" Me: "I can't promise you tata. This is my baby. The only one I have. I'm scared. I got attached. I thought she was being aggressive but she's actually in pain. Daddy she's been wanting my attention and I kept blaming it on hormones. I neglected my baby tata while she cried for help." Khaya: "sweetheart, you didn't neglect the baby. Uzoba right ubhabha. Trust in God, Pray to Him as you always do. He will never desert you." I nodded. Me: "you're right. Enkosi tata. Uzongena?" Khaya: "No baby. You had a reason for putting me out of your house, I apologize kwakhona. Its fine. Uzuthi ku Sandile azolanda imoto when he's free apha kum." I got off the car with my hand bag and phone ndayongena endlini. Nobody was here. I didn't want to see anyone. I wanted to be alone with my baby. Uqgiba kwam utixa I went to the bedroom with a bowl of fruit salad and some water. I truly didn't feel like fruit. I wanted a sandwich. With melted cheese inside. And that's it. Thank God for once it didn't have to be creepily disgusting. I went to make my sandwich ndabuyela eroomini. After eating and going through work emails. I finally found the courage to take a nap. The minute I closed my eyes. The image of that screen with my baby in it and that bright spot appeared immediately in my mind. I wanted to scrape it off. So, I called utatakhe. His phone rang got voicemail. I hung up and sent a text. "We need

to talk. Its urgent." Response: "in a meeting." I had to wait. I didn't want to wait though. What meeting is this? I made a call to work. Me: "Sive, get me Luyolo please." Sivu: "ok Sis' Spho. Just a minute." I waited 3 minutes. Luyolo: "Hello?" Me: "hi Luyolo. Unjani?" Luyolo: "I'm great thank you. Wena Unjani?" Me: "I'm perfect. Are you with uLakhe in a meeting?" Luyolo: "No. He said he won't be working today so I must carry on with Keith today and ngomso. Then we close for Christmas and New year." Me: "Oooh! I think I've started with forgetful syndrome. Now I remember where I misplaced him." he chuckled Luyolo: "okay sisi. Goodbye." I hung up. I had lied. Again. I hated embarrassment and speculating eyes. Why did I call in the first place? What meeting is this where he doesn't need Luyolo? And he isn't working- OH. Now its clear. He promised weeks ago, he would shut it down. WOW. I was still in panic mode. And wanting to cry but I didn't want to cry alone. I wanted my husband to hold me and tell me kuzolunga and kiss my head. I needed that right Now. The day seemed like a sloth making its way across a yard. Slow.... Endless....without much hope but just moving forward.

It was dark in the bedroom when I woke up after my nap. The sun had set. I haven't made dinner! I jumped out of bed and slipped on slippers making my way to the kitchen. Sibu was sitting on the counter while Sandile stirred the pot. Sibu: "hi usandofika?" Sands: "hey love bird. How did it go?" Me: "my dad says, uzuyolanda imoto when you're free. He brought me home." Sibu: "Why?" he got off the counter. I blinked the tears away. There was no use crying now. Sands: "Spho, what happened?" Me: "the doctor says my baby's heart has something called an echogenic focus." Sands: "what the hell is that?" and so I explained to them. Sibu: "but...the doctor says its okay. Nothing to worry about. So There's no need to stress. Right?" Me: "yes. I'm just hella sleepy. Bendizobeka ezizitya and start dinner but you have that handled. So.." Sands: "Spho. The baby is okay. Don't worry." Me: "yeah. I know." I knew now because the baby kicked just once. Something so indescribably amazing happened in my heart. Some type of reassurance that we'll be fine. Whatever the circumstance. I'll do whatever it took. Me: "I'll be in my room." Sands: "I'll bring your supper." Me: "enkosi Sands." I went to my bedroom, curling up in bed and opened my laptop. I knew this would be a problem but I wanted to know. I am crazy over Google. I had to know what these echogenic things did. I knew I wouldn't like what I found but like a determined girlfriend certain on getting her FBI badge, I persevered in search. Lakhe walked in the room. My heart jumped. I wasn't expecting him. I don't know why considering that this is his house and bedroom. He took off his shoes and belt. Me: "hey." Lakhe: "hey." Me: "how was your day?" Lakhe:

"good. Yours." Me: "what did you do?" Lakhe: "I was in meetings all day. I told you." Me: "did I do something wrong? To you." Lakhe: "No." Me: "then why are you acting so cold toward me all of a sudden." Lakhe: "I'm not cold. I'm just busy." Me: "with what? You barely talk to me now." Lakhe: "I'm talking to you right now though." Me: "Lakhe what about the other days?" Lakhe: "Spho. Honestly, life isn't going to be rosy everyday. I work. I get hectic busy around this time of the year and I'm stressed. Our financial year ends next month, you have all these requests for me, what I must do, what I must not and I have a trial coming up as well. I am not Superman." Me: "All I ask for, is communication. When you're stressed, where There's a problem, when yo-" Lakhe: "every aspect of my life must be run through you first before I can get to it? Spho, come on. You get to do as you please whenever you please. Why funeke ube hands on nakobam ubomi?" Me: "I just want to make sure you're okay." Lakhe: "I don't have to say I'm not. You can literally see that when I walk in. I don't want to be disturbed or questioned. You know this. We have been through this before. Could you just let me process my shit please?" I had something to tell him. Well, we all know that. At least I've stopped crying every 2 minutes. Lakhe: "I don't need any more problems or disruptions to my life. I cannot take it. Please give me some space." he went into the bathroom before I could respond. I don't know what that meant. He was exhausted, yes. This was his baby too, why should I have to worry alone? Especially for this big decision. Should we do the test? Rather we know now than later? Me: "Lakhe." Lakhe: "did you not hear what I just said?" I could feel my tears coming back. I was so torn. I didn't know what to do. Tell him anyway and risk him exploding and disappearing off to Japan for weeks. Or keeping quiet and risking my baby's life in the long run. He would hate me if something were to happen to his baby and I had the knowledge to prevent it way before. Me: "its about the baby." he stood at the bathroom door and looked at me. There was a cold, dark, acrimonious look on his face. His eyes in dark holes and his mouth a hard line. It was evident. I had struck a nerve. Lakhe: "I'm leaving." Me: "I'm sorry. I won't say another word. I promise." maybe I could wait a few days. A week. His well-being was also important. Lakhe: "No. Ndihamba ngoku." Me: "you don't have to. I'll go to the spare roo-" Lakhe: "I said...." there was a strong pause, not only did it scare me but I did not want to question it or him. He wore his shoes, took his keys and walked out. I had pushed too hard. Thinking that maybe he would be open to talking. I don't know what it was, but I had nothing to do with it. I just added on a few minutes ago. Other than that. Something incredulously painful hung on him. Sinister. Dark. It made him angry and hostile. What in the world could have happened in the past few days? Was it about my dad? Is that why my dad

khange afune ungena? Well, besides me banning him and all. Then whaaat! Only one person could answer my question.

#78

I woke up on Tuesday morning. I could smell Lakhe's cologne which meant he was here. I got out of bed and looked in the closet. Nobody. His suitcase was missing, meaning he was already gone. I went to make my bed ndaye bathroom. Once I finished showering I went to find a jean and one of my baggy vests ndanxiba and my white sneakers. I tied my weave back ndayongena e-kitchen. I needed to eat something badly. Bendilambe ndisifa and the baby was just as hungry, I could feel it in the kicks. I started with drinking water then made myself Oats. Sibulele came in. Sibulele: "Hey.. Uziva njani?" Me: "I'm okay." Sibulele: "you sure?" Me: "yeah." Sibulele: "come on, Spho. Its me." Me: "Lakhe is acting very strange. He was so pissed off izolo. I didn't even get a chance to talk to him. Now he's left for Japan." Sibulele: "so uzothini?" Me: "I don't know." Sibulele: "Do the test. Sikhona nje thina." Me: "and if I have a miscarriage? What then? I don't want that to happen Sibulele. Noba ke umntana ubanayo abnormality, There's nothing they can do for. So what's the point of putting her at risk?" Sibulele: "as long as you don't stress about it." Me: "I won't. I have a prenatal class today, I also have to go Christmas shopping. I'll see you later." Sibulele: "awukagqibi ukutya." Me: "I want McDonald's." Sibulele: "you're gonna have to finish that porridge first." I sat down and ate. Sibulele: "my mom," I stared at him like a predator. Sibulele: "the woman that raised me, she wants me over for Christmas. Come with me." Me: "to Durban?" Sibulele: "yeah. Its nice and sunny. Great tourist places. You can relax." Me: "Christmas without my parents? Yuh. Especially now that my dad is back. I haven't spent it with him for years." Sibulele: "that's true. If you change your mind the offer stands." Me: "okay. Can I go now? Ndigqibile." Sibulele: "Go." I took my bag and keys then left the house. I drove to the mall to pick up presents and get a few dresses for me and my big tummy. Christmas was on Friday and I had planned a very nice social dinner. I drove to my mother's house to surprise her. Or maybe also to ask for advice. I parked my car and went to the door. Me: "mama!" I knocked. The door was locked. Me: "mom!" Mama: "coming baby!!" I waited for a minute. Me: "I kind of need to pee badly." she opened the door. Me: "what was taking so long?" Mama: "bendivasa mntanam." Khaya: "hi sweetheart." I was confused now. Ndajonga ku mama. Mama: "utatakho uyabulisa." Me: "hi dad..... Since we're all standing here. Answer me this, the two of you for the past few weeks have been acting weird. What is up?" Khaya: "nothing." Me: "mama?" Mama: "everything has been great." Me: "so if

ubuvasa, just now. Tata busenza nton?" he looked at me. Khaya: "I was in the toilet." Me: "both of you in the same toilet at the same time?" Khaya: "yes. Do you want some tea?" Me: "not from you thanks. I'll make it." I switched on the kettle. Khaya: "Uphi uLakhe? Did you cancel your trip?" Oh yeah... That. Me: "I don't want to go. I don't feel well." Khaya: "so yena Uphi? He left you?" Me: "he has business to take care of." Khaya: "of course he does." Mama: "Khaya, leave it alone." Khaya: "honestly?" Mama: "why don't you give him a chance-" Khaya: "He won't change now. Its too late." Me: "how do you kno-" Khaya: "because I was once him Spho! I have to go." he took his keys and left. Me: "Mama? And please don't lie to me." I poured the water into cups and put tea bags inside. 2 and a half sugars for mom. Just 2 for me. No milk. We sat down. Mama: "we are constantly trying to work on our marriage." Me: "why? You guys are perfect-" Mama: "No honey. We're not. We've never been. When we had you, it was amazing. Everything was great. Then wahamba wena wayofunda wazihlalela, the cracks started showing again. The truth is, mna notatakho are best xasidibene ngawe. He prefers to be absorbed into his work, if he's not fussing over you." Me: "Lakhe akakhonjalo nje. We bonded way before I got pregnant." Mama: "mntanam. Utatakho is only looking out for wena. You don't have to take his advice all the time. You're grown, you're allowed to make mistakes." Me: "My marriage isn't a mistake mama." Mama: "its not. Its a blessing and you have to treat it as such. Why did uLakhe leave without you?" Me: "I don't know. He's got a lot on his mind. He needed space." Mama: "away from his wife?" Me: "that's what he said. He just needed space." Mama: "what did you do?" Me: "nothing ma. He just switched up over night. He's not even gonna be here on Christmas." Mama: "haibo Spho! How do you let that happen? Its your first Christmas together!" Me: "he doesn't celebrate Christmas mama." Mama: "why? He's not Christian?" I don't even know actually. I don't even know my husband's religion! That made me panic. Me: "he just doesn't. Sibu is also leaving for Durban. He wanted me to go with him." Mama: "I don't know honey. Leaving umzi wakho when your husband isn't there either is not a good idea." Me: "he left me. Ndithini ke?" Mama: "awuyo nkedama Sphosenkosi. You can have Christmas here with me and your father. It will be much better with you around." Me: "why are you smiling like that?" Mama: "if you can also perhaps stay the night." Me: "Why?" Mama: "it would be nice waking up to your flap jacks and syrup." Me: "I'm not sure if I'm hearing you correctly ma, you're saying things, that mean something else. You want me to come here, so that utata can feel closer to you and then stay the night.....and make you breakfast in the morning. So ndiyi housekeeper mna mama?" she laughed. Me: "wow." Mama: "just one night." Me: "why don't you guys come to our house? I don't want to abandon family ka Lakhe. They didn't do anything wrong. Plus they're looking forward

to the dinner." she shook her head. Mama: "we love the Sobukwe family. We've been spending a lot of time with them. We just want a cozy little Christmas. My little family." Me: "ndithini ke kubo?" Mama: "well, they'll be fine. Ithi andiphilanga and you have to take care of me." Me: "Oh mama." Mama: "pretty please?" Me: "I'll have to divide myself. Maybe move dinner to lunch then ndize ngapha late. I can't just abandon them on Christmas. I'm their daughter in law." Mama: "thank you my angel. I'll cook your favorite." Me: "ndatsho ndalamba. Oh and I need the toilet." I got up ndayochama, flushed, washed my hands and went to look through the fridge. Mama: "those are for Christmas." Me: "mandifownele McDonald's ke mos. I also have a prenatal class in 2 hours, uyafuna uhamba nam?" Mama: "definitely." I made a call to McDonald's and ordered my meal and waited patiently on the couch.

The day before Christmas. I was feeling sooo rejuvenated. So happy. Super excited for tomorrow. After a mid morning swimming exercise, I went to shower and get dressed. I would make a great sandwich for myself ndihlale ndizimamele for a few hours, then start on the salads later. Then take Nosi out for a movie. After making my sandwich, I sat on the couch. My phone rang. My heart stopped for a second then raced faster. Masilakhe. I haven't heard from him in days. Me: "Hi." I decided to answer. Lakhe: "hello." now what? The baby kept nudging me inside. Lakhe: "how's my little pumpkin doing?" Me: "she's kicking me crazy." Lakhe: "u-excite'wa ngu tatakhe?" Me: "probably." Lakhe: "I'm about to have dinner. Haven't eaten all day. I'm fired kodwa ndilambile." Me: "Oh okay." Lakhe: "I'm sorry about the other day. I was really frustrated. I can't even excuse myself. I feel bad." Me: "its fine." Lakhe: "ndizobuya next week. Wednesday. I'll make it up to you." Me: "Alright." Lakhe: "okay then. I love you. I have to go." Me: "love you too." I hung up. I was not going to let him ruin this happy day for me. I ate my food quietly ndibukele TV. Dumi came to join me. Sibuy was on his way out. Me: "uhambe kakuhle vha." Sibuy: "thank you. I'll call you ufika kwam." Me: "okay." Dumi: "bye." Sibuy: "ungasokolisi uSpho wena. My cab's here. Bye." he left the house. Me: "Uphi uSandile?" Dumi: "I haven't seen him all day." Me: "Nosi yena?" she's probably still sleeping. Uyamazani lamntana she sleeps all day long." Me: "utata yena Uphi?" Dumi: "I'm not sure. Haven't seen him either. Maybe uhambe noSandile." Me: "I hope you'll help me start with tomorrow's meals." Dumi: "I wish I could.... Zingi and I have decided to have a family Christmas. With the kids away. Just us two." Me: "Oh? That's amazing Dumi. I'm so happy for you guys." Dumi: "well. Its weird because.....well, we're not back together." Me: "why?" Dumi: "its embarrassing." Me: "come on. We're best friends. Tell me."

Dumi: "well, it so happens that.....I can get up." Me: "you can walk!!!?? That is amazing!" Dumi: "No! It.....can get up." Me: "OH....that is even better." Dumi: "you're sick. Anyway. It happened after our therapy session from last week... She was helping me get in the car. I told her I can handle it. Which I can by the way. She insisted....and had her boobs in my face. So ...yeah." Me: "I'm still happy for you. So you're setting aside Jesus' birthday, to rekindle your sexual desires." Dumi: "You've just ruined it." Me: "I'm kidding. We all know Jesus wasn't born on the 25th of December. Its technically just a holiday to Celebrate his birth." Dumi: "please don't make me mad. You know that gets me crazy. Jesus was born on the 25th. End of story." Me: "Not end of story.."

Dumi: "whatever. Anyway...that's happening." Me: "I wish you the best. And I hope someday, you guys can work through your differences." Dumi: "I'm taking it one step at a time. Plus she's carrying my third baby." Me: "that's great Dumz." Dumi: "Unjani ubhabha omncinci. Is she kicking?" Me: "like every 2 seconds. Akalali lomntana." Dumi: "maybe uzophuma kuwe ediniwe afune ulala oko." I giggled. That would be really sweet. Nosi: "guys." Me: "hey you. Ndicimba usalele." Nosi: "no.....so...uhm....I have something I need you to be open minded about." Me: "You're dating a girl?" Dumi: "why would that even be your first guess?" Me: "you heard her say open minded. I wouldn't mind you dating a girl, as long as she has manners and she's clean. You won't have to worry about pregnancy and other things." Nosi: "okay, that's not it. I'm not lesbian." Dumi: "then yintoni ingxaki?" the gate buzzed. She went to press to open it. Me: "Nosi?" Nosi: "well.....uhm..." Dumi: "umithi?" Nosi: "No!" Me: "your boyfriend is coming over for Christmas? Did you ask your dad? Cuz I'm not telling him." Dumi: "hayi nam." Nosi: "No!" she smiled. Nosi: "I invited my mom for Christmas." Me: "you did what?" Nosi: "we're her family. She needs us. Bendizomyeka ahlale yedwa? She's my mother Spho. Andifuni ahlale yedwa kulandlu." I was just baffled. Stella walked in the house. Stella: "hello my angel." she hugged her daughter. Stella: "why is this house so dull? Where are the preparations? Where's the excitement!" It died when you pulled in the driveway. I wanted to say. Nosi: "ma, say hi to Spho. Nanku noDumi. Bhuti's friend." Stella: "Hello." That's it. I'm gone. I got up from the couch. Stella: "you're pregnant? Didn't waste any time, did you?" I was not in the mood to shame. Stella: "its a pity you have to use a baby to hold on to someone who clearly isn't-" Nosi: "mama! What did I tell you?" Stella: "oh sorry darling. Apologies Spho. Are you due next week? You look rather huge." Robert walked in with his son. Sands: "hello ma." Stella: "My little baby." she kissed his cheeks. Rob: "Nokwakha." Stella: "Monwabisi. Sad how you can't even live up to your name." Rob: "what's sad is you not having someone to spend Christmas with. So you forced your daughter to bring you here." Stella: "I never forced her." Rob: "I've lived with you for almost 40 years." he smiled. Rob: "I know you."

Stella: "what ever makes your diabetes level." I went to my room. I took my overnight bag and packed a few clothes in it and shoes, plus toiletry and make up. Sands: "Spho?" Me: "ngena." he came in. Sands: "where you going?" Me: "I'm not gonna stay here with your mother. She hasn't been here for 5 minutes, but has already insulted me 3 times. I can't stress. There's already a situation with this baby." Sands: "ndiya understander mna. I think its good for you to go somewhere." Me: "I should've left with uSibu." Sands: "ungayi kokwenu nje? You can't spend Christmas eve alone. I want you to stay but umama will make things difficult and andifuni something to happen to you or the baby." Me: "I miss him so much." he hugged me. Sands: "I know. Uzobuya...and it will be like he never left..." Me: "okay....I promised not to cry today." I carried on with my packing. Sands: "do you want me to drive you?" Me: "no, I'll be okay thanks Sandile." I zipped my bag. Sands: "I'll take this to the car." Me: "No... Go to your family." Sands: "Look, ndiyamthand umama. I just don't want you to leave here and then she thinks she's now the woman of the house. Let me take out your bag. She doesn't need to know uyahamba." Me: "Sandile. Whether I'm here or not. That won't make a difference to her." I locked the sliding door firmly. Then took my bag and locked my bedroom. The windows connecting inside it were all locked. Sands: "uhambe kakuhle ke." Me: "thanks bye Sands." I walked to Rob. Me: "tata, ndisaya ekhaya for a while." Rob: "okay mntanam. I'll take care of things here. Undibulisele kutatakho." Me: "enkosi tata. I will." Thank God Stella was nowhere to be seen. Inoba base roomin with uNosi. I drove my car to Newton Park.

When I drove into the street of my parents' house. I noticed two cars parked out front. I recognized one of them. Nobody was expecting me. Not even my mother. I parked my car and took my bag to the front door then knocked. My mother opened. She gasped. Mama: "Hi Spho." why was she standing at the door. Mama: "I thought uza ngomso late. What's this? A bag?" Me: "ndicela ungena mama. What's going on?" Mama: "why are you here? Kwenzeke nton?" Me: "kufike umama ka Masilakhe pha. I can't stay with her mama. She's mean and stresses me out. Open the door. Nenzantoni apha?" she let me inside. I already knew he was here. His car was parked out front for goodness sake. Me: "molweni." Khaya: "Hello sweetheart." he smiled. Siya: "Hi Spho." he took my bag to the room. There was another woman in the lounge. Me: "molo mama." who was this? Woman: "Is this Spho? Oh My Goodness! You look beautiful! Give me a hug!" I hugged her. Seriously, who was this guys? Me: "Enkosi mama." I looked at my dad questioningly. Khaya: "Spho, this is Siya's mom. Sis'Lorna." Oh. Goodness. This is awkward. Siya: "have you eaten?" Me: "uhm...no. Not in the past 2 hours." Mama: "ndizok'phakela. Sit

down honey." I felt like a stranger ekhaya honestly. What were they doing here? I sat down. Siya: "how've you been?" he sat next to me. Me: "great...wena?" Siya: "I've been okay. Unjani umntana?" Me: "I'm not sure." I was trying not to think about it. Siya: "njani? When last did you go for a check up?" Me: "a couple of days ago. Babsi says There's an echogenic focus on the baby's heart." Siya: "what is she doing to make it better? Or make it go away?" Me: "why do you look so scared?" Siya: "I.....its your baby. Its just, I don't want anything to happen to him." Me: "There's a test, I could take. Just that There's a risk." Siya: "what's the risk?" Me: "a miscarriage." he looked at the floor. Siya: "whatever this is. Its not worth your baby's life." Me: "and what if the baby is born with an abnormality?" Siya: "then we'll cope with that, knowing he's alive and unabazali abamthandayo. If they find something now, how will they heal it? You're just going to worry for the rest of your pregnancy. They can only do anything for umntana xa umzalile." Me: "we?" Siya: "I meant you and your family." Me: "that's not what we means." Siya: "I'll be there as a friend for support obviously. I'll never let you go through that alone." Me: "I know." Siya: "did you read up on it?" Me: "yeah. BabyCentre blog keeps saying its a normal variant and usually doesn't mean anything and doing the test is not a bad idea since only 1 out of 300 end in miscarriage. There's no proven theory that the amnio is the cause of miscarriage because most of its cases are successful." Siya: "1 out of 300 is still scary." Me: "yeah....I don't want to go through it again." Siya: "again?" I looked at him. What was this constant look of concern on his face? Me: "I never told anyone. Not even my dad knows. I miscarried when I was in an accident." Siya: "I'm so sorry to hear that Spho." Me: "its okay. I'm trying to make sure this one stays inside and healthy till he's ready to pop." he smiled. Siya: "have you decided? On the birth?" Me: "Yes. Definitely a private hospital. I want my child to be in immediate medical help. They have to check if he's okay." Siya: "hopefully Babsi will be around. She travels quite often. Its always better to have a doctor you're familiar with." Me: "you're a doctor I'm familiar with." Siya: "I don't give birth to babies." Me: "come on. You're a GP." Siya: "exactly." Me: "why did you lie?" Siya: "about what?" Me: "nge age yakho dummy. You thought I wouldn't find out." Siya: "whatever. I'll fetch your food." Me: "if its any consolation, you're still older than me." Siya: "it is. And thank you." he went to the kitchen. I couldn't help but laugh. He had this little boy attitude and smile. My mom and Lorna were having a private discussion across the room. I don't know where my dad disappeared to. Siya brought me my food. Siya: "there you go. Happy chewing." Me: "thank you." I took a big bite off my chicken. I was really hungry. Siya: "khame ndiyokhangel utatakho." he left me to my food wabuya kwakhona in a few. Siya: "he's on the phone with uLakhe. Khandiphe." Me: "what they talking about?" Siya: "you want me to spy for you?" Me: "Yes." he

took my potato and left again. By the time he came back, I was done eating. Siya: "they spoke about Tokyo. Oko ehleka utatakho, nothing much. Then something about coming back soon. Lakhe is in Tokyo?" Me: "yeah." Siya: "but its Christmas." Me: "I know." Siya: "did something happen?" Me: "kind of. I don't know." Siya: "you at least told him about the baby?" Me: "I tried." Siya: "that's not good enough Spho. Its his baby too. He needs to know." Me: "I'll tell him. Ubuya kwakhe." I put down my plate. Me: "don't look at me like that. I'll tell him." Siya: "you need to put your feet up." Me: "can you calm down? Geez you're like this one inside of me." Siya: "uyakhaba? Can I feel?" Me: "don't get emotional." he held my tummy. Siya: "I can feel..." then his face changed. Me: "what?" Siya: "why ekhabela ezantsi?" Me: "I don't know, isn't that a thing they do?" Siya: "I don't know..." Me: "are you saying There's something wrong?" Siya: "No." Me: "Siyanda." Siya: "Do not be so worried all the time. Relax." I lay back on the couch. Khaya: "is everyone ready?" Me: "for what?" Khaya: "we're going bowling princess and then out for ice cream. Uyeza?" Me: "I would love to take a nap actually tata. But you guys have fun." Siya: "you can't stay here alone." Khaya: "That's true." Me: "andisehluthi tata." Khaya: "its good for you to exercise. Come." Mama: "thina sizohamba noSpho. You boys ride alone." Khaya: "okay." we came out the house. Watixa umama. I went to my car with sis Lorna and my mom. Khaya got into Siya's car with him. Siya: "I'm going to need you to stop looking at me like that tata." he started and drove away first. Khaya: "like what?" Siya: "oluhlobo undijonga ngalo. I know you called umama ka Lakhe ba makaze. You knew Spho would come running here and meet my mother then force me to spend time with her." Khaya: "I did no such thing." Siya: "I heard you on the phone, last week. Tata, why go through so much trouble, she's happy with uLakhe!" Khaya: "she's not! Something is wrong Siyanda. Be there for her please." Siya: "inzima lento uza nayo tata. I don't like meddling and I'm not going to. Its time you accept the fact that uSpho is married to that guy, and its not going to change. Not while you're still interfering. Leave them alone." Khaya: "you're right. I'm sorry I dragged you into this. Andizazi bendicinga ntoni." Siya: "you just want what's best for princess. I understand." he focused on the road. Siya: "what boggles my mind is why uncokola kangaka naye. And laugh so hard at his jokes. He's not that funny." Khaya: "are you jealous?" Siya: "of what? ULakhe? Please." Khaya: "Keep your friends close and your enemies closer, they say.." Siya: "If you gave him a real chance, just one." Khaya: "Not in a million years Siyanda." Siya: "I give up." he stopped at he robots. Siya: "so I've decided ndibuyela eJozzi. There's nothing for me here." Khaya: "what about uSpho?" Siya: "we cannot possibly go through this again." Khaya: "but as i-friend? To have her back? Support her?" Siya: "I'm a flight or phone call away." Khaya: "she's about to have a baby." the car moved again. Siya: "I

know." Khaya: "stay Siyanda. That baby will need a dad." Siya looked at him and shook his head. Siya: "Masilakhe is the baby's dad. Tata, this conversation is really annoying me ngoku." Khaya: "I didn't want to tell you this." Siya: "what." Khaya: "I'm not supposed to....." Siya: "Tata." he parked the car. Khaya: "Rob told me that, Lakhe is on trial for murder. He is suspected to have killed his ex fiance. Who was pregnant with his child-" Siya: "whaaaaat!!!!!!!!!!!!!" Khaya: "Siyanda, calm dow-" Siya: "Tata, umyeka njani uSpho ahlale nalomntu!!! Don't tell me to calm down!!! Kunga suspectwa and he's on trial, there must be some truth to it!! He's a murderer? What the hell....." Khaya: "Siyanda, you can't tell Spho. She needs you in her corner. Don't just leave her hanging. Please. You can't go back to joburg-" Siya: "I'm not going anywhere!" Khaya smiled. Khaya: "that's my boy.."

#79

I stood by the tables and watched my mom bowl. I was eating a cup of chocolate ice cream. Me: "what?" Siya: "nothing." Me: "You've been following me around like a detective." Siya: "I'm not. Uya kwezindawo ndifuna ukuya kuzo qha nawe. Can I have some ice cream?" Me: "why uthanda utyela umntanam?" he chuckled. Siya: "ulele umntana. Khandiphe wethu." I gave him a taste. My phone vibrated in my pocket. I took it out ndayijonga. It was Sandile. Me: "your best friend is calling." Siya: "who's my best friend?" I answered. Me: "Sandile." Sands: "Spho. You locked my brother's room?" Me: "Yes I did. Why?" Sands: "uhm....kunento endifuna uyiboleka yakhe." Me: "which is what?" there was silence. Me: "Sandile." Sands: "just a shirt. The white one." Me: "is it urgent?" Sands: "uzobuya nini?" Me: "I can come open for you. I don't mind. Nanku noSiyanda, sizoz." Sands: "No, I can come to you. Say hi to him for me." Me: "Sandile... I'm not giving away istixo sala room. Lakhe told me specifically not to let anyone in his room without both of us there." Sands: "oh okay." he hung up. Me: "he says hi." Siya: "everything okay?" Me: "ndiyabuya vha." Siya: "uyaphi?" Me: "I'm going to check what he wants. He seems jittery." Siya: "let me come with you." Me: "No, you're gonna distract him ndiyamazi uSandile." Siya: "how am I gonna distract him?" Me: "just stay please." on any other circumstance I wouldn't have said no, but uSandile is on a mission. He was being weirdly discreet which is unlike him because akakwazi kalok yena uxoka. Siya: "fine. As long as you come back." Me: "I will." he walked me to my car and I drove away. My phone rang again while ndiqhuba luckily connected to the Bluetooth. Me: "hey." Lakhe: "ndicela unike uSandile istixo." Me: "I'm on my way to the house." Lakhe: "ubuphi Dan?" Me: "ekhaya. Your mother is at the house. Ndizomvulela uSandile." Lakhe:

"Ndithe nika uSandile istixo Sphosenkosi. That's it. That's all I'm asking. Akho need ube extra." he hung up. Something was going on here. I just had a weird feeling in my gut. Maybe the baby was awake. Maybe she was trying to turn around. I arrived at the house and parked the car in front of the garage. Before I even stepped out the car. Sandile was by my door. On a regular day, I would've gotten a fright. Today, I actually didn't. Bendimlindile. Sands: "you don't have to get out the car. I'll be in and out." Me: "I promise you Sandile, I will knock you down before I let you take this key. Ndithe ndizoyivula la room. Yinton Dan Le ndingafunekanga ndiyibone?" Sands: "its nothing. I don't like bothering you. Uyayazi nawe ndithanda uphole. You don't have to walk all the way in. Worse umama uhlel efront." I got out the car. Sands: "Spho." Me: "I don't care. You're hiding something, and I'm going to find it. Ugcqiba kwam uyifumana. Ndilwe nawe for ukundixokisela Sandile. Brace yourself." Sands: "Okay! Okay!" Me: "Talk." Sands: "uhm....I wanted to hide your Christmas present as a surprise. From Lakhe and me." Me: "awww. That's so sweet! I might as well take it then kuba sendilapha and andizok'bona ngomso." Sands: "what?" Me: "you can give it to me now." Sands: "like ngoku? Can't I do my original plan?" Me: "No. I want my present. Go fetch it." I knew he was lying. Seriously, Sandile Cannot lie to save his life. Sands: "Lakhe says you can't see it." Me: "why?" Sands: "because he....wants to....make it a bigger surprise." Me: "okay." I walked toward the house. He followed behind me. Sands: "Spho... Yima." Me: "Sandile, I left this house a couple of hours ago. When I left my room, nothing was wrong. Your behavior is suggesting ufuna ukupha into kula room." I got to my room and put the key in. Sands: "There's nothing Spho. Relax." I opened the door ndangena and looked around. Everything was fine. Sands: "see? Go..." Me: "okay then. But let me get my jacket first. I feel chilly. Ndizosishiya kuwe istixo ungasokoli." Sands: "okay." I went to the closet, right next to the jackets wardrobe, kanye pha ezantsi, was Lakhe's safe and for the first time since I've known him. It was open. I pulled the door quietly. What. The. Fuck. I took out the white t shirt that had blood on it. My mind immediately flashed back to the few nights before our wedding, When Lakhe disappeared all day and half the night wabuya sesula igazi on his t shirt waza straight kule safe. I remember this because I heard the sound it makes xa ivulwa. So he was in such a hurry that he even forgot to close his safe. This is what Sandile was looking for. A white shirt. See? He just can't lie. Why did he want it so badly? Why didn't I notice this before? Probably because I wasn't looking. I took the t shirt and wrapped my jacket around it ndaphuma. Me: "I couldn't find this jacket, and ndithanda yona. I thought I lost it." he smiled. Sands: "its okay." Me: "I'll see you later then? Utixe ke apha." Sands: "okay. Thanks Spho." I half jogged to my car. I was shaking kukoyika and my heart raced. I shoved it under my seat

and quickly drove off. I don't know why I took this t shirt. Now ndiyoyika ingathi ndizobethwa. It was full of blood. Lakhe only wore a bandage on his hand for one day. Maybe wethu its nothing, right? No, its something. He put it in a safe for a reason. Now he sent his brother to get rid of it? Ikhona into ebhethayo. I called Zintle. She picked up immediately. Me: "hee mtshana. Yayaphi la friend yakho uButternut that was head of a forensics lab?" Zintle: "sikhona esosbhanxa eso. Why?" Me: "uSino befuna i-number yakhe. I mentioned you might know him, so..." Ngubani uSino ?? Zintle: "who's that?" Me: "uyathanda ulibala ke wena. 2 years ago sise Cubana. Sadibana nezinye ii-girls. Kukho uButternut." Zintle: "Yoh. Inoba ndandinxilile tshomi. I'll text it you." Me: "thanks my love. Wenzantoni?" Zintle: "ndihleli wethu nomzali. Andisedikwe." Me: "oh hayi wethu. Undibulisele ku makazi." Zintle: "une tricks. Ufuna ndiyomthengela Hunters gold. Uyazelaphi? Yuuh hayi wethu." Me: "khawuvusele umakazi wethu. Ukuba ibindim ubuzotaka. Go do good." she laughed. Zintle: "ok tshomi. Nanku endibiza. I'll text you the number." Me: "thanks hun." I hung up. In a few minutes I got the text and I called immediately. I don't know what I was looking for but I was looking. BN: "Hi." Me: "Hello Bulelani. Uthetha noSpho itshomi ka Zintle." BN: "u-lovey ka simprah? How are you?" can I just throw up? Me: "ndiyaphila Unjani wena?" BN: "ndi-perfect." Me: "Bu, I need a favor from wena." BN: "it will cost you. What is it." Me: "uyakwaz mos utesta igazi if sikwi skipa?" BN: "Yeah." Me: "how does 5k sound?" BN: "make it 10k and I won't involve a single soul." Me: "uyandityabula Bulelani." BN: "how badly do you need that test done?" Me: "as in yesterday." I hated the thought going through my mind at that moment. What was Lakhe so deeply involved in that I had to go behind his back to find out? BN: "you realize tomorrow is Christmas." Me: "I know." BN: "the lab will be empty. I'll have to work alone, meaning I'm missing family time. The least I can do is come home with a hoverboard as a present for my son and some nice perfume for my girlfriend, don't you think?" Me: "R10 000 it is then." BN: "good. I'll send you my location, sidibane ngomso at 6am. Undinike the t shirt, and my money." Me: "Bulelani." BN: "Ya?" Me: "this stays strictly between us." BN: "Spho. You know me. That's why you called kakade. I'll see you tomorrow." I hung up. My car was parked in the lot of the bowling alley. On me, I had about 6k which I had drawed ngokuya bendisenza shopping and forgot about it. I'd have to wake and go to the ATM before 6am. I took a plastic from the back and shoved the t shirt in it ndayibuyisela under my seat. I breathed in and out. Countless times. Then got out the car. I walked into the bowling alley, sebezohamba. Me: "senigqibile na?" Siya: "yeah. Umama udiniwe." Me: "Yeah me too. My back is sore again." Siya: "its supposed to be getting better though, how are the classes?" Me: "they're good." I smiled. Siya: "are you okay?" Me: "I'm fine." Siya: "something is

bothering you... Uthini uSandile?" Me: "ebefeketha as usual wethu. I feel bad for leaving him alone with his fam because akayifumani la attention iyeyakhe yedwa." Siya: "he's lucky to have a sister like you. Let me drive you home?" Me: "No, its okay. Hamba notata. I'll see you there." Siya: "Spho, what's wrong?" Me: "nothing." Siya: "ndijonge ke." I couldn't. Siya: "something is definitely wrong. What happened?" I looked him in the eyes. Me: "nothing is wrong." this lying thing was getting easier. Siya: "if you can keep this stare for 2 minutes I'll believe you." Me: "Fine. Let's do it." I folded my arms and looked at him. His eyes were soft and caring. Unpretentious. Also so strong. Me: "Poppy.." he smiled. Siya: "you remember." Me: "Shhh." I felt transported to another world. A world of bright sunshine and piggy back rides at a park. Protection from those barbaric pigeons. The giggles. Late night calls. That last kiss at the airport. With tears in his eyes. I remember. Every single piece. How.... I tried to breath again slowly. He moved closer to me. I was transfixed, I couldn't remove my eyes from his gaze. He moved infinitesimally closer. My senses were drinking in his cologne and the fresh mint breath almost a few centimeters from me. Khaya: "kwenzeka ntoni apha?" I snapped out of it. Siya: "we're having a staring contest." Khaya: "niyawaqalile kanene ngezinto zenu. Its time to go. Come." I quietly went to my car with umama nomamakhe. I first sat in my driver seat and listened to the irregular stepping of my heart beat. Ingathi yenza i-gwara gwara. Mama: "are you okay hone-" Me: "I'm trying to breath mama." Mama: "you don't 'try' to breath. That's not natural. What's the problem?" Me: "I have breathing issues. I have to take breaks and focus on that every once in a while." Mama: "hmm...okay. Take your time." Lorna: "I can drive for you baby." Me: "its okay ma." I started the car and drove to mom's house.

We arrived first at the house wayovula umama. I just wanted to climb in bed, besides the early morning and disappearing act I was to do ngentseni, I was tired. The women went inside. Siya's car parked behind mine wayongena endlini utata. I was standing by my car. Just dumbstruck and confused. Siya: "Spho.." Me: "yeah?" Siya: "you remember me don't you." Me: "No." Siya: "you're a bad liar. Undibize ngegama lakho. Uthe Poppy. I am the only person besides your biological mother that calls you that." I kept my mouth shut. Siya: "talk to me please." Me: "ndithini Siyanda. I'm married." Siya: "stop hiding behind this marriage. Just talk to me." Me: "I respect and love my husband too much to cheat on him." Siya: "or are you scared of him?" I looked on the tarmac. Siya: "no man is above God Spho. Ukuba uyamthemba and uyathandaza, akasoze naninina akulahle. Please remember that." Me: "I know." Siya: "I'm supposed to be spending Christmas here with your family

tomorrow. If it makes you uncomfortable I could cancel." Me: "Don't." I blurted out. Siya: "are you sure?" Me: "yeah.." he pulled me into his arms and hugged me tight. I could almost feel my worries and stresses disappear. Me: "I should get inside." I let go of him. His hands still on my waist. Siya: "that's a good idea." I looked up at him. Me: "I don't want you to go." Siya: "nam andifuni uhamba. But I have to. I'll be here tomorrow morning. Uvuke ke nawe." Me: "I will.." I pulled away from him and walked to the house. His mother said her goodbyes and they left. I went to my bedroom, semi closing my door ndacima isibane. I called my brother. He picked up almost immediately. Sibuh: "hey you." Me: "andisazibaweli donuts kengoku." Sibuh: "haha.. Already regretting staying behind? Bendithe masambe. Would be getting you donuts now." Me: "sudika man. I wanted to talk to you bout something." Sibuh: "okay. What's up." Me: "I almost kissed uSiya." Sibuh: "whaat! How?" Me: "I don't know." Sibuh: "Spho. How did that happen? I thought you hated this guy." and so I went on to tell him the story of years ago up to now. Me: "its just this thing when I look at him in the eyes, ingathi its a reassurance that everything will be okay. I feel so light and happy around him, and upset xa funeke emnkile." Sibuh: "what about uLakhe?" Me: "I don't know. Ndiyamthanda uMasilakhe. I do. Its just.....very different." Sibuh: "different how Spho?" Me: "Andiyazi Sibulele. All I know is that ndiyamthanda and then with this one. I'm not sure if its love. What if its hormones or lust? What then?" Sibuh: "well.....I can hear it in your voice you have something deeply for this nigga." Me: "it can't be that deep." Sibuh: "it is. You almost kissed him. Worry yam is that if Lakhe finds out, he will kill you both." Me: "do you think he'd do that?" Sibuh: "I know he would. So don't even try making this Siya thing a thought. Suka kuye qha." I automatically thought of the t shirt in my car. Sibuh: "a lot of people can get hurt Spho. Leave it alone. I know kubhlongu but nyamezela mntase." Me: "if kutsho wena ke." Sibuh: "how's the baby?" Me: "Uright. The occasional kick here and there xa ndingam'hoyi. Yay'thanda attention lo." Sibuh: "uzofana notanci wakhe. Bazovana ngento ekho." Me: "I have another call coming in. NguLakhe. We'll talk later vha." Sibuh: "okay. Bye." I hung up and answered this. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi." Me: "hey." Lakhe: "iphi t shirt yam luyithathe kwi safe?" Me: "eyiphi t shirt kengoku?" Oh Shit. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi." Me: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Siphi. Iskipa sam. Besikula safe." Me: "andazani naskipa mna. Kutheni uzofaka izikipa kwi safe? Khona don't you lock that thing? Ndizoyivula njani mna?" Lakhe: "ndifike kwelo bhayi esaskipa sik'la ndawo yaso baby. Andifuni uxabana nawe." he hung up. I was about to pee on myself. How did he know I took it? How? How! How! Ubuya Wednesday mos. It was Friday tomorrow, I had a few days. If sibuyele pha esaskipa uzoyazi ukuba sithathwe ndim and that will be a problem. Again, what will he do if asikho? I will deny it until I die shame. I put my phone down and closed my eyes to pray. Just before I

started, I heard voices. They sounded like ziphuma kwi room ka mama notata. Ndacwecwa ndayohlala kumnyango wam and listened. It was in hearing distance. Khaya: "ufuna ndithini ke Zama? We had an agreement. Asikwazi uveske sibuye umva." Zama: "Khaya, its enough now-" Khaya: "it can't be enough. You are the last person to tell me its enough." Zama: "it is a few hours before Christmas morning! Suppose uhleli ne family yakho." Khaya: "I'll be back ksasa mos." Zama: "Khaya this thing is destroying our home. Can we stop now? Please? If we focus on umtshato wethu-" Khaya: "ndizomfunaphi omnye umntana ke Zama?" Zama: "What you're doing will make you lose the one you already have!" Khaya: "ungak'linge uvuse umntanam elele ngale ngxolo yakho. You started this. Ngokwakho. Kutheni ungenoyimela? You should be happy that I'm not even cheating. I got the sour end of the deal, when you hurt me. Ndiyeke Zama, ndifuna uyobethwa ngumoya." Zama: "how can you say that!! " Khaya: "Zama, kudala ndizama. This is the only way. Ndiyakuthanda.....but I can't do this anymore. Ungu mama womntanam endimthanda ngobom bam bonke... Kodwa, we can't drag this any longer now. I'm sorry. Ndizokubona ksasa." I crawled back into bed. My whole body in shock. It felt as if ndim lo kuthethwa naye. All I wanted to do was cry. How could he be so cruel? I was disturbed my vibrating phone. Siya's text. "Home safely. Sweet dreams." I pushed my phone under my pillow. It vibrated again. Ndayijonga. Incoming call. Me: "Siyanda." Siya: "I just want to say goodnight." Me: "okay. I'm half asleep. Goodnight." Siya: "okay." I hung up.

I didn't sleep. Not a single wink. Oko ndijamele i-ceiling. I got out of bed at 5 ndayovasa ubuso namazinyo. I quickly got dressed and checked my messages to plan my route. I sneaked out the house to my car and to my horror, it wasn't there. My heart stopped beating. I was dry and so scared that my knees began to buckle. Mama: "Spho?" she was standing by the door with her gown on. Mama: "wenzan?" Me: "my car is stolen." Mama: "no baby. Utatakho uyifake garage after Siyanda and his mom left." I felt a sense of immediate relief fill a hole inside me. Me: "sphi stixo. I have to go." Mama: "uyaphi at this time?" Me: "I'm going for a drive mama. I need some fresh air." Mama: "okay." she gave me the keys and I went to my car in the garage. First thing I did was check for the plastic and t shirt. It was still there. I drove out to the ATM ndakhupha the remaining cash and went to Bulelani's place in Humewood. We met at his gate. Me: "hi." BN: "sho skeem. Ulungisile?" Me: "yeah. Is there a chance I can get back the results by Monday?" BN: "No. Probably Friday next week." Me: "just do it as fast as you can. The sooner the better." BN: "okay. Will do. Go before someone sees you." I gave him

everything and left. I didn't want to go back home. I didn't want to see my father. Although there was no way to avoid it. I could go home and hide in my room until kufike guests and then I wouldn't have to talk to him. Sounds like a plan? Unfortunately for me, its not. Nantsi moto yakhe parked out here. I parked mine ndangena kumiwe e-kitchen. Zama: "how was your drive sweetheart?" Me: "Perfect mama." Khaya: "Where did you go princess?" I closed and locked my bedroom door without responding. Yena ebeyephi sezobuza mna. I looked for clothing to wear. I can't remember when last I had such a heartbreaking Christmas. I hated it. After taking out my dress and ironing it, I went to the bathroom ndazitixela kwakhona pha. My dad was still in the kitchen epheka nomama. I don't know why bendenza umntana o-fragile. Why can't they just let out the truth qha? Akho need yode ku-act'we. I soaked and bathed myself. When I felt good and ready, I got out ndanxiba gown yam, my slippers, ndakhupha amanzi ndavasa bath tub and walked out to my bedroom. Khaya: "are you gonna help us with lunch honey?" Me: "No." ndangena eroomin yam. Khaya: "Spho." I began getting dressed ndava imoto imisa phandle. Ndabuyela back to bed with my fleece blanket. Lorna and Siya were arriving ngaphaya. How could I pretend? I took out my laptop and went through my emails, doing a bit of work also. Siya: "knock, knock." Me: "ngena." he walked in. Dressed in a long sleeve white shirt, unbuttoned down half his chest, he had on navy blue tight fitting pants. And his fancy brown shoes. He smiled when he saw me. Siya: "I hope you're playing a game on that laptop and not working. You already look good being lazy." he sat on the bed. Me: "my father will chase you out of this bedroom, no matter how much he likes you." Siya: "I'll wait until he does.." Me: "uyaphi? You look so fancy." Siya: "WE. Are going to church with umama. It starts in an hour. U-ready?" Me: "I was not told of this." Siya: "nxiba sisi. I'll wait in the lounge." Me: "okay." I got up waphuma yena, closing the door behind him. He stood outside the house going through his cellphone. Khaya: "Why are you avoiding me?" Siya: "I'm not." Khaya: "you're not taking my calls." Siya: "because you're pushing too hard. I don't like it. I know you're trying your best to get me what I want kodwa its time for you to back off now. I've got it handled." Khaya: "Oh?" Siya: "I mean it." Khaya: "Fine. Ndiyakuva. But if you need anything-" Siya: "you'll be the first to know." he locked his phone. Siya: "Mama? Its time to go now. Andifun uba late." Lorna: "Okay! Zama, let's get going. We'll finish cooking ubuyeni kwethu ecaweni." Zama: "okay." Khaya: "sizonilandela. You can go ahead." I walked out the house. I was really tired. You could probably see it in the way I walked. Khaya: "Spho, uzohamba nathi mntanam." Me: "I'm taking a ride with Siyanda nomamakhe. I'm not going to wait while the both of you fake love each other and pretend like all is well. Treating me like a fragile child that's going to break to pieces if you were honest." Khaya: "what

are you talking about?" Me: "Dad..... I'm going to church. I don't want to be aggravated. Please." Khaya: "I aggravate you now?" Siyanda opened the door for me. I slid into the backseat and sat myself comfortably wavala icango, driving us to church. Khaya: "What just happened?" Zama: "I don't know. She was acting weird nakusasa." Khaya: "what does she mean fake love? Do you think she heard us izolo?" Zama: "probably." Khaya: "do you think we should tell her?" Zama: "not yet Khaya. Not until you sort all of it out." Khaya: "andithandi umntanam akhubeke Zama. I don't want her upset. I'm going to tell her!" Zama: "NO! Just wait. We're going back inside the house now. Put on your brave voice for your family and hold on." Khaya: "fine."

#80

When we got home from church. I helped my mother cook lunch for the family and our guests. Mama: "mntanam. Sit down, you need to rest now. Sesigqibile." Me: "I'm okay mama." Mama: "no you're not. Spho. Sit." Me: "okay. I'll sit." not in the lounge though. That's where my dad was and I did not want to talk to him. So I sat at the dining table where I looked lonely. There was a knock on the front door. Mama: "come in." and what do you know? Uncle Lani comes striding in. Lani: "molweni." Lorna: "hello Phumlani." Lani: "Ninjani? Aphi amadoda alapha?" Mama: "siyaphila Phumlani, base front." Lani: "hi Spho." Me: "hello tanci." Lani: "how's my favorite niece?" Me: "I'm fine tanci, considering the fact that you didn't bother coming to my wedding." Lani: "wedding? I was never told of a wedding." he looked at my mom. Mama: "it was last minute." Lani: "who did you marry?" Siya walked out the lounge answering his phone. Siya: "yes, this is he..... Right now? Who is supposed to be on call?" he was out the house after that. Lani: "Oh Thank God, its him. Ubuye nini khona?" Me: "its not him tanci." Lani: "now I'm confused." Me: "I married uMasilakhe." Lani: "Why?" Me: "hayi ke tanci." Lani: "but why kengoku uSiya elapha?" Mama: "he's here for work." Siya came back in. Siya: "uxolweni mama. There's been an accident on the N2, just before the Motherwell off ramp and they're bringing them to the hospital. Yi-taxi yabantu kunye nemoto ezimbini. I have to go help." Khaya: "same. I've just been called." Lorna: "but what about lunch? Anikatyi." Siya: "I'll be fine. For now. Ndizofowna when I get a chance." Me: "Siyanda." he walked to me. Me: "you're a GP though." Siya: "Aphe bhayi. I ran an entire hospital in joburg. Have faith." Oh? Wow. Okay. Me: "good luck then." he smiled and walked out. Lani: "kuzima ubayi engineer. Nobody calls you for help. Anyway, how come I was never told about Spho's marriage Zama?" Mama: "like I said. It was last minute. She decided in a week ufuna utshata and that's what

happened." Lani: "Wow." he sat down. Lani: "anyway, like a normal person, who actually values members of his family, ndizonichazela ukuba I'm getting married in February." Mama: "to who?" Lani: "umama womntanam. I asked her last month." Mama: "Kuthen ungahlelanga naye since its Christmas?" Lani: "she'll be here in an hour ebeye ecaweni. Sukoyika. Unjani sis Lorna?" ouch. Lorna: "I'm great Phumlani. Wena Unjani?" Lani: "I'm happier than I've ever been." Me: "how old is your child tanci?" Lani: "he's 1 year and 2 months now. Still wears diapers though. And akathethi. All he says is dada." Me: "like you said, he's 1 year and 2 months. Usemncinci nje." Lani: "I guess." Mama: "what happened to not believing in marriage." Lani: "well....I figured its best to raise my son and the only way I can do that is if uhlala kum. The next step was to make umamakhe a queen and respected. I gave up my pride and did it." Lorna: "awww. That is so sweet Phumlani. I am happy that you did the right thing." Mama: "so you getting married ngenxa yomntana?" Lani: "I'm getting married because I'm inlove. Spho, where is your Mr?" Me: "he's in Tokyo." Lani: "is that a restaurant around here somewhere?" Me: "no Tanci, Tokyo is in Japan." Lani: "in Asia?" I looked at him. Lani: "why epha? Suppose uhleli nomfazi wakhe mos." Mama: "Spho, bring me the asparagus from the pantry please." Thank God. I got up ndayolanda le asparagus ka mama. Even when I came back, my uncle asked the same thing. Mama: "khayekane nomntana man Phumlani!" she snapped. Why was she so mad tho? Lol. This was amusing me actually because believe it or not, my mother was jealous. Lani: "kuphakwa nini kulendlu. Andiselambe." Mama: "uphuma njani endlinakho ungatyanganga." I held in giggles. Lani: "hayike u-funny kengoku. Spho, I see you're pregnant. How far?" Me: "18 weeks tanci." Lani: "half way there hey. Yikwekwe?" Me: "I don't know yet. Ndimbi dan tanci?" Lani: "khandiyithethe ke leyo, but since you brought it up..." I smiled. His phone rang. Lani: "nanku mfazi wam." he got up and went to answer. Lani: "yes baby? Ndiyeza ke." he hung up. Lani: "ndisayolanda umntuwam ecaweni. Ndiyabuya Sphosh ka tanci vha." Me: "okay." he walked out. I looked at umama while she cooked. I couldn't read her facial expression. It was just blank with a hint of sarcasm. Ndaske ndabhidwa. Lorna: "dinner will be ready in 30 minutes. Khandilungiselele tafile Spho." I got up ndalungisa tafile, putting the plates and cutlery in their places. I went to switch on the lights on the Christmas tree. Yes, we had a Christmas tree. I'd only bought my parents gifts because I didn't know sizoba extra apha endlini. I texted Butternut to check how everything is going. He was still busy. How long did it take kanti? I called Sibú to wish him a Merry Christmas. Ndayozivalela eroomin. Sibú: "heeyyy. Unjani?" Me: "I'm great. Wena Unjan?" Sibú: "I'm perfect. Ndigqibo kutya ngoku. Ndihluthi ndingqengqe ngecala." Me: "I'm still hungry. Andikatyi. Ubuya nini?" Sibú: "I'll be back on Tuesday. Why? Uyandikhumbula?" Me: "No..not really." as

long as its before Wednesday. I needed to gear up my army before ibuye landoda ise Tokyo. Sibú: "kwenzeka ntoni?" Me: "nothing. Bendibuza qha." Sibú: "ikhona ke into ondifihlela yona." Me: "well...." Sibú: "talk to me." Me: "izolo, ndifownelwe ngu Sandile efuna something from Lakhe's room. I went to open for him and search before him. I found the safe open.." Sibú: "Oh God....Spho wenzeni." Me: "There was a t shirt. It had blood, I took it." Sibú: "why did you take it!!!" Me: "I don't know. Ndiyise komnye umfana to test it. But Lakhe called and he said he wants it back." Sibú: "Spho, ambolanda esaskipa usibuyisele pha!" Me: "but I denied it Sbu. If it magically appears ndizothi sivela Phi?" Sibú: "if it doesn't uzothi siphí?" Me: "I'm going to stick to I don't know." Sibú: "Spho, put that t shirt back there. If he finds it there, he will never ask why you took it. Ayiphindi ivuswe topic. If he doesn't find it there, then kuzonyiwa. Trust me on this. Put the t shirt back." Me: "but who's blood is on that t shirt? And why is it in the safe?" Sibú: "that doesn't even matter now." Me: "Sibulele. I am his wife. I have the right to know! And I know he won't tell me so I had to gather evidence!" Sibú: "I can't get any flights before Tuesday. And indlela zii-busy kakhulu for me to drive down to you. I don't know what the hell You've done." Me: "I just don't like secrets Sibú. I have to know otherwise I won't be comfortable." Sibú: "so when you know, you'll be comfortable?" Me: "I'll see then. Listen I have to go." Sibú: "okay. We'll talklater." Me: "sho." I hung up and went back out. Mama and Lorna were decking the table with the casserole bowls and platters and all. I was so hungry. Just before ndihlale phantsi, wangena kwakhona utanci. He was carrying his son. His fiance was right behind him.....she was Gorgeous. I so wanted the full story kengoku. Lani: "Spho, nanku maka Lukho, baby, this is my neice, that is her mother and this is our close family friend uSis Lorna." Me: "hi sisi.." Maka-L: "hi Spho, ndingu Nandi. Molweni sisi." and she had manners. Mama: "uno sisi ondim." which my mother suddenly didn't have. Nandi: "Oh I'm sorry...its just that...Spho looks matured and.....uhm.." my mom just looked at her. Lorna: "let's sit guys. I'll pray." Lani: "please make it 2 lines. If uyadlulela niyondifumana sendilayisha mna." Lorna: "khavale amehlo Phumlani. Please." we all closed our eyes. Lorna: "Dear God, siyabulela ngokukutya usipha kona mihla ngemihla, siyabulela bawo ngee ntsikelelo zakho, nokusikhusela kwimimoya emidaka." my uncle cleared his throat. Lorna: "egameni lika Yesu Krestu inkosi yethu, Amen." Everyone: "amen." we opened our eyes. Baby Lukho was staring at me ehleli on his father's lap next to me. He looked so beautiful with beautiful big eyes and thick pink lips. He had milky skin and the chubbiest cheeks. My heart was melting. Mama: "Sphosenkosi, Itya." Me: "but he's so adorable-" Mama: "he's not going anywhere. He'll be there ugqiba kwakho." Lani: "unomona ngomntana?" Mama: "Sphosenkosi ngumntanam, uthwele umzukulwana wam, it is my job to take care of them both. Akekatyi

namhlanje, therefore, everything else will have to wait." funny enough, bendilambe a minute ago. When I saw this baby, all that went away. I had to eat though, for my own baby. I had my lunch. Making sure I had enough, not too much food, not too little. Ugqiba kwam ndaqokelela izitya ndazisa kitchen. Lorna: "ziyeke my sweet. Go put your feet up." I have no idea why I was being treated like an invalid. Ingathi ndizoveske ndiwe ndife. I went to the lounge and sat on the couch with my feet up. Siya sent a message: "Its so awful. Two lives lost. Six others on life support. The rest are not too bad. Think I'll be here the whole night." Me: "should I bring your food?" Siya: "Please." I locked my phone and watched TV for a minute. Baby Lukho crawled into the lounge. Sucking intensely on his pacifier. He stopped and stared at me then pushed his bottom up in the air, standing on his feet and hands, then slowly lifted his hands until he was standing with his own two feet. I clapped for him. He took small steps toward me smiling shyly. Wafika wama next to the couch. He stared at my tummy and poked it. Me: "uyayazi ngubhabha lo? he's a cute little booboo like you in there." he took out his pacifier and put it on my tummy. Me: "oh you're soo sweet! Thank you baby Lukho. Enkosi boy yam vha." he smiled. For a long while he played around me emane ngoza kum. Then I heard him fart. Was it a fart? I had to check. I managed to lure him closer and tried to peep in his pants. Nandi: "wenzantoni?" Me: "Oh... Uhm. I want to check if he needs changing." Nandi: "khulula brukhwe yakhe, check on the side of his diaper not from phezulu." Me: "Ohh.. Now I feel dumb." Nandi: "its okay. You'll get used to learning new things xa ungumama." Me: "I wish there was a test I could take instead." she chuckled. Nandi: "unfortunately, this isn't like a degree. Which would've been easier for you." Me: "heee." Nandi: "kudala endibalisela ngawe utanci wakho. You really are his favorite niece." Me: "I'm his only niece njena." we laughed. Me: "I'm gonna have to go to the hospital ndiyonika uSiyanda ukutya kwakhe." Nandi: "ngubani uSiyanda?" Me: "a friend of mine. Usebenza esbhedlele." I picked up Lukho and kissed his cheek. Nandi: "Oh... So are you married?" Me: "yes." Nandi: "to?" Me: "Masilakhe. He's in Tokyo for a meeting." Nandi: "Oh... Uzobuya nini?" Me: "next week." Nandi: "that's nice. Hopefully uzophathelwa a pretty little present." I smiled. It was a fake smile. Me: "let me get going before kube late. Bye Lukho." he looked like he was sulking after I put him down. Nandi: "uyasithanda ke isandla ubhutiza. Izapha nono." he grabbed my dress. Me: "Heee umfana. Ufuna uhamba nam?" he closed his eyes putting his head on my thigh. Nandi: "ungahamba naye. I'm sure utatakhe won't mind." Me: "are you sure?" Nandi: "let me ask him." she went to her fiance. Nandi: "baby, uSpho angahamba noLukho? Uzobuya kwangoku." Lani: "unini u'kwangoku'?" Me: "about 30 minutes. Ndisa ukutya ku Siya. He left before he ate." Lani: "is that so?" Me: "tanci you were here." Lani: "notatakho

nje akekatyi." ifuna yena kaloku leyo. Mama: "ewe sele Uhamba nokutya kwabo bobabin. Uncedile mntanam." Me: "can I take him with me?" Lani: "only if you can tell me uSiya ithini into yakhe apha..." Me: "Uzele umsebenzi." Lani: "send'tshuba aphe ndlini." Me: "dad invited him-" Mama: "actually I did. Siyanda noLorna bayafana ingathi yifamily kuthi." is that so? Lani: "I hear you." I went to change my shoes. Nandi wayolanda car seat yomntana wayifaka kweyam imoto. Me: "I'm so nervous." Lani: "you should be. This is my only child." Nandi: "hayi man Lani. You'll be fine Spho. Lukho is sweet, akazokusokolisa unless ufuna ufunqulwa." Lani: "angalili umntanam please." Nandi: "he'll be fine! Nantsi bag yakhe Spho." Lani: "drive very slowly." Nandi: "sum'hoya utamkhulu lo. Relax." Me: "come Lukie." I took the tupperware containers and held his hand. We walked to the car ndamfaka kwi seat yakhe in the back and buckled him in. I was really nervous. I put the tupperware containers on the passenger seat and got in the car. I drove away to the hospital.

On my arrival, I texted Siya asking him to come outside. I didn't want to bring the baby inside the hospital building. Lord knows what germs fly around in there. In a few minutes he was outside. I got out my car. Me: "hey, u-busy?" Siya: "Yeah. I was sorting out the O.P board." Me: "then kwathini ungayigqibi?" Siya: "I gave it to someone else to do, I couldn't keep you waiting." I smiled. Me: "uyi bully yazi." Siya: "injalo kaloku. Xa une bully, nawe ubayi bully komnye." Me: "I have a present for you." Siya: "besides my food? Oooh." Me: "look inside." he peeped in the window. Siya: "awww. Ngowam?" I laughed. Siya: "I'm kidding. Who's this?" Me: "this is my uncle's son. Lukho." Siya: "he is cute. Molo Lukho. Hey boy." Lukho just stared at him. Siya: "okay, so he doesn't talk?" I took Lukho out ndamfunqula. Me: "not yet. Naku kutya kwakho. That's for you and dad." Siya: "why ungathethi naye?" Me: "did he send you to spy on me?" Siya: "you're the only person I spy for. He just mentioned in passing that you seem to be ignoring him. He doesn't know why." Me: "I overheard him. He said he's leaving umama. Apparently, he can't pretend anymore. They pretend to be happy in my face but they're not. So many times ndibuza kumama Uphi utata andizulisele. He doesn't even sleep at home anymore." Siya: "so uyalinda?" Me: "No, I just don't like being made a fool." Siya: "if you speak to him, maybe he'll be honest." Me: "he won't. But you could." Siya: "I could what?" Me: "spy for me. Figure out what's going on." Siya: "I can't do that, love. And I'm not going to because its not our place to meddle. Bayeke olahlobo." Me: "fine. Maybe meddling isn't my calling. Its just that I wouldn't do it if bendinga bhanxwa. I don't know why bendenza umntana." Siya: "I'm sorry.." Me: "I hate being lied to. Nawe Siya, try

and lie nje ngento encinci, I won't talk to you. I will literally block you out of my life." Siya: "I haven't lied ever since I confessed." Me: "okay. Bamba ke your pretend baby." I gave him the child. Me: "uyandisinda ngoku." he laughed. Siya: "ndilambile mna. Ndifuna ukutya." Me: "uyow'bona ba mawuthini. I need to sit." Siya: "why ningangeni?" Me: "There's germs there." Siya: "heee, uzama ukuthi nam ndine germs." Me: "yeah." he moved closer. Me: "usondela uyaphi?" Siya: "ndicel ukusulela ngezi germs." Me: "stay away from me." I giggled walked away. Siya: "iza sisi." he grabbed my arm with his free hand. Me: "Siyanda man." he pulled me gently. Siya: "I'm rubbing germs all over you." he held me tightly in his one arm, the other carrying Lukho. Me: "wenzantoni Siyanda." Siya: "kaloku andithi awufuni uyozilanda phakathi? So ndizisisile ke kuwe." Me: "nooo, you know what I'm talking about." Siya: "I don't." Me: "you do. I told you There's nothing more than friendship I can offer you." Siya: "I know that." Me: "I don't want you to feel led on." Siya: "I'm not. I enjoy company yakho qha. Nothing else." Me: "good. I don't want you to hang on to the hope that I might come back to you." Siya: "I don't know why because awonwabanga but its fine. I respect your decision." Me: "thank you. You can let go of me." Siya: "now?" I giggled. Me: "yes now." Siya: "okay ke." he let go of me. I took Lukho from him. Siya: "can I drive you home?" Me: "I'll be fine. Ndizezele mos. Take your food." Siya: "I want to make sure you're home safely." Me: "if you could just stop being obsessed. I'll be fine." Siya: "okay ke ndiyekile." Me: "ukushiyela ntoni ukutya?" Siya: "Yoh." he took the containers. Siya: "I'll probably see you tomorrow. Akuhambeki apha." Me: "khona why is your beep thing not going off?" Siya: "ndiyicimile. Bendingasoze ndikwazi uthetha nawe kukho lanto." Me: "okay ke. Switch it on uyophangela. Have fun." Siya: "I don't think that's possible but okay. Uhambe kakhle. Text me when you're home okay?" Me: "Go." Siya: "ndizok'linda kude utsale tshin. What do you think I am?" Me: "a man that has a job, saving other people's lives. Hamba man." I put Lukho in his seat and buckled him up. Xandivala ucango, nanku lomntu uselapha. Me: "Siyanda man..." Siya: "ziphi iztixo?" Me: "nasi." I showed him my hand. Siya: "good." he put the containers on the roof of the car. Me: "Siya...don't." Siya: "I have something for you. A Christmas present." Me: "where did you get time?" Siya: "I make time. Always." Me: "iza ndibone." he reached in his pocket and took out a stuffed puppy key chain. I just laughed. Siya: "yintoni?" Me: "its so cute. This is the weirdest gift I've ever received. Thank you." Siya: "at least you won't lose your keys." I hugged him. Me: "thank you." Siya: "its my pleasure." I let go. He opened my door and I got in. Me: "hamba kengoku." Siya: "okay. Let me take my food. Ikhona mos neyaka tatakho apha?" Me: "yeah." he took the containers. I started my car. Me: "bye." Siya: "goodbye." I drove away. When I got home, I could hear arguments all the way from outside. I took the baby and his bag in. Mama:

"phuma kwam!! Wawuthe awuphindi ubuyele apha! Kodwa namhlanje ukho! Ufunani?" Lani: "yindlu ka bhuti wam le. I don't need your permission and andiyi ndawo kungekatsho yena!" Lorna: "Zama, thoba sisi umsindo. Sinokwazi Uhlala phantsi siyilungise Lento-" Mama: "akhonto ndizayihlalela phantsi!" Me: "kwenzeka ntoni." Nandi got up wazothatha umntana wakhe ne bag. Nandi: "did you guys have fun?" Me: "yes we did. He's so quiet though." Nandi: "he's shy. Andithi boy boy? You're such a shy bunny. Binkie boy ka mamakhe." the baby smiled and giggled. Nandi: "we're going home now as soon as they stop fighting." Me: "why are they fighting?" Nandi: "Andiyazi ndisuka e-bathroom. Andiy'ngeni ke mna ndingabuzwanga." Me: "hayi ke i-worse." my uncle stormed out. Lani: "masambeni Nandipha." Nandi: "bye Spho. It was lovely meeting you." Me: "same here sisi." they got in their car and left. I was not taking any sides. I went to the lounge ndahlala on the couch to watch television. Benditshiseka actually, I wanted to wash dishes but I was already told ndiziyeke and I didn't want to cause more drama. It was late, I was tired, I needed to sleep. Me: "mama... Ndisayolala vha. I'm a little tired." she didn't respond. Lorna: "okay my angel. Ambo nqenqa. We'll be fine." Me: "ndingak'ncedisi with the dishes kqala?" Lorna: "hayi mntanam. You can go." I went to my bedroom, ndanqenqa phezukwe bhedi. I was almost fast asleep when I saw my husband standing by the door, the t shirt with blood on him. My eyes shot open. Me: "I'm dreaming...." I breathed. I looked around me. The room was empty. No one was here....

I woke up Sunday morning. Two days after Christmas. I stayed in bed for a few minutes ndiziva naar. When last did I have morning sickness? Today was more intense, I felt like each time I moved I was striking an emotional nerve. My heart was racing for no apparent reason. I just needed to be back in bed. I took a deep breath and sat up. The baby was kicking. Intensely. I tried to rub and massage my tummy. What was wrong? I went to shower and dressed in a tracksuit, I had to see a doctor for this. After making my bed, I went to the kitchen. Kodwa isusu besingavumi ukutya. I didn't know what could make me eat. The time was still 7am. My mom was still sleeping, she would wake at 7:30 for church. Utata wasn't here. Lorna ebesendlini ka nyana wakhe. I drank a glass of water. Each gulp felt like a ticking clock and on my last swallow, I heard a knock on the door.....ndaginya. Who could it be at this hour? I went to the door, unlocked it and opened it. I almost choked. Me: "Lakhe..." he just stared at me. I. Was. Shaking. Me: "what are you doing he-" Lakhe: "ndicela uthathe okwakho. Sigoduke Sphosenkosi." Me: "but bab-" Lakhe: "Now." he hissed.

#81

I looked at him and laughed. Me: "khangene wethu, let me make you breakfast." I went to the kitchen ndimshiya pha emnyango. Me: "how was Tokyo?" Lakhe: "Spho. Umshiya njani umzi wakho kufike abantu? Uthi ithini family yam? I want you back in that house in an hour." Me: "hayi sweetie, I'll be in church in an hour." Lakhe: "I'm not fucking playing with you." Me: "uzandithini ke? Drag me? Go ahead. Andizoyeka obam ubomi because you magically appeared because kaloku wena uyi magician. Andiyazi Noba ku Wednesday na namhlanje." he breathed and turned around ndava ngecango lemoto and the revving then a swoof sound. He was gone. I sighed in relief. I really did have to go to church. I was scared. But at the same time bendinomsindo. Ucimba uyi king yaphi lo? Mama: "Uthetha naban?" she walked in the kitchen with her gown on. Me: "ngu Masilakhe. Wants me to go home. Betsho kubani that uyabuya? Ebethe mos ubuya Wednesday." Mama: "well Spho, maybe he felt guilty and came back earlier. Iya kumnyeni wakho uthethe naye. All this rebellious behavior and being angry for no reason is childish. Iya emnyenini wakho." Me: "xandingafuni mama ndithini?" Mama: "is this about Siyanda?" Me: "No....I genuinely don't trust uLakhe. I get scared." Mama: "why do you get scared?" Me: "he has these moments where he's so angry I can't recognize him. Ndiyamoyika mama. What if he hurts me?" Mama: "he would die before he ever touched you that way. He knows that. Buyela kumntu wakho, talk to him." she boiled water in the kettle. Me: "what do you mean he would die?" Mama: "I would kill him if needs be, nobody gets to hurt my daughter unless they have a death wish." Me: "maa...why you acting weird?" Mama: "I need to be alone." Me: "Oh..." so basically I was being chased out. I went to my bedroom ndayokhangela ilokhwe for church. I would go straight home after the service. I got dressed, packed all my things ndazifaka kwi bags zam ndaphuma nazo. After saying goodbye to my mother I drove to church. I was angry. Umsindo wam wasn't because of Lakhe. My anger was deeply rooted. I was angry because I had a comfortable life before all this drama. I had a great job. I had a house. I had a boyfriend. Why did he have to be so weak? Why was he a jerk? Why did he cheat? Simphiwe was a comfortable person. I wouldn't have to be testing blood on t shirts and running away from crazy psychotic family members. Money really cannot buy happiness. Nothing about all of this is real or happy. I parked my car at church ndayongena kwi service. "Surely He will save you from the fowler's snare and from deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers and under his wings you will find refuge. His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the

terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness nor the plague that destroys at midday. A thousand may fall at your side. Ten thousand at your right hand but it will not come near you." watsho u-Psalm 91 as though ibindiva entliziy'weni. I had to be strong for the little one. I sat in one of the benches at the back listening quietly until the service was over. I still had a heavy heart kunzima ukuphakama. I had to go home. Indlela bendingafuni ngayo you would swear ndithenjjswe ngobulalwa. I had tears in my eyes. I just wanted to die. Kwafuneka ndiphakamile ndihambile. I drove as slow as I possibly could ndade ndayofika. From outside it looked as though akukho mntu. I stopped the car and took out my bags ndayongena endlini. Indeed bekungekho mntu. Yet. I calmed a little walking to my bedroom. When I opened the door, there he was. Masilakhe. Standing by the window with his phone in his ear. Lakhe: "Tengo que ir. Hablaremos despues." he hung up and looked at me. Me: "Hey." Lakhe: "Hi." I put my bags down. Lakhe: "busow'tyile?" Me: "no, I'll make a sandwich. I wasn't feeling well." Lakhe: "okay." Me: "I'm taking these to the laundry room." Lakhe: "Spho..." Me: "hm?" Lakhe: "I'm sorry." Me: "for what?" Lakhe: "for leaving you. For being rude. Being angry. You didn't do anything wrong and you didn't deserve it." Me: "Oh." Lakhe: "undixolele?" Me: "No. You spoke to me like I was rubbish. I tried Masilakhe to tell you things, include you and you didn't want to listen. Then you had the audacity to accuse me of stealing a t shirt and threatening me? That is Not okay." Lakhe: "but uyithathile nje." Me: "I didn't!!! Ndizosthini!" Lakhe: "why are you lying? I'm trying to be reasonable apha." Me: "you're accusing me of lying!" Lakhe: "because you are. Unoske uthethe inyani qha." Me: "I didn't take the t shirt." Lakhe: "I hate being lied to. Uyayazi nawe lonto." Me: "hehake." I took my bags and went to the laundry room ndafaka impahla ku machine and switched it on. I went to the kitchen ndiyokwenza into yokutya. I couldn't stomach anything at all though. Baphi ooDumi? Rob? Nosi? Sands? Where did everyone go? Maybe bazobuya soon. I made a quick peanut butter sandwich and drank mango juice. He walked into the kitchen and looked at me. Me: "what?" Lakhe: "andibethi Spho. I never have. I don't abuse women. Yinton ekwenza ungafuni uthetha inyani? Woyika nton?" Me: "hehake." Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi, ndiyakucela. I'm giving you till tomorrow afternoon. Ubuyisele iskipa sam. In the condition that it was in, kulandawo ubusithatha kuyo. Otherwise, kuyohlwa emini ngakuwe." Me: "I didn't take your t shirt." Lakhe: "you are aware that there are cameras in that closet right? And in all the other bedrooms of this house." oh....fuck. Lakhe: "did you really think I'd leave my house without knowing kwenzeka ntoni phakathi kuyo? I want my t shirt." I swallowed. Me: "I can't." Lakhe: "why not?" Me: "I sent it away." Lakhe: "away ? How?" Me: "xa uyazi undibuzela nton?" Lakhe: "ingaba ndiyathakatha ba

ndinoyazi izinto ozenza naphandle." Me: "I just sent it away." Lakhe: "all I'm saying is. Mayibuye. Qha."

I spent my whole afternoon trying to call Bulelani. His phone was off. Why was his stupid phone off! I had to go look for him. But I couldn't use my car. Me: "baby. Can you check my car. Its making a noise." Lakhe: "what noise?" Me: "Andiyazi man. Its like.... Krrrrr. Please check." Lakhe: "I'll call a mechanic." Me: "but I want to go to Steers." Lakhe: "why?" Me: "I crave Steers. Sibu always gets me chocolate milkshakes." Lakhe: "oh." if you were wondering why he wasn't so attentive it was because I 'accidentally found' one of his favorite shows playing on TV. By 'accidentally', I mean on purpose. And by 'found' I mean searched. His focus level was on 26% now. Me: "I'll get an Uber then." Lakhe: "my car doesn't make sound." Me: "I'm scared to drive your car. Masambe sobabini?" Lakhe: "Uber baby." Yayy! I requested my Uber. Ndamlinda patiently. Me: "you want anything?" Lakhe: "no." Me: "okay. I won't be long." Lakhe: "ok." I went to the cab waiting outside and we drove off. I'd switched my phone off on purpose so that I'm untraceable. Ufika kwam at Bulelani's house, it looked locked and unattended. I knocked on the gate, rang the bell and finally waphuma. Me: "hey!" BN: "what's up. Why ulapha so early?" he rubbed his eyes. Me: "its 4pm. I need to get the shirt back." BN: "why?" Me: "its a matter of life and death." BN: "I'm not done ngayo. I said by Friday." Me: "all you had to do was get samples of the blood or traces or whatever." BN: "its a lot more complicated than that. But if you want it, uzoyifumana. For 2k of course." Me: "are you fucking serious?" BN: "I broke the first rule, this is the second and I'm going to break the 3rd to get the results for you in Days. Do you realize I've put this issue of yours in top priority? People wait weeks for results. Months even. Do you want to wait that long?" Me: "I don't. Just give me back the t shirt." BN: "no problem. Buya apha ksasa. Around 10." Me: "okay. I'll be here." I went back to the cab and we left for Steers ndayothenga take aways zam. I finally went home. When I walked in the door, he looked at me. Lakhe: "you really went to Steers?" Me: "that's what I said mos." Lakhe: "ndazelaphi izinto zakho kaloku." I sat down and started eating. Me: "Where's everyone?" Lakhe: "I sent them home." Me: "why?" Lakhe: "this is our house. We will live together only from now on." Me: "why?" he just looked at me. Me: "we were fine njena." Lakhe: "and we'll continue to be fine. I don't want crowds in my house. I want to come home from work, kukho mfazi wam epheka supper for us both." Me: "I'll be at work too." Lakhe: "okay. Unjani umntanam? Is she kicking?" Me: "we need to talk about the baby." Lakhe: "talk nganton?" Me: "before uye eTokyo, I went to the doctor." Lakhe: "what for?" Me: "for a check up. I wanted to surprise you in Tokyo. Turns

out the baby has an echogenic focus on his heart." Lakhe: "what's that? Some kind of disease?" Me: "not really... Usually they mean nothing, but there is a test we could take to make sure nothing is wrong." Lakhe: "Usually? And if its not usually?" Me: "the baby may have problems after birth." Lakhe: "how safe is this test?" Me: "its safe.....the only risk may be a miscarriage but its unlikely to happen." Lakhe: "so, let me get this straight. There is something on my child's heart, that may or may not be a problem. Whereby taking a test to make sure, actually risks his life all together?" Me: "well-" Lakhe: "we're not doing that fucking test. My child is FINE. Akana niks erongo lomntana." Me: "Masilakhe, I'm not comfortable with that. What if-" Lakhe: "there are NO what ifs Spho! None whatsoever. This child stays undisturbed in your belly until he's ready to come out. I don't want nothing to disrupt his growth. Uze ke wena ujikele emven kwam uyoyenza lento." I looked at the TV. Lakhe: "undivile Spho?" Me: "I heard you." so far, it sucked being married. You can't even make decisions for yourself funeke uginye qha. I hated it. Lakhe: "yintoni ngoku?" I looked at him. Lakhe: "Spho, honestly. Do you really want to risk the life of our second baby?" Me: "why would you even think that?" Lakhe: "uqumbile mos!" Me: "Yinton le uyibonayo kum ithi ndiqumbile?" Lakhe: "that attitude for one." Me: "I'm not comfortable. That's all." Lakhe: "what makes you uncomfortable?" Me: "the baby. I'm afraid something is wrong and I'm ignoring it because of you. I'm the one that feels this baby from inside." Lakhe: "so Uthi andikhathali mna?" Me: "I didn't say that." Lakhe: "that's what it sounds like." Me: "Lakhe, I'm tired. Can you give me some space alone please?" Lakhe: "space? Why?" Me: "ndidiniwe." Lakhe: "then what do you need space for?" Good God. Why couldn't he just bloody disappear! I got up and went to the bedroom. He followed. Lakhe: "baby... Look, I don't want to lie, losing my baby sendimazi oluhlobo ezikhulela kamandi in your belly, it scares me. I don't want that to happen. If awukho comfortable, I'm here. I can massage you, I can make you food. Anything you want. Kodwa, Andifun ulahlekelwa ngumntanam. Please understand this." Me: "I understand." I sat on top of the bed. My feet were extremely swollen and sore. My back was aching. Me: "can you keep quiet for a few minutes and massage my tummy?" Lakhe: "okay, ndiyeza. I have to take this call first." he answered his phone ephuma.

I woke up a couple of hours later. He was on the bed, staring at me. Me: "creepy Lento uyenzayo." Lakhe: "kukho number that keeps calling you on your phone, xandiphendula. Icime." Me: "ubuphendulela nton phone engengo yakho." Lakhe: "I bought it though." mental note: ngomso lo usayo. Buy myself a new phone. Me: "is that so?" Lakhe: "then kwangena message..." Me: "and you read it didn't you?" Lakhe: "you switched off your on screen

notifications and changed your password. Ufihla ntoni Spho?" Me: "I could ask you the same question." Lakhe: "it can't be an affair. I know you're not that stupid. What is it that you're hiding?" Me: "nothing." Lakhe: "then kutheni uzotshintsha password." Me: "after someone accessing your computer easily, ubufuna ndithin?" Lakhe: "that's not it. I know you're hiding something. I know futhi it has to do with me. I will look for it, and when I find it... All hell will break loose." Me: "are you threatening me? Again?" Lakhe: "this isn't a threat. Ndiyak'xelela qha, regard it as a notification." Me: "good....because you wouldn't be that stupid." Lakhe: "what's that suppose to mean?" Me: "If you keep on threatening me, I will urgently show you something to be threatened of. Ba awunandlela yothetha nam. Vala umlomo wakho uthule. I have been patient enough with your ass. Uyandidika ngoku straight. I dare you one more fucking time to make an empty threat. Kuzokwaziwana Masilakhe." he got up and walked out the bedroom with half a chuckle. I heard him whisper a tune all the way to the lounge then all of a sudden.....he kept quiet.

#82

I spent my Sunday night alone in my bedroom. I don't know where Lakhe slept and I didn't care. As long as engekho ecamkwam. I woke up on Monday and started cleaning the bedroom. Half of me wanted to unpack his bags ndiyomenzela washing like a wife should, half of me didn't want to because uzothi I'm meddling. Ndayeka kunjalo. I went to shower ndaphuma ndayonxiba. I didn't have anywhere to go today so perhaps if I could go check on uZingi. I tried calling her, phone yakhe yabe i-off. I wore my soft socks ndaphuma eroomin ndisiya ekitchen. I was hearing people, whispering so I slowed down and listened. Lakhe: "what are you talking about?" Sands: "remember you sent me to pay off Fernandez?" Lakhe: "don't tell me he still wants more. I've finished paying my debt." Sands: "that's not it. He gave me a message that comes from Komander." Lakhe: "K? The man without a face? No one has ever seen him. Sepua's and Fernandez's boss." Sands: "Yes." Lakhe smiled. Lakhe: "he wants to do business?" Sands: "No... He has a message for you." Lakhe: "a message? Uthini? How does he know me?" Sands: "God, Lakhe what have you done." Lakhe: "Thetha man!" Sands: "He says, should you hurt the closest person to your heart, your heart will be the closest thing to him." Lakhe: "what...what does that mean?" Sands: "you suspected Khaya to be in some kind of dealings? What if..... he's the Komander? He's K." Lakhe: "that's impossible. I searched Khaya. He's clean." Sands: "this man disappeared for years. The same amount of time that Khaya lived in Cuba." Lakhe: "Khaya? Naaah... It can't be." Sands: "Bhuti. I don't know about you,

but andiyingeni tuuu ke le. Ngu pepepe ka Peri Peri lo uzifake kuye." Lakhe: "Khaya is always working at the hospital. I kept a tail on him. I know his moves." Sands: "what about this Siya dude?" Lakhe: "Oh My God, Don't tell me about Mr Goody Pants, Mayor of Vanillatown. He's not K." Sands: "are you comfortable nalamntu around here?" Lakhe: "I don't have a choice Sandile. Siyanda is my ticket back to Spho's heart. He Needs to be around." Sands: "andiyiva Lento uyithethayo but back to K's message." Lakhe: "what if.....Komander is not connected to Spho. What if its someone else?" Sands: "who else are you close to?" Lakhe: "nguwe, uNosi, Sibulele... I don't know! Sandile, Komander is known for riddle messages and being confusing so that singayifumani move yakhe." Sands: "Keep your friends close, and your enemies closer!! This is not someone you love Lakhe, he's talking about someone you want to get rid of." Lakhe: "I've never been so mind fucked." Sands: "nguban enemy yakho." Lakhe: "its obvious ngulo Siyanda wasekunyeni." Sands: "You better make damn sure nothing happens kula Siyanda bhuti. I don't want to be an orphan mna." Lakhe: "my question is, why is he here? To torment me?" Sands: "probably. Kuzofuneka unyamezele ke. Its going to be one hell of a situation. Hopefully Spho loves you enough to stick to you." Lakhe: "Spho is the least of my problems. I can't lose my business and most importantly my credibility kwi business. Maybe I should get to know Siya. He can't be that bad, right?" Sands: "Wrong. But good luck though." I tip toed back to the bedroom ndahlala phezukwe bhedi processing everything I heard. Siyanda was connected to one of the biggest drug dealers that ever lived? Because I know for a fact it wasn't me. My dad haates anything illegal. He's vindictive, yes. But never involved in anything criminal. It had to be Siyanda. I don't even know him that well. I took the money I had in my wallet and sat again on the bed shoving it in my boob. I was thinking of trying to get out the house without being noticed. Lakhe: "hey.." he walked in the bedroom. Me: "hi." Lakhe: "kudala uhleli?" Me: "yeah. Ndiphuma kwi shower. Let me go make food." Lakhe: "okay. Nam ndizovasa ngoku." I went to the lounge and requested an Uber. Ndazulisa nge kitchen and juice. When my cab arrived I went out the house ndayokhwela and drove away.

After my exchange with Bulelani, I went back home. The results would be in by Friday. Andiyazi ndizozithini results kodwa ndizobona ngolwezihlanu. I got off the car ndayongena endlini. Lakhe: "and then?" Me: "and then what?" Lakhe: "why would you just disappear like that!" Me: "I went to fetch this." I gave him the plastic with his t shirt in it. He took out the t shirt wayijonga. Then he threw it inside the fireplace. Me: "what are you doing?" he lit a match and tossed in there too. Immediately catching fire on the t shirt. Lakhe: "now that

its gone, I don't have to worry about it being stolen again. Bendibawela sithethe." Me: "about what?" Lakhe: "Us. I'm genuinely sorry." Me: "Okay." Lakhe: "I want us to go back to being in love." Me: "you mean, me being blind." Lakhe: "you're not blind, you never were." Me: "Did you ever close your drug dealing business." he looked at me for a few seconds. Lakhe: "Yes." Hesitation means Lies. Me: "so, you're not involved in any illegal activities whatsoever." Lakhe: "Ewe baby." Me: "Masilakhe, you remember ndikuxelela that I would leave? I wasn't playing. I will Not be involved with a criminal. EVER." Lakhe: "kodwa ayikho fair Lento uyenzayo Spho. Why are you always threatening to leave me-" Me: "I'm not threatening to leave you! I am telling you andizomelana nobuthuvi mna!!!! I am not your control bunny! Andizokhonza wena! If you do not clean up, I'm not going to bother neither. Tshini undenza isbhanxa mos." I opened the fridge to make food for myself. I hadn't eaten all day and ndilambile. Lakhe: "you're not going to leave." Me: "suziqhelisa ukuzibhanxa." Lakhe: "Spho uyandithanda. If you wanted to leave, you would've left a long time ago." Me: "you're right. This baby is the only thing that's keeping me here." he kept quiet. Lakhe: "we can work through this. Maybe we should try counseling." Me: "I'm not sick. You're so used to being like this, any sign of being normal is sick to you. Xandingafuni ubane gintsa Masilakhe, andizobane gintsa. I'm not going to swallow my morals because of love. If you can't change your behavior, ayindifuni leyo mna." Lakhe: "but andilo gintsa mna." Me: "whatever it is that you are." Lakhe: "ufuna ndithini to prove it to you." Me: "uzucimba ubhanxa mna." I took my food to the lounge. Lakhe: "kodwa Spho wena Noba ndithethe inyani uzondishiya." Me: "I thought I couldn't leave apparently." I ate. He stood by the couch. Lakhe: "Don't you remember our vows? For better or for worse?" Me: "you can't throwing that at me. Unless ufuna ndiqale nge 10 Commandments." Lakhe: "I really thought you loved me. All this time. That I'd finally found someone who doesn't care about the money I have. Why uzondenza lento." Me: "if that's your version of emotional blackmail, I strongly suggest you go to the mirror and practice. Maybe put some onion near your eyes. Look convincing." Lakhe: "I don't know when you became so heartless." Me: "ndibona apha kuwe. Uzilibele? Hayi noko ithe chatha ubugqwirha ba mawungazikhumbuli izinto ubuzenza. Remember the few days before Tokyo. How you left me here alone? Inyani ine khala ke yona shame. Ayifunwa ngumntu." ndaqhubeka ngokutya okwam. He just stared at me. I stared at the TV iyilonto. Lakhe: "You know your little friend does a whole lot worse than me." Me: "I know. At least he's honest and I'm not married to him." Lakhe: "Spho ufuna ndithini ke!" Me: "wena ufuna uthini." Lakhe: "for fucks sake!" he yelled. Then walked out the house.

Tuesday morning. I woke up and he was right next to me. Again. Me: "do you ever sleep?" Lakhe: "ndizolala njani umntu wam endimthandayo efuna ukundishiya?" (how do I sleep when the love of my life wants to leave me.) Me: "you know my conditions." Lakhe: "but you're so wrapped in this perfect Siya guy, awunayo ne chance yam." (I have no chance) Me: "maybe I am wrapped. But I've spent two days with you, ignoring him. What does that tell you?" Lakhe: "but I can't be like him." Me: "I don't want you to be like him! That's the thing, I want you to be you, without all this drama that you drag along." Lakhe: "uxolo kaloku baby..." (I'm sorry) he moved closer to me. Lakhe: "at least I only belong to you." Me: "I know that. Usondeliswa Yinton kengoku?" (why are you moving closer?) Lakhe: "ndicela uphuza?" (Can I get a kiss?) Me: "is that your being nice? And attentive?" Lakhe: "No. Ndiyakthanda Spho. You just keep rejecting me." (I love you Spho.) Me: "I reject you because undenza istuji." (you're making me a fool.) Lakhe: "uxolo ke baby." (I'm sorry baby.) Me: "Uthi uxolo kuba ubatyiwe nje. You don't mean it." (you're sorry because you're horny.) Lakhe: "I do mean it. As a matter of fact, ndiyokwenza breakfast ngoku for umfazi wam ndimvise kamandi. Then I will take her to a spa, then after that ndimse kwi shopping." (as a matter of fact I'm going to make breakfast right now for my wife, make her feel special.) Me: "as sweet as that sounds. I can do it all by myself. Ndodwa." (Alone.) Lakhe: "I know one thing you can't do for yourself." Me: "and that is what?" Lakhe: "you can't eat your own pussy.." Me: "Wow. Unzulu shame." (you're deep.) Lakhe: "uyakwazi ke?" (well can you?) Me: "ndifuna uyovasa." (I'm going to shower.) Lakhe: "awufuni ndikuvise?" (can I show you?" Me: "No thank you." Lakhe: "u-sure? I build yachts with my tongue...." Me: "hehe. Khame ndiyovasa Masilakhe." (I'm going to bath Masilakhe) Lakhe: "want me to join you?" Me: "no, just make breakfast. Uhlale ukule mood." (stay in that mood.) Lakhe: "okay ke baby. Ungandiphoxi nawe." (don't snap at me as well.) I got up and went to the bathroom ndiyovasa. I showered for a while, ndaphuma ebathroom. He was still laying on the bed. Me: "ayiphumi kengoku le breakfast." (so I'm guessing no breakfast?" Lakhe: "i-ready i-breakfast." (the breakfast is ready.) Me: "why are you looking so fucky." Lakhe: "umhle kodwa umfazi wam." (but you're beautiful my wife.) Me: "ayisebenzi lento uyenzayo. Ubune threats. Hours ago. Now all of a sudden ndimhle? Umhle nawe baby." (What you're doing isn't going to work. You were threatening me hours ago, now all of a sudden I'm beautiful? Then you're also beautiful.) Lakhe: "ndicela ukuyibona ke? Just once?" (can I at least see it. Just one?) Me: "Andifuni." (I don't want to.) Lakhe: "awusengcole. Baby, can I

get one at least? For being faithful ke? Khandi compensate for uphelela kuwe." (you're being mean.) Me: "No that was part of your vows, andingeni ndawo mna." Lakhe: "Yoh. Ndiya punish'wa apha kodwa." (now I'm being punished.) Me: "uzobane ndlela yotheha nempatho. I-manners uzozichola naphantsi if necessary." (that means you'll learn some manners and a way of talking. You'll pick them up from the floor if necessary.) Lakhe: "ufuna ukutya nton?" (what you gonna eat?) Me: "just cereal." ugqiba kwam uthambisa pha ecamkwakhe. I went to look for something to wear. He went to make me my cereal. After getting dressed, I changed the sheets and made the bed over taking the sheets to the laundry room. Ugqiba kwam I went to the kitchen. Lakhe: "naku baby ukutya kwakho." (here's Your food baby.) Me: "thank you." we heard the gate buzz. Lakhe: "ngubani kengoku lowo at this time?" (who the hell is that at this time?) Me: "Inoba zii-neighbors zakho kaloku." (probably your neighbors) he went to open the gate. Lakhe: "abeva aba ne?" (these ones don't listen.) Me: "ngubani lowo?" (Who?) Lakhe: "uDumisani uSibulele noSandile." Me: "ibi unfair eyoba mawubagxoth abanye kodwa." (it was unfair for you to throw them out in the first place.) Lakhe: "this is my and yours house though. Suppose kuhlala thina qha apha!" (Suppose we live together only.) Sandile opened the door. Sands: "Good morning family!" Dumi: "Molweni." he was pushed in b Sibu. Sibu: "molweni bhuti." (greetings) Me: "hey guys." Lakhe: "I sent a group message. Nizothini apha?" (what are you doing here?) Sands: "hayi kaloku bhuti. Asizanga kwi side lakho. Our side is the other one, therefore asikho sendlini yakho." (big brother, we didn't come to your side of the house, ours is the other one. Therefore we're not in your house.) Lakhe: "its still my house. I paid for it. All of it." Sands: "Spho, khathethe nomfana wethu, ndisayo pakisha izinto zam mna." (Spho, please talk to this man I'm going to unpack.) Sibu: "uhm.... Akhange ndiyifumane imemo mna." p Dumi: "what was the memo?" Lakhe: "mxim." he walked to the bedroom. Dumi: "let me go to the bathroom. Ndiyabuya guys." (I'll be back guys.) he wheeled himself away. I poured the cereal down the drain ndavasa isitya and made myself toast. I don't care if he saw it on camera. I'm pregnant. I have the utmost right to change my mind. I ate my buttered toast and juice. We went to the lounge. Sibu: "so..." Me: "look at the fireplace." Sibu: "what about it?" Me: "its there." I led him out to the garden. Sibu: "the t shirt?" he whispered. Me: "Yes. He burnt it. Now he's definitely hiding something." Sibu: "as long as ingekho kuwe anymore. I don't want anything to happen to you." Me: "worse kengoku I think Siya is up to something. He may be connected to some big drug dealer called K." Sibu: "the man without a face?" Me: "apparently." Sibu: "but nobody has ever seen him. Only two people communicate with him. Uyazi njani?" Me: "Sandile was here izolo, I overheard him telling uLakhe that he received a message from K

via Ferna something. The message said, should you hurt the closest thing to your heart, your heart will be the closest thing to me." Sibu: "shit. And?" Me: "he's been trying to break down the riddle. My family is clean. I don't have any gangsters in it. My dad haates anything illegal. My mother isn't even an option. Tanci uligwala ke. Then they somehow managed to break down the message. It could be a riddle. The 'keep your friends close and your enemies closer,' so what if the closest person to Lakhe is his enemy?" Sibu: "this is deep. I know Lakhe is dangerous. Kodwa, things I've heard about K. He's the type of person that causes nightmares and trips to psychiatrists. Its just that damn traumatizing." Me: "so, now, Siya ndimsusa kum ndimbeka pha kude. I don't want to be in the middle of this shit." (I'm putting Siya out of my life.) Sibu: "and uright. You could get seriously hurt. Or die." Me: "let's go back inside...."

Late on Tuesday afternoon, I got a call from my father. I decided to answer it. I was curious to hear what he had to say. Me: "hello?" Khaya: "molo mntanam. Unjani?" (Greetings my child, how are you?) Me: "I'm good. Unjani tata?" Khaya: "I'm fine thank you. How's the baby? Ude wa-decider ukuyenza test?" (decided to do the test?) Me: "Yes. I've decided not to do it. Everything will be fine, even if it isn't. Sizoyibona nomnyeni wam." (I'll deal with it, with my husband.) Khaya: "that's great my love. I just missed you. Akhonto ibitheni. I know lately I seem to be trailing off as utatakho and I want you to know I'm fully behind you with what you want. I understand that is your husband. I will try my best to accept him and bless your marriage. Andifuni ungonwabi ngenxa yam." (I don't want you unhappy because of me.) Me: "enkosi tata. Is everything okay?" Khaya: "well....yes." Me: "tata..." Khaya: "Oh princess yam. Its so difficult. I'm not coping." Me: "with what?" Khaya: "I..." the phone cut off. I know for a fact he didn't drop it. It was cut off. What the hell was happening. Lakhe: "everything okay?" Me: "I think my dad is in some kind of issue." Lakhe: "issue how?" Me: "I don't know. Something seemed off over the phone. I'm scared." Lakhe: "ufuna uyombona baby?" Me: "yeah." I wore my shoes quickly and took my keys. Lakhe: "let me drive." I tossed him the keys. We drove to Newton Park quickly. As soon as the car parked I got off and went to knock on the door. Silence. His car was in the driveway. I know for a fact he was inside. Maybe being held hostage by a robber. Me: "we need to break down the door." Mama: "why do you want to break down my door?" she opened and looked at me then at Lakhe. Mama: "molweni." she smiled. Me: "hi mama. Uphi utata?" Mama: "he's taking a nap. Why?" Me: "I was talking to him on the phone and it just cut off." Mama: "his battery probably died." Me: "can I see him?" Mama: "definitely. But no noise or talking, he hasn't slept in days and he has to be at work tomorrow." she led us to the

bedroom and opened the door. Mama: "See? He's sound asleep." she whispered. My dad was curled up on the bed sleeping. His stomach was moving in and out so he was breathing fine. Thank goodness. I breathed in relief. He's absolutely fine. We closed the door. Mama: "why were you worried?" Me: "I thought he probably got sick like a heart attack or something. We were talking on the phone when he said that he wasn't okay and he wasn't coping." we sat in the lounge. Mama: "yes, its been very difficult mntanam ever since your father came back from Cuba he hasn't coped properly. I don't know if he's underworked or stressed but the conditions he was working in in Cuba he got used to, now apha everything is so different. Maybe he misses Cuba. He might go back." Me: "you want him to go back?" Mama: "of course not my angel, but the same as when someone is overworked and stressed it also happens when you're underworked. I just want what's best for his wellbeing." Lakhe: "That's true ma. Maybe I should talk to him when he's available and see where I can help." Mama: "that would be great nyana. I'm going to see uLorna for a while to give him some quiet time." Me: "yeah we should go too. Please tell him to call me when he's awake." Mama: "I'll tell him my angel. Enkosi for visiting." we said our goodbyes and left the house. Lakhe: "what do you think?" Me: "maybe he's sick and doesn't want to stress me." Lakhe: "then why were you worried?" Me: "it just cut off while we were talking, it was so weird." we drove quietly to our house. When we arrived Sandile was in the kitchen cooking. Sibu and Dumi standing around talking to him. I went straight to my room with Boogie to take a nap. Lakhe entered the kitchen. Sands: "Hey lover boy." Lakhe: "we need to talk." Dumi held his wheels beginning to wheel out. Lakhe: "stay exactly where you are." he looked out the kitchen door. Lakhe: "something weird is going on in that house." he whispered. Sibu: "what house bhuti." Lakhe: "k'lo Spho." Dumi: "weird how? Illegal weird? Or just voodoo weird?" Lakhe: "I think her dad is The Kommander." Dumi: "who's that?" Lakhe: "Sandile." Sands: "The Komander is an internationally known criminal. Who deals everything from drugs, to cars to humans. A man that has never been seen by anyone, no one knows what he looks like, where he is, we just know he exists. People that cross that guy, go missing." Sibu: "why would you think utata ka Spho is The Komander? He's not exactly thug material." Lakhe: "its just a feeling I have. He has disappeared for years to Cuba, The first time he met me he said I was a criminal, how would he have known that? And I just got a message from him recently. Why wouldn't he be?" Dumi: "That's just circumstantial Lakhe. From the way You've described Komander, he seems like a dark and sinister person. I can't imagine Khaya like that. He has a daughter, why would he traffic humans?" Lakhe: "I don't know man." Sands: "what exactly happened before and when you got there?" Lakhe: "well, Spho

was on the phone with him. Then it cut off and she got worried. So I offered to drive her there. Safika uKhaya elele." Sibú: "okay, that is weird. Ebephi umama?" Lakhe: "she was there. She says he's been stressed lately and wants to go back to Cuba." Dumí: "What if.....what if its not Khaya?" Lakhe: "what are you talking about? I saw him sleeping with my own eyes." Dumí: "what if he's not Komander but someone he knows is." Lakhe: "someone like who?" Dumí: "when did The Komander send the message?" Lakhe: "I got the message yesterday." Sibú: "what was the message?" Lakhe: "should I hurt the closest person to my heart, my heart will be the closest thing to him." Dumí: "The closest person to your heart? Spho?" Sands: "it would never be that direct. But let's admit it, either way you look at it, she is in the centre of The Komander's words. I thought maybe he meant in the sense that, Keep your friends close and enemies closer." Sibú: "Yeah, I'm with that theory too because its obvious you wouldn't hurt Spho. So the million dollar question is, Who is your enemy?" Sands: "can I draw up a list?" Lakhe: "I've always had enemies Sibú. Always. But the most recent one nguSiyanda. I like the guy, I just don't want him near Spho. And Khaya adores him." Dumí: "Siya and Khaya are both your enemies. The Komander could be Siya." Sands: "absolutely not. I refuse to believe that candy floss of a human being is a cold hearted killer." Dumí: "Killer, no. Psychopath? Well..... You don't know him that well. Every psychopath I've ever come across fits Siyanda's profile like a glove." Sands: "what profile Dumisani?" Dumí: "The key attributes of a psychopath being calculating, ability to fit in, form friendships, be calm and very attractive so as to be able to charm others." Sands: "did you just call another man very attractive? I will definitely be spending less time with you." Dumí: "They're skilled actors. They're like pet snakes, they keep measuring your body size while cuddling you and starving themselves for weeks, and once they're sure you're at your most vulnerable, you trust them with your life and they've worked up an incredible appetite to devour, they kill you." Sandile dropped the pot lid. Lakhe: "Dumí, how sure are you of this?" Dumí: "I'm not saying he is one but I wouldn't rule him out immediately. Siyanda is very available. That, on its own, is dangerous." Lakhe: "Sibú, can you find out about Siyanda's life in joburg?" Sibú: "definitely. What's his surname?" Lakhe: "Kusile." Sands: "I am convinced Siya is Komander." Lakhe: "not just yet man Sandile." Sands: "Kusile? It has dawned? Lakhe stop being naïve, we need to face the hard cold truth. Siyanda is here to kill you."

I was woken up from my nap by Boogie licking my face. Me: "hey honey. Uvuswa Yinton?" I sat up. Lakhe was sitting on the bedroom chair deep in thought. Me: "hey." he looked up. Lakhe: "Hi. How was your nap?" Me: "it was good." my phone buzzed I picked it up and saw Siyanda's name on my screen. Lakhe: "something wrong?" Me: "No." I silenced it and put it down again. Me: "sephakile uSandile?" Lakhe: "no." the phone rang again. Lakhe: "why aren't you answering your phone?" I answered to avoid an argument. Me: "Hello?" Siya: "Hey, for a second I thought you were ignoring me." Me: "why would you think that." I got up to walk to the sliding door, before I even reached it Lakhe grabbed my arm. How did he ... Siya: "okay, I was hoping I'd see you. I don't have friends here, so I thought maybe we could hang out." I looked at Lakhe, he was nodding. Me: "yeah that would be cool." Lakhe: "here." he whispered. Me: "You want to come here?" Siya: "uhm, I don't want to step on your husband's toes. Would he be comfortable if I was there while he's in Tokyo." Me: "he's actually back. So its fine." Siya: "perfect. I'll be there in an hour." Me: "see you then." I hung up. Me: "why are you hurting my arm? What's wrong with you?" Lakhe: "Why were you walking out the house?" Me: "I was coming to open the sliding door for fresh air. What in the world are you on about?" Lakhe: "Oh. I'm sorry baby. What did he say?" Me: "what is going on?" Lakhe: "nothing. I just thought we'd spend time with our new friend." Me: "We?" Lakhe: "yes." I looked at him questionably. He was up to something. Me: "okay, I'm going to the bathroom. Tell the guys to set the table, I'll be out in 10 minutes." Lakhe: "sure." I went to the bathroom he dashed out the room. Siby and Sands were chilling in the lounge watching TV. Lakhe: "Uphi uDumi?" Sands: "he went to wash his hands, uyeza. What's up." Lakhe: "he's coming." Sands: "I just said that." Lakhe: "no I mean uSiya-" Sands: "what!! Why!" Lakhe: "Calm down-" Sands: "what do you mean calm down- why would you invite a psychopath in my house?" Lakhe: "Your house?" Sands: "you know what I mean. Lakhe, this is not a good idea." Lakhe: "Siby, what did you find?" Siby: "absolutely nothing. He doesn't even have a speeding ticket." Lakhe: "any friends?" Siby: "surprisingly no. You'll find this interesting. My source says he barely hung out with anyone. Well, that is ever since his best friend went missing." Dumi rolled in his wheelchair. Dumi: "who went missing?" Sands: "Siya's best friend in joburg." Lakhe: "what happened?" Siby: "well, this guy, uhm Rey something bebethanda Uhlala kunye at all times and then one day, they just stopped talking, the next day he never pitched for work. Then days turned into weeks, to a month and two, they found him 4 months later. he'd been mutilated. Ears, eyes and tongue cut out. He had an X carved onto his chest and his skin was decaying. That was it." they all stared at him. Sands: "all this time uhleli apha ecamkwam, withholding such information. Unzulu yazi Sibulele." Dumi: "Damn." Lakhe: "why did they stop talking?" Siby: "nobody

knows." Sands: "I have a theory. Based on him being mutilated, he saw something he wasn't supposed to. He was going to rat and ebengamameli." Lakhe: "question is, what did he see." Dummi: "any relatives of Rey? Any other person he was close to?" Sibuh: "I haven't gotten that far, why?" Dummi: "the day he stopped talking to Siya, perhaps he mentioned why to someone. Someone could know the reason the two stopped talking." Sibuh: "I'm on it." Lakhe: "No, later. I want you to keep eyes on him, all of you." Dummi: "uhm, what do you mean?" Lakhe: "he's joining us for dinner." The bedroom door opened. Lakhe: "guys I've been telling you to set the table for 8 minutes now. Kuske kuthin ningeva? Spho, baby khazobona!" I walked to the lounge. Sandile sprang out his seat and went to the kitchen followed by Sibuh. Lakhe: "abeva abantwana bakho badala." Dummi looked constipated with the look on his face. Dummi: "I think I need to lie down." Lakhe: "no you don't. We have a guest. You can help set the table." Me: "Lakhe subayi bully man. Dummi go lie down-" Lakhe: "Dummi is not tired at all. He's helping me set the table." he wheeled Dummi to the dining table. I tidied the lounge they had been sitting in and opened the large sliding door to let some air in. After an hour wafika Siya. I opened the front door for him which was a horrible mistake. His cologne made my knees buckle and my mouth started watering. He looked at me. I looked at him. What now? My eyes slipped down to his thighs where his jeans were hugging his legs. Shit. Siya: "hey." Me: "hi." I managed to say. Siya: "I bought you a milkshake." I smiled. Me: "thank you." Siya: "Double chocolate. You'll love it." Me: "I do. Come in." he stepped inside the house and I hated myself for wanting to hold him. Lakhe: "Hey!" he shook his hand. Siya: "Hi Masilakhe. Unjani?" Lakhe: "I'm great. You've met the guys. We're about to have dinner. Come sit." I disappeared to the kitchen. Sandile was oddly quiet. Me: "do you need help?" Sands: "I do not." Me: "you okay?" he nodded. Me: "Sibuh, come say hi to Siy-" Sibuh: "yeah, I'm just gonna help Sands for a second." alright. I went back to the lounge. Lakhe was chatting to Siya. Dummi sat nearby staring at them. Me: "can I get you some juice or alcohol Siya?" Siya: "I thought you knew me by now." he smiled. Me: "preferences change." Siya: "mine don't." Me: "orange juice then?" Siya: "thank you." Dummi: "I'll get it Spho." if I didn't know any better, I'd say those 3 are avoiding Siya. My question is why? I sat on the opposite couch. Lakhe: "so, have you decided on staying in PE or ubuyela eJoburg?" Siya: "I'll be staying here for a while." Lakhe: "what about your life in joburg? I'm sure your best friend is going to miss you." Siya kept quiet. Dummi returned with the juice. Lakhe: "or is he here too?" Siya: "I don't have a best friend." he said darkly. Siya: "thank you." he took the glass of OJ. Lakhe: "every man has a best friend. Eyam ngu Dummi, we even live together ndlela le andithanda ngayo." Dummi: "Is that so? You don't want me to leave!" Lakhe: "I believe I kicked you and your buddies out on

Sunday." Dumisani: "mxim. So Siya what do you do?" Siya: "I'm a doctor." he looked at me. Lakhe: "a General Practitioner. He's super great. Ebeyi Chief of the hospital in Joburg." Dumisani: "oh that's amazing." Siya: "not that big a deal." he sipped his juice still staring at me. Me: "have you spoken to utata lately?" Siya: "we spoke on Sunday. Why?" Me: "well, he doesn't seem okay. He said he wasn't." Siya: "Oh. Your mom arrived endlinam few hours ago esitsho naye. She's worried about him but he'll be fine." Me: "I thought you worked together and saw each other every day." Siya: "this week is a bit busy." he sipped his juice again. Sands: "dinner is served." he brought the plates and food to the dining table sayohlaleni phantsi. Siya: "have you been exercising?" Me: "Yes." Siya: "taking your vitamins?" Me: "Yes. Why?" Siya: "Nothing. Just making sure." after saying grace we ate our meal and afterwards I went to wash the dishes. Siyanda and Lakhe were sitting in the lounge talking. Dumisani was helping me with the dishes. After we were finished I went to join them for a game of monopoly. Everyone began to loosen up then. After two games, we relaxed in the lounge just chatting. Sibuleka kept disappearing with his phone. I wonder uncokola nabani encume kangaka. It was after 8pm when Siya got ready to leave. I was a little sleepy now. Me: "let me walk you out. Siya: "it was great chilling with you guys, Thank you Lakhe." Lakhe: "its always a pleasure man, you're always welcome." Sands: "have a safe trip." I walked Siya out to his car. Siya: "so...that was nice." Me: "it was. Thank you for coming." Siya: "thank you for inviting me. Sandile reminds me so much of my younger self." I giggled. Me: "I don't believe you were a Sandile. He's an idiot." he laughed. Siya: "you should get back inside. There's a bit of a chill." Me: "okay." we both kept quiet and stared at each other. I didn't know what to say really. Siya: "I don't want to come between you." Me: "I know." Siya: "I don't know if I can control myself when I'm around you. I miss you everyday Spho. I hope Lakhe knows what he's doing." he kissed my forehead. Siya: "get inside the house." I walked up to the door and closed it behind me. My team was lazing on the couch watching soccer. I stood by the TV. Lakhe: "hey babe." Me: "don't 'hey babe' me. What was that about?" Lakhe: "what?" Me: "you wanted me to invite him here to hang out with you. Why?" Lakhe: "I wanted to get to know him. Is that a bad thing?" Me: "then why were these three acting weird?" Sands: "I wasn't acting weird." Me: "you were dead quiet the entire time. Sibuleka was disappearing and reappearing like a magician. Dumisani looked like he was mid heart attack the whole time. Is there something you guys want to share?" Sands: "mid heart attack." he dissolved onto the floor laughing hysterically. Me: "I'm going to bed." I went to my room to sleep.

Sibu: "can I talk?" Lakhe: "yima." they watched TV for a few minutes. Lakhe: "so.... What did you find?" Sibu: "Rey's sister committed suicide the day after his body was discovered. And that's the only family he had." Lakhe: "how did she die." Sibu: "in her autopsy they found cyanide in her blood stream." Dumi: "Good grief, cyanide? She drank cyanide?" Sibu: "well....that's what the report said. Ruled out as suicide." Lakhe: "she definitely did not drink cyanide voluntarily." Sands: "I think someone paid her a visit. As you would a grieving friend, offering to make her something to eat and so forth." Dumi: "There's a vibe about this guy man. I've never been so sure that he was the one that murdered Rey. Did you see how he was when you asked about a best friend. He just changed." Sibu: "if there was any doubt in my mind. Its gone now. Sands, what are you thinking?" Sands: "Siyanda doesn't have a killing mechanism." Lakhe: "but you just said-" Sands: "I know what I said. He's just not the guy." Dumi: "Sandile, this is a psychopath. You don't know what he's capable of." Sands: "he doesn't show the signs of a murderer Dumisani but that doesn't mean he doesn't know someone who does." Lakhe: "so we're back to square one." Sands: "not necessarily. Siyanda may not be Komander but he knows exactly who he is."

Lakhe came into bed a few hours later. I felt the bed move but he didn't come close. I turned around and moved to his side. Lakhe: "uhleli kanti?" I pulled him closer and kissed his lips. Lakhe: "bab-" I pulled down his briefs and massaged his cock. Lakhe: "oh...wow...." I went under the covers and filled him in my mouth. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi." I sucked on him long and hard, swallowing him in and gargling him out. I went further down to his balls and gently sucked while stroking him. His thighs were shaking. Lakhe: "ahhhhhh shittttt!!!" he groaned as he orgasmed. I sucked his length back in my mouth, deep to my throat and felt throbbing then a trickle of his cum in my mouth. I went on. Stroking his balls, sucking while he's cuming. Lakhe: "Fuuuuuuuuuckkkk!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" he screamed. His body shaking violently. I went deeper and he pushed me away, his breathing in short gasps for air. I spit the semen on my hand to wash it off and kneeled on the bed. Me: "need some water?" he nodded quietly. I got up. There was an urgent knock on the door. Sands: "is everything okay in there?!!" Me: "we're fine Sands." Sands: "Uphi uLakhe? I heard him scream." Me: "he's here." I looked at him curled up on his side on the bed. Me: "say something." he shook his head. Sands: "Spho, I don't hear uLakhe. Where is he?" Me: "he's in a delicate position Sandile." Sands: "is he hurt?" Me: "just a little bump." Sands: "Spho ndicela uvule umnyango." Lakhe: "I'm fine man Sandile!" Sands: "oh....okay." well that was the most awkward conversation I've ever had. I got him water from our bathroom sink

and he gulped it down at once then returned to his fetal position. Me: "are you okay?" Lakhe: "what in the world was that for?" Me: "I missed you." Lakhe: "you almost killed me Spho." Me: "I'm sorry, I didn't know you wouldn't like it." Lakhe: " You've never done anything like that to me before. Sandile was ready to call an ambulance. Where does that come from?" Me: "I don't know." Lakhe: "Is this about Siyanda?" Me: "why in the world would it be about Siyanda?" Lakhe: "I don't know. I'm just making sure." Me: "what's wrong?" Lakhe: "Do you still love him?" Me: "No." Lakhe: "Are you sure?" Me: "I married you Lakhe. I'm pregnant with your child. I'm in love with you, how more sure must I be?" he sighed. Lakhe: "Sometimes I feel like I pushed too quick for this. I was scared that You'd leave me. Then Perfect Vanilla Boy comes along, I would've been doomed." Me: "who's Perfect Vanil- oh Siyanda? Are you insecure about him? Because I could tell him to stay away if its making you uncomfortable." it was making ME uncomfortable. Lakhe: "Yes. No. He's your friend, and mine now too. I don't mind him coming over at least once a week. He's a cool guy." Me: "since when?" Lakhe: "heee. Hayi ke Spho." Me: "What's the real reason you want to be his friend?" he looked up at me innocently. Me: "tell me." he sighed and held his head. Lakhe: "I can't believe I'm going to say this." I waited. Lakhe: "he's cool. Kind of makes me feel like I'm part of the cool kids, I never had that. That's it." Me: "Cool?" Lakhe: "you know Babalo and Dumi are the only friends I'm not related to that I have. Sandile and Sibuhambi because they're family. And let's admit Dumi and Babalo aren't the world's greatest, they're nerds like me." Me: "its weird that you want to be friends with my ex. Kodwa awufun nombona uSimphiwe." Lakhe: "hehake. Ndiyinton kuSimphiwe ngoku." Me: "you were using him." Lakhe: "I was kakade ndayifumana Lento bendiy'funa kuye. And?" Me: "ungcolile. Worse omnye umntana uqale Brothers Union." he laughed. Lakhe: "Wow. Brothers Union? What do they do? Bake biscuits and sip tea?" Me: "awusagezi nje." Lakhe: "uxolo ke. Ndilibele yi-friend yakho. On a serious note, I've never in my life came twice in under 10 minutes. What you did tonight, does not leave this room. Uyandiva?" Me: "who would I even tell?" Lakhe: "Wena nala Sandile wakho are always giggling together. Ndaziphi nihleba bani." Me: "awusemuncu nje." he held my tummy. Lakhe: "I hope you didn't swallow." Me: "of course not. Ndiyitice ecaleni." Lakhe: "good." he yawned. Lakhe: "Spho I love you." Me: "I love you too baby." Lakhe: "ndiyalala ke mna ngoku kudala ndiziqwayitile." Me: "lala kaloku." Lakhe: "kutheni wena ungalali?" Me: "ndizolala xa ulele." Lakhe: "hmm..." in a few minutes, he dozed off. I just sat in bed deep in thought. I had this weird feeling in my heart like something was about to happen. I stared at the curtains then went to make sure the windows are sliding door were locked. Everything was in place,

except my heart. I went back in to bed. Whatever it is, God will take care of it.

#85

Khaya woke up early the next morning, his mouth bone dry and head spinning. Khaya: "damn it..." he sat up from bed. Khaya: "Zama?" she walked in the door. Zama: "yes sweetheart?" Khaya: "ndicela amanzi." Zama: "sure thing." she brought him a jug of water. Zama: "ina." he gulped the water, feeling instant relief. Khaya: "I was supposed to be at work." Zama: "I called them and told them you were sick." Khaya: "I was never sick." Zama: "and they will never know. We have a problem." Khaya: "Zama, I'm not in the mood for your games today." Zama: "Spho has found her brother." Khaya: "I know that. Its been weeks." Zama: "and her mother." Khaya sighed. Zama: "Do you think she'll talk?" Khaya: "she's a drunk. Nobody will believe a word that comes out her mouth." Zama: "her son might. Khaya, we cannot risk that happening. She's in a rehab center. All you have to do is talk to her." Khaya: "I'm not doing that." Zama: "Khaya. Honey. It won't be a good idea for you to miss an entire week of work now would it? We can't keep doing this. Just talk to her, make her understand." Khaya: "why don't you? She'll listen to you. You used to be -" Zama: "You're the doctor. You'll be there. Do it for your daughter." her phone rang. Zama: "Hello?" she answered. Khaya got up and made the bed then finished the remaining water. Zama: "Okay." she hung up. Zama: "I have some business to sort out baby. I'll be back later okay? Please go see her?" Khaya: "okay." he kissed her lips. Khaya: "I love you." Zama: "I love you too K."

It was a few days before the New Year. I was tired the entire time and bored. So I took my laptop and started with my work quietly. I don't know where Lakhe disappeared to. The house was quiet too. I heard my phone ringing from the bed covers and I picked it up. It was dad. Me: "Tata?" I answered. Khaya: "hi pumpkin. Unjani?" Me: "Not that good since You've just compared me to a pumpkin tata." he chuckled. Khaya: "uxolo mntanam. How's my grandchild this morning?" Me: "she's okay. Not too disruptive either inoba ulele. Unjani wena tata? I came to see you izolo ndafika ulele. Your phone just cut off. What happened?" there was silence over the line. Me: "dad? Is there something wrong?" Khaya: "no." Me: "tata are you sick? please tell me. We can find a solution." Khaya: "I'm okay my angel. I just had a bit of a headache so I took a sleeping pill to help me nap. Its been a busy week at

the hospital." Me: "yeah utsho noSiyanda. He says he barely spoke to you since Sunday." Khaya: "ubudibene phi noSiyanda?" Me: "he came over last night." Khaya: "Spho, what do you mean he came over last night?!" Me: "I invited him.....why? What's wrong?" Khaya: "I thought you didn't like Siyanda." Me: "I don't." Khaya: "Sphosenkosi." Me: "tata, nguLakhe othe mandimbize. They hung out together and played games. Apparently they're friends now." Khaya: "ulkhaya noSiyanda are friends? Wow." that name was still weird to me. Me: "yeah, anyway when you have a chance you can come over for dinner nomama. I miss you." Khaya: "I miss you too my angel. I will let you know ke vha." Me: "yes sir. I love you tata." Khaya: "I love you too baby girl." I hung up. Well that made me feel much better. At least he was okay although he was hiding something. I would have to wait until I found him alone. After a few hours of work I realized it was a bit awkward that the house was still quiet. Unsettling actually. I got out of bed and walked to the lounge. There Sandile was, fast asleep on the couch with a packet of Lays in his arms. Dumi and Sibule were not here obviously. He was probably bored. I went to the kitchen to make lunch. Definitely in no mood for a sandwich. I wanted a full meal. So I started cooking enough for dinner as well. Halfway in my task Sandile woke up and came into the kitchen. Sands: "hey girl. Unjani? You look fabulous today uvelaphi?" he opened the fridge and scanned it. Sands: "Clearly not the grocery store." he mumbled. Me: "I didn't go anywhere. Kuthen wena ungayanga kwa Pick n Pay." Sands: "Andicingi kaloku ndintampule nge nyawu kwela langa mntase." Me: "lizokwenza nton ilanga?" Sands: "andisemhle for ukutsha." Me: "There's cars." Sands: "not today. Lakhe took his. Sibule took mine. Rob took yours. Everyone is gone and they left me here by myself to starve." Me: "two things, 1, you're not in a desert, quit being dramatic. 2, why didn't you use Uber?" he just stared at me. I carried on cooking. Sands: "uzophaka nini?" Me: "I'm still cooking. I don't know." Sands: "I have a guest for dinner." Me: "Who is it?" Sands: "I don't know." I looked at him again. Me: "what?" Sands: "I mean I have a guest I'm inviting I just don't know who. So depending on what time you dish up, I'll pick the one more convenient to the time." Me: "so this guest, is only here to eat my food." Sands: "Do you really want to know?" Me: "Well its my house, so yes." Sands: "not just to eat your food, also to get her ass thrown in the air and on to this dick-" Me: "Sandile!" Sands: "I asked." Me: "I don't want to know!" Sands: "you sure?" Me: "you're disgusting. Leave." he chuckled. Sands: "so what is it that you and Dumi gossip about so much these days?" Me: "I don't gossip with Dumi. And why does everyone think I gossip with everyone?" Sands: "well, it counts as gossip if it dies down the minute someone else enters the room." Me: "its not gossip. If I told you what I talk about with Dumi, THAT would be gossip. So no." Sands: "is it about Zingi?" Me: "why would you think that?"

Sands: "because they're spending a lot of time together lately. Going to therapy with Dr Fischer. Then having ice cream together at that little shop afterwards." Me: "how the hell would you know that?" Sands: "You're wild if you think I let anyone in this house roam around free all day long. I get bored." he munched on his chips. Sands: "like when Siyanda kisses your forehead. What's that about anyway." Me: "Don't worry about Siya." Sands: "oh he's not the one I worry about. My worry is strictly reserved for my puppy. Anyone else is not my concern thank you very much." Me: "Good to know you're a great dad to Boogie." Sands: "I am. So..." Me: "Siya is nothing but a good friend. There's a reason I never followed him to Johannesburg. Even if I don't know it today, but I'm sticking with it. Besides, Lakhe makes me happy. Sometimes. Sometimes I just want to beat him with a stick." he laughed. Sands: "Is that what happened yesterday? I'm glad you finally beat him because sooner or later I would have to. He can get out of hand at times. So what did he do?" well... Me: "besides being himself?" he smiled. Sands: "So, are Dumi and Zingi back together?" Me: "funeka ubuze uDumi ke mtshana." Sands: "I did. Twice. He ignored me. Why would he do that?" Me: "I don't know, its probably not even because you slept with his wife and humiliated him in front of us by confessing it. Detailing it. It beats me." Sands: "OOOH? Is that why? Then I'll have to cancel my date. You think he has a problem with me and her? Oh that's not good." Me: "wait..... The person coming here nguZingi?" he stared at me. Sands: "Who did you think Spho? That I'd invite a random stranger whom I met on the internet to have sex with me and chase out the next day? When I have an ex who's heavily pregnant with my best friends baby. Of course I want my ex! I want to adopt the baby, and be a great father to him. Then we can get married and move to Pluto." to be honest, I was mind fucked. It took me a full two minutes to realize he was being sarcastic. If it wasn't for moving to Pluto, I wouldve freaked out, only realizing that Pluto doesn't exist anymore eased my panic. Me: "Sometimes a yes or no." Sands: "much more fun watching your face change 7 different emotions." Me: "you're evil. And did you say Dumi is your best friend? Since when?" Sands: "not much I can do about it. He upgraded last week because he lives with us full time and I'm his Uber so he buys me McDonald's everytime I give him a lift." Me: "must be horrible being you." Sands: "You have no idea." he threw away the chips packet. Me: "So where is everyone?" Sands: "hmmm.....let's see." he gave it some thought. Sands: "Sibu took Dumi to his office and Sibu went to work, the time is 2:45 so Sibu will be leaving in ten minutes to go visit his mom at the rehab centre then fetch Dumi at 4:15. Then arriving here at 4:48. Lakhe went to a meeting with Gerard Ku`che. After that, he is taking Luyolo on an expedition and he'll be back at 5 this evening. Rob didn't tell me anything. He just rushed out. I tried to chase him but Boogie

needed a bath, he was playing with honey and milk so..." I turned down the stove. Me: "before we come back to the dog playing with honey and milk, how do you know where everyone went and what time they come back." Sands: "they told me where they were going, I calculated when they'd be back." what? And what? Me: "how?" Sands: "Sibu leaves his office at 2:55pm. Visiting hours at the rehab centre are from 3 to 4. He leaves at 4:05pm. Arriving at Dumi's firm which happens to be 15 minutes away, at 4:20. Usually arrives at 4:15 since he drives like a crazy person, the time from Dumi's firm to here is plus minus 28 minutes. He should be at that gate before 4:50pm." Me: "So everyone tells you where they're going before they leave." Sands: "kind of. Sometimes I have to snoop." Me: "Why don't you find a hobby?" Sands: "I have plenty. Snooping is one of them." Me: "other hobbies that don't include other people." Sands: "ndidlala noBoogie then teach him how to swim. He's getting pretty good now." I sighed. Me: "I'm going to give you a task to keep busy everyday." Sands: "hehake Spho. I'm not bored." Me: "Yes but I am. Come let's go." I switched off the stove. Sands: "siyaphi?" Me: "to the mall." Sands: "Dear God, not the mall!"

It was 5:37pm when we came back from Baywest Mall. All the cars were back in their places. Clearly everyone was home. We walked inside with Sandile, carrying the parcels. I'd taken him shopping which he liked a lot. Except having to wear any other color besides black, I managed to get him to try navy. He hated it. I bought it anyway. Now everyone was in the lounge frowning at their phones. Dumi, Lakhe, Sibu and Rob. Me: "molweni. Ninjani?" no response. Sands: "Wowza. If yall think you can ice me out, you have another thing coming. Its busy packing its bags from Germany shame. Yazi aninazintloni. Hayi i-worse ke wena tata, andikwazi Noba usuka Phi. Today is gonna be a brand new day for each and every one of yo-" Lakhe: "nivelaphi? We've been waiting over an hour, phone zenu zi-off." Sands: "uwoah, ndikwazi ke ngothand uncanca ibele. We went shopping." Lakhe: "I see that!!" Sands: "soo, why you mad?" Lakhe: "ngeyiphi Le shopping that requires phones to be off? Ndifike mna apha endlin akhomntu." Sands: "ubuphi dan wena?" Lakhe: "I went to work!" Rob: "it was about time you two started again. Ntombi yam, ndicela undiphakele." Me: "okay tata." I went into the kitchen while the two brothers exchanged disses. I heated the food and brought everyone their plates and we started eating. After supper I got them drinks. Dumi and Sibu were abnormally quiet. Me: "Sibulele." he looked at me. Me: "what's wrong?" Sibu: "my mother stopped talking." everyone kept quiet. Rob: "what do you mean?" Sibu: "she just, went mute tata. She hasn't said a word all day." Lakhe: "maybe she's stressed." Sibu: "yeah, that's what I

thought. But, the nurse says, she's active, talks a lot and helps everyone around her. Uyathanda ubalisa amabali. At times acule. The teenagers at the centre really like her and bahlala naye most of the time. Today, she just locked herself in her room." Sands: "uhm....bhuti, can I see you for a second?" Lakhe: "izapha Sibulele." they walked to the bedroom. Rob: "thank you for dinner my angel. It was amazing." Me: "its a pleasure tata. Can I get you anything else?" Rob: "do you have dessert?" Me: "ewe tata. There's still some cake, and some ice cream." Rob: "a slice of cake mntanam." Me: "coming up." I went to cut a slice for him and Dumi. Rob: "hlala phantsi ngoku uphumle. Put your feet up." I sat on the lone couch. Rob: "how's my grandchild?" Me: "uphilile tata. Uyandikhaba kungoku." he jumped up immediately to come place a hand. Rob: "ndiyamva! Eyy umntanam madoda, akonwabe man! Akak'hluphi?" Me: "hayi tata." Rob: "This is my first time experiencing a pregnancy. This is exciting. I cannot wait to hold him or her." Me: "I thought Nosi is biologically yours nje tata. Didn't you experience that pregnancy?" Rob: "yes she's biologically mine but we opted for a surrogate. So I didn't really get close to her until after she was born." Me: "Oh." Rob: "let me make you tea." he rushed to the kitchen. Me: "mind switching roles?" Dumi: "Nope, I'm good thanks." he laughed.

Sands: "I may have another theory." Lakhe: "what?" Sands: "we've poked something. Is it possible that our sniffing around has alerted Komander?" Sibu: "I was careful." Sands: "I know you always are, but sithetha ngo-Komander ngoku. He who can find hell. Then take you there for vacation. Someone, from whoever You've contacted or passed through, has probably let him know." Sibu: "what makes you think that Sandile?" Sands: "Rey." Lakhe: "shit." Sibu: "ndi-confused kengoku. What does Siyanda's late friend have to do with my mother keeping quiet?" Sands: "what if Rey wasn't mad at Siyanda or stopped talking to just Siyanda? All we know is that he stopped talking." Lakhe: "wasn't he a doctor? It'll be easier to find out." Sibu: "that's the thing, he wasn't a doctor. He worked at the morgue." Lakhe: "So he didn't really talk to anyone anyway. Shit." Sands: "or maybe there was someone else working at the morgue with him. Is it the same hospital as Siya?" Sibu: "yeah." Sands: "try and find someone who worked with Rey. Those last few days." Sibu: "Bhuti, what if....by carrying on snooping, what happened to Rey also happens to my mother? She didn't do anything wrong." Lakhe: "you're right. It might be coincidental but its worth looking into. Leave the Rey episode. Someone must have been in contact with your mother in the last 24 hours. Question is, who." Sands: "yeah, I think its safer to look at that route." Lakhe: "banayo cctv footage kulendawo?" Sibu: "not everywhere. Only in the offices." Sands: "how

do you get in?" Sibú: "I D book. Signing in." Lakhe: "great. As an immediate relative you can get the visiting log for your mom. Its legal." Sibú: "bhuti ndiyoyika mna ngoku. How did the Komander know where to find her? Or that she's my mother? What about my other mother in Durban?" Lakhe: "Calm down. For now, we're just covering our bases. We're not sure that this is The Komanders doing. Let's not assume." Sibú: "What if Siya got mad when you asked him about the friend and now he wants revenge?" Sands: "highly unlikely. Why not target someone direct to Lakhe?" Sibú: "that's Spho, and Siya likes Spho. Lakhe doesn't like his mother so obviously he's not gonna go there! But I'm Spho's brother, which means our mother is the next direct target." he sat down on the chair shaking. Lakhe: "now you're just over reacting. We don't want a situation where Spho and utata start asking questions. It is imperative to keep them away from this. Spho is pregnant, I don't need her worrying about all this. Got it?" Sibú: "Yes sir." Lakhe: "Good. Now get it together." he walked out. Sands: "don't worry Sibú. We'll work this out together. Don't be afraid. At least not yet."

#86

I was in bed reading a book that Wednesday evening after a luxurious bath. Finally feeling sleepy I put my book down. Lakhe came into the bedroom. Lakhe: "baby?" he got into bed. Me: "hmm?" Lakhe: "are you already sleeping?" Me: "yes." Lakhe: "kodwa uyandiphendu-" Me: "what do you want Masilakhe." Lakhe: "well....uhm.... I was gonna take Sibú out bowling and grab a few drinks because he isn't feeling okay about his mom. I was wondering if you want to come too?" Me: "hm.hm." Lakhe: "oh." Me: "please go Lakhe, I want to sleep." Lakhe: "are you sure?" Me: "Yes! Go." Lakhe: "thank you baby. I love you." he kissed my cheek and left. I knew for a fact I wasn't being invited at all. He just wanted to go, without loose ends. I could at least sleep in peace. After settling into a nice comfortable position I fell asleep.

I woke up to a phone ringing, thinking it was morning already kanti it was midnight. I stared at the landline number. Lakhe was fast asleep next to me. I wonder ubuye nini because he was still fully dressed but clearly fast asleep. I answered my phone. Me: "Yes?" "Mrs Sobukwe?" Me: "yes. This is she, her, I mean me." Who calls at midnight? "This is Sister Anne from Groovemor clinic. You're listed as an alternative contact person on Miriam Thumeka Ngxalase's file." Me: "Okay. Is everything fine?" "Well, Yes and No. I'm not sure if your brother has informed you but Miss Miriam stopped talking this morning. Now, I

wanted to inform you that she just said something." I sat up. Me: "what did she say? When?" the call cut off. What the? I called the number back and it just beeped twice and cut off again. I called it again and it didn't even bother ringing. What the fuck is going on? I would've gone back to sleep but two things bugged me. The first was, this lady could have waited until morning to call, but instead called immediately meaning whatever that Miriam said was important. Secondly, why would the phone line stop working all of a sudden? At midnight? Something creepy was going on. I looked at Lakhe who was snoring lightly. Me: "baby." Lakhe: "hmm." Me: "wake up! The hospital just called!" his eyes shot open. Lakhe: "what hospital?" even in the dark I could see his eyes were red. Me: "Le ka mama ka Sibhu." Lakhe: "what? Bafowne Phi? When? Bathini?" he sat up. Me: "they just called me, bathi I'm listed as an alternative contact or whatever, literally just a minute ago." Lakhe: "what do they say Spho." Me: "this lady, Anne she says. Uthi umama ka Sibhu just said something." Lakhe: "and? What did she say?" Me: "that's the disturbing part. I asked what did she say and the call cut off. I called it back twice and now its not even ringing." Lakhe: "Spho....are you sure?" I showed him my phone since he thinks I'm lying. Even my TrueCaller app identifies the number properly. Lakhe: "what must have happened? Kutheni bengafownelanga uSibhu?" Me: "I don't know. I don't care, what I care about is why was the call cut off and what did she say that was so urgent it couldn't wait till morning. We have to go there." Lakhe: "You aren't going anywhere. Sphosenkosi, umithi umntanam. I am not letting you anywhere out of this house ngelixesha. Neither am I going anywhere because I'm supposed to protect you. What I will do, is tell Sibhu, but only in the morning ngoba naye uzofuna uya pha ngoku. We don't know what's happening pha and I will be damned if I let any one of you get hurt." Me: "It is scary. Nyani masimchazele ksasa. I can't lose Sibhu too." Lakhe: "okay babes. Masilale." Me: "but what if they get through to him and he goes there?" Lakhe: "asoze aphume kulendlu at this time uSibhulele without letting me know. Relax." we lay back in bed. Me: "ubuye nini ungaqalisanga kwa ukhulula nje?" Lakhe: "Yoh babes. I think about an hour ago. Ndilixhego kaloku mna ndidinwa very quick." he took off his shirt and pants. Lakhe: "Kuthen wena ungandikhululanga? Ndiyakwazi kaloku uyathanda undinqika ebuthongweni bam." Me: "ithandwa nguwe lo." we cuddled. Lakhe: "beniyephi noSandile?" Me: "benditshilo nje kuwe." Lakhe: "Uthe niye kwi shopping qha mos. And I didn't even get anything." Me: "I went to shop for Sandile. Not wena." Lakhe: "so Sandile is your husband now?" Me: "hayi, ngu brother wam. And he needed some love, that's it." Lakhe: "hmm. Kumandi ubanguye. Mna zange ndakhutshwa nokhutshwa. Ndiya use'wa qha." Me: "andizok'phendula ke yazi." Lakhe: "what did you buy your bestie?" Me: "some clothes. A pair of sneakers that took almost two hours to decide

on. Yuh, your brother is impossible. Akayifuni nenye color except black. He says its going to itch him." Lakhe: "What were you expecting from him because even his underwear is black. Even ikawusi le." Me: "I bought him a white t shirt and a navy one. Xandihamba naye mna uzozinxiba. Noko idibene nobugqwirha leyakhe." he chuckled. Lakhe: "anizolwa man." Me: "Uphi uNosi?" Lakhe: "uye Kapa kwi tshomi zakhe nomamakhe." Me: "so landlu ise Monti yeyaka mamakho?" Lakhe: "mamakhe. Yes. The divorce is finalized." Me: "alright. Utatakho uzothini kengoku?" Lakhe: "well, it seems as though my house is a hotel. I caught him dragging his luggage in and tomorrow his cars are arriving. Andiyazi bacimba kuphi apha aba. And ndizoba gxotha bonke ndik'xelele. Dumi is the only one authorized to stay here." Me: "Khawuyeke abanye abantwana. Yazi wena uyathandwa kokwenu qha awuyibon lonto. Let them relax. Nawe ukhe uphole. Sooner or later bazode badikwe bahambe ubakhumbule ke wena." Lakhe: "bakhunjulwe kwa ndim? Nantsi eyam family mna endinoykhumbula. Kunini ndahlala nabo bona? Hayi wethu." Me: "fine, but let them stay. Be honest, you enjoy being around them." Lakhe: "I do. Kaloku wena uyandibaleka ukhuphe uSandile. Inoba ngomso kuzokhutshwa uSibu. Friday nguDumi. Soze mna ndikhutshwe. Akunzima uba ndim." Me: "are you done?" Lakhe: "ewe." Me: "lala ke." Lakhe: "fine." I chuckled. After a few minutes of silence I heard him snoring again. Tshin thiza lomfana.

Thursday morning I woke up without Lakhe in bed. I pulled myself up and went to the bathroom then showered. I came back to make the bed and look for something to wear. I was going to visit Zingi at her house maybe drag Zintle and Fez too, actually thinking of hosting a baby shower for her. I found a baby blue maternity maxi dress. I put on my granny sandals which happened to be very comfortable so I didn't care. Lakhe said they look like I'm living in a cottage with 25 cats. Heeee usile lowam umnyeni vha. I called Zintle. Me: "brother." Zintle: "hello malume Uright?" Me: "ndiright sthandwa. Ubusy?" Zintle: "ha.a ndiya-cleaner qha." Me: "I was thinking of getting something for uZingi and some cupcakes and other things senze Noba yi-mini baby shower." Zintle: "unyansile yazi. Yima ndivase ndifownele noFez. Sidibane Noba kuse Baywest?" Me: "ewe babes." Zintle: "sho." we hung up. After brushing my hair I went to the kitchen and found everyone sitting in the lounge watching TV. Me: "molweni Tata." Rob: "hello my sweet. I made breakfast." Me: "enkosi tata." Sands: "I helped." Me: "thank you Sands." Lakhe stared at them both and looked back at his phone. I went to fetch my plate and a glass of juice ndayohlala kwi dining table. I hated awkward silences. Andiyazi bayawatheni aba. After I finished eating I washed my plate and

went to fetch my bag and keys. As I was walking out the front door. Lakhe: "uyaphi baby?" Oh? Me: "I'm going shopping." Lakhe: "again?" he stood up. Me: "Yes again. Do you need anything?" Sands: "uye Baywest?" Me: "yes." he stood up too. Me: "what is it?" Lakhe: "nothing." Me: "Uphi uSibulele?" Lakhe: "he's at work." Me: "did you talk to him?" Lakhe: "I woke up late. I left him a message to come straight home." I nodded. Me: "goodbye tata." Rob: "bye honey." I went to my car with my two tails. I honestly don't know what these two are up to and I was in no mood today. I got into my car. Wangena Sandile kwi passenger seat, Lakhe got into the backseat. I drove out the yard and went to the mall. Maybe they thought I was lying about the mall. When I parked at the Baywest parking lot we all got out the car. I called Zintle and Fez who were still on their way. Me: "baby, Uphi?" Zintle: "sisendleleni babes. We'll arrive in about 10 minutes." Me: "okay, text me xa nifikile so I can tell you which shop. Oh and just a warning, I have two bodyguards with me." Zintle: "uthini na ngoku?" Me: "Lakhe and Sandile." Zintle: "oh sweet! Okay babes." I hung up. These two looked out of place. I went into the mall and straight to the baby shop. Me: "this is so beautiful." I found a pure white fleece blanket. Sandile was looking at the white cot. Lakhe walking around. Sands: "this is adorable. Funeke ndithengele uBoogile. He would love it." Me: "that is for babies." Sands: "Boogile is my baby." Me: "since when is he Boogile?" Sands: "that's his full name." Someone needs to come fetch Sandile please. Sands: "I'm gonn put it on his diamond necklace. I ordered it from Germany." Me: "you ordered your dog a diamond necklace." Sands: "well yes, I figured if he looks handsome, he'll feel handsome." Me: "he's a dog." Sands: "he has feelings too." Me: "feelings that cost diamonds Sandile?" Sands: "here you are looking at a blanket that costs someone's monthly salary. And your husband looks like he's about to buy the entire store." I looked at Lakhe who already had a few items under his arm. Sands: "not to mention the Gucci blanket he brought home from Japan." Me: "he got the baby a Gucci blanket?" Sands: "its the cutest thing I swear." he smiled. Lakhe: "baby? Which color? White or brown?" Me: "Masilakhe. Put down the items." Lakhe: "but bab-" Me: "Now." he put them on the counter. Me: "in their places." he took out his black card and handed it to the cashier still staring at me. Me: "Masilakhe'ikhaya I'm here for Zingi! We're hosting a baby shower for her this afternoon. Put those things back!" Lakhe: "so mandifike mna ndingaphethanga present? Yavuya shame." Me: "you're not even invited!" he looked shocked. Lakhe: "its not even your party Spho." Sands: "yeah, mna ndizothenga Lena." he tried picking up the cot. What have I done? Bendibasaphi? Me: "we don't even need that. Zimi still has a cot-" Sands: "ngeyaka Zimi leyo not the new baby. He deserves his own. Ma'am, I'll have this to go." Lakhe: "Yep. Yep. Drag it over here. Yirhuqe." Zintle and Fez finally arrived. I greeted them while those other two debated

on color scheme. Fez: "what's happening?" Me: "I made a mistake and brought them here." Zintle: "ububasaphi?" Me: "I didn't think they'd be like this. Izolo bendikhuphe Sandile, we went shopping. He enjoyed himself so much Lakhe got jealous, today ndithe ndiphuma ndalandelwa ngabo bobabini." they laughed. Zintle: "hayi ungumama nyani sana." Fez: "Yinton Le kuxatyanwa ngayo?" Me: "paint color for the baby nursery. Do you think they'll notice if we disappear?" Fez: "oh hayi tshomi sungcola. Besides bazosincedisa ngo-pusher trolley ezi." ndilibe kanene yi crush yakhe uSandile so its gonna be picture time ibengathi baye together kwi shopping. Yeyi. Akunzima. Me: "guys. We're discussing this further next month. For now, siphelelwa lixsha. Pay, siyofaka emotweni then we can look for other things." Lakhe: "okay baby. Bamba Sandile." Me: "do we have to buy this cot?" Sands: "Yes. I like it. I'm going to build it back together at home." Me: "please tell me its not for the dog." Sands: "hehake Spho, how extra do you think I am? Boogile is gonna grow to be big, so his one needs to be a bit bigger than the baby's." Zintle and Fez were in stitches. I really was not in the mood for arguing with Sandile Sobukwe today. He annoyed me enough yesterday. Me: "fine, ambozifaka emotweni." they collected their items and walked out after payment. I strolled the mall with my girls. Me: "those two are going to drive me crazy." Zintle: "at least wena unomntu that drives you crazy." Me: "awumfuni ke uSibu." Fez: "he's ignoring her calls." Zintle slapped his shoulder. Fez: "ouch!! Khange Uthi mandingaythethi tshin!" Me: "why is he ignoring you?" Fez: "revenge obviously, naye kaloku usis wakho ebezenza i-fresh fruit." I laughed. Me: "hayke sisi." Zintle: "Please talk to him Spho?" Me: "and say what?" Zintle: "anything. Ndibawela umbona." Me: "is it possible that ubawela umbona only because you're lonely and we're approaching the New Year wena ungena mntu." Zintle: "noFez mos akanamntu." Fez: "hayi sisi, nantsiya indodam isiza." I looked and saw Sands and Lakhe. Me: "ndizomxelela mna uSandile uyamthanda and une pictures zakhe ku instagram wakho." Fez: "hayi Spho suthakatha mfazi. Uzoyenziswa yinton lonto." I laughed again. The boys finally caught up. Me: "sizozifumana phi cupcakes or an actual cake?" Sands: "I know a guy." he took out his phone and made the call. Me: "now for the snacks-" Lakhe: "ndizoyozithenga kwa Checkers. Anything specific?" Me: "No, just snacks. We'll cook for her." he nodded and walked off to Checkers. Fez: "mna ndizothengela uZingi some new clothes. She needs to feel loved too, lomntana is stealing her limelight." Zintle: "okay babes." Fez: "masambe siye kwa Woolworths Sandile." I was shocked that he had the guts of asking him out loud. Sandile followed him still talking on the phone. Zintle and I stared at each other. What the hell just happened? Zintle and I walked around and eventually ended up at Spur because I was hungry. Lakhe joined us then soon Sandile and Fez came back too. We ordered food. Zintle: "so,

Spho, I was figuring how about sigoduke, once everything is planned, just spend time and relax. Then ngomso ibeyi baby shower yakhe." Me: "that's a good idea. Ndinayo nendawo ediniweyo ngoku." Sands: "yeah, sizokwenza ne braai so funeke siyothenga inyama." I looked at him. Fez: "that's a great idea." Me: "He's not invited." Fez: "hayi Spho sungcola. They helped a lot today." Sands: "hayi mna bendingazoya kuye kakade. I need an excuse for i-braai." Me: "its December. You don't need an excuse for i-braai." Sands: "ndiright." my food arrived ndangena kuko immediately. After our lunch, we relaxed into a conversation. "Hi Fez." a voice said. It was a tall light skinned lady ehamba with two other girls. Wait... Fez: "Thami." he rolled his eyes. Thami: "molweni wethu Zintle noSpho. Aninqabe. And who's this." she looked at Sandile and Lakhe who both stared at their phones quietly. Thami: "anyway, ndiyabona awukaphucuki Fezile. What's that blog of yours again? Le ina 12 followers?" she laughed. Thami: "Sometimes you should leave that work to professionals." was she waiting for a response? Thami: "anywho, unlike some of us who-" Sands: "If you say one more word I will fucking drag you out of this establishment with your bloody face inside out. Uyandiva?" Thami: "hehak-" Sandile stood up. Sands: "Get." the look on his face made me buckle. Thami walked away. Sands: "niphakameni sambeni." he marched out. I asked for the bill. Zintle and Fez followed him. Lakhe was absolutely unaffected. You'd have sworn akekho. Lakhe: "yeke ndiy'batale baby." he took out his wallet. Me: "and then what happened to your brother?" Lakhe: "when?" Me: "now! When he threatened that horse." he burst out laughing. Lakhe: "Yazi wena noSandile. Mxim." Me: "Lakhe I'm serious, he changed from 0 to 100 real damn quick." Lakhe: "Sandile hates bullies. Eyona nto indothusayo yeyoba akhange amhlohle inyawo emlonyeni immediately, because Sandile is not in the business of warning people. Into ayaziyo kushova inqindi emntwin avale umlomo lo wakhe." Me: "unganqandi?" Lakhe: "hayi ndingenaphi?" he paid the bill and we walked out. Akhange kuphinde kuthethwe emotweni.

We arrived at our house around two in the afternoon. Zintle and Fez sat by the pool side drinking juice. I sat with them drinking my water. Sandile had disappeared into his bedroom the minute he arrived. Lakhe was watching television by himself in the lounge. Fez: "YOH. Friend." Me: "Don't." Fez: "Did you see how he defended me? I could've cried on the spot." Me: "Fezi-" Fez: "don't even try to dampen my shine. He is my superhero." Me: "Fezile, Sandile is not gay. I'm not saying this to hurt you, but to help you, I don't want you hurt." Fez: "hayi ke Spho, why would he defend me if he didn't like me? We spent all day together." Me: "you went to one shop." Fez: "My goodness. I

didn't even know he could get all serious, one minute we were like, the next we're like..... Then he's like..... YOH." with the dramatic hand gestures, I kid you not. Zintle: "kodwa Spho does Sandile have a girlfriend?" Me: "he used to." Zintle: "a lot of people have gone from straight to gay. Maybe he's shy." abamazi uSandile aba. I'm talking about a guy who stalks people on a daily basis, as a hobby. The guy who befriended his ex's husband. Drowns himself in a swimming pool when he's mad. Me: "he's not gay." Fez: "unomona ke uSpho ndinomntu ofana nowakhe." Me: "first of all, Sandile akafani tu noLakhe, secondly, ndinomona ngantoni kuSandile when he's like a jellybean, thirdly, and I say this with love, Look at my Husband honey. Come on!" they laughed. Fez: "I have to admit, he is hella sexy vha." Zintle: "what happened to that light skin fella?" Me: "Siya? Ukhona somewhere. Anyway Fez, Yinton ngoku uThami?" Fez: "heee, ndizophinda ndikubalisele tshomi. Ndisekwi high yomntu wam." Zintle: "I wonder uphi owam because the only reason I came here was to wait for him." Me: "worse ba zonke itshomi zam zidyole endlinam nabantwana bam." we laughed. Zintle: "because you breed sexy children." Me: "ndincamile, oooh nanku tata." Rob walked to us by the swimming pool. Engese skime utatakho sana ingathi yi pimp. He was dressed in red shorts and a white golf shirt with red stripes. And funny looking shoes. He had a black glove in one hand, plus shades on his face. Me: "molo tata, you look spectacular. Uvelaphi?" Rob: "I went for drinks at the golf club with my buddy Gregory, then hit a ball or two. Molweni ma'lady." Fez: "molo tata." Zintle: "hello." Rob: "my angel, I want you to help me. Sandile is in a mood, Lakhe akafuni. I want to take a picture for instagram." he gave me his phone. Me: "sure thing. I'm going to take just moment photos of you." Rob: "how?" Me: "pictures of you unaware of the camera. Like you walking out the sliding door, looking at the pool, things like that." Rob: "maybe one next to my helicopter." Me: "not today." I took a few good shots of him then we went to the driveway, where I took one of him closing the boot, another opening the driver door and the last one of him sitting on the seat facing outward, one leg hanging out while he was looking at a phone. Me: "there." I gave him back his phone to see. Rob: "Wow!! These are the best pictures anyone has ever taken of me. Enkosi mntanam." Me: "its a pleasure tata." Rob: "I'm going to frame this. Khame ndiyobonisa uSandile." he went inside the house. I went back in too. Lakhe: "and now? Nibusy nganton notatakho." Me: "just taking pictures." Lakhe: "wonke umntu apha kulendlu uhoywa ngaphezukwam. Do you see why I want them to leave? Andilifumani netontsi le attention mna apha." he got up and walked out. In a minute his car drove out. I was still confused. Nyani andimniki attention? Mr I'm-in-a-meeting. 'I'm taking Sibu out because he's not okay'. When did I not give him attention whereas ndihleli naye all day at the mall? Akasena drama uLakhe bethuna. Kengoku ubaleka

ntoni? Wow. I went back out to the girls. Zintle: "babes, mandinishiye mna."
Me: "I thought you were waiting for Sibub?" Zintle: "I was but you know its clear that akandifuni uSibub, mandimyeke wethu and focus on other things." I stared at her suspiciously. Me: "you mean utata ka Lakhe. Don't you even dare."
Zintle: "he has his own helicopter?" Me: "leave him alone! Zintle, Rob is in a delicate place, he doesn't need this. Please. Ndicela lo respect qha." Zintle: "okay fine! But should he make a move, I'm not promising I'll say no." Me: "Just go." Zintle: "bye mommy." she kissed my cheek and left. Me: "Fez awuhambi?" he shook his head. Me: "you okay?" Fez: "Sandile asked me to stay." Me: "when?" he showed me his phone. Indeed there was a message from Sandile: 'Ungahamb'apho.' I saw the sheepish grin from Fez's face. I didn't even know anymore ndaveske ndathula. Me: "izondincedisa upheka ke." we went to the kitchen, I took out the pots and meat. Wangena Masilakhe with plastics. He dropped them on the counter and looked at me with hands on his hips. Me: "what's this?" Lakhe: "this is dinner. Since you run around for this entire household uphinde upheke mna ndingalifumani tontsi Le attention yakho ndifike udiniwe ebhedini ulele. You don't have to cook. What's your excuse now." Me: "I never had an excuse." Lakhe: "clearly." Me: "litontsi elitheni eli Uthetha ngalo. Here I am talking to you, ayilotontsi elo?" Lakhe: "ayilo tontsi." I sighed. Me: "okay. Ulambile?" Lakhe: "Ewe." Me: "fine, check where Sibub is ndizophaka sityeni." Lakhe: "Yuh baby uSibub uzofika ngoo 3 apha ngu 2 ngoku." Me: "then have a sandwich." Lakhe: "Andifuni sandwich mna." Me: "ufuna ntoni Lakhe? Dinner?" Lakhe: "ewe. Cela undiphakele." I dug into the Spur plastic and took out a long slab of ribs. Putting it on a plate with some veggies. Me: "is this fine?" Lakhe: "ewe baby, enkosi." he took his plate and disappeared to the lounge. Me: "I don't know why he's being a baby today." Fez: "its cute man tshomi. Awumhoyi omnye wena." Me: "when! Ndihlala naye nje day in, day out." I took out a plate for Fez and dished for him as well wangena Sandile. Sands: "enkosi mntase, I can always count on you." he took the plate. Me: "that's not yours." he was already digging into a rib. Sands: "yeyaka bani?" he chewed. I took out another plate and dished for Fez who was stealing a picture of Sandile's side view eating. Me: "nantsi eyakho babes." Sandile put down his plate and took the new one. Me: "SANDILE!!!!!!!" I screamed. He froze. Sands: "Khange uthi ayoyam ley-" Me: "leave this plate alone. Itya Le buyitya. Put. This. Down." he put down the plate. Me: "thatha Le buyitya and leave." Sands: "but ubuthe ayoyam then wathi nantsi eyakho babes, now I'm getting yelled at. Ndenzeni?" Me: "I said leave." Sands: "fine." he took his plate and walked out. I dished for Rob then Dumi and Sibub. Covering their plates. Fez went to the dining table to eat. I brought Mr Rob's plate on a tray. Lakhe: "hehake." he mumbled. Rob: "Yinton Masilakhe Sobuk-" Lakhe: "since when does he get a tray now?" Me: "Lakhe you just took your

plate and left." he shook his head and ate. Rob: "sumhoya sthandwa Sam. Uzohlala ecamkwam utye okwakho ukutya. Uyeke la nopopi wakho ugezayo." Lakhe: "ndingunopopi tata?" Rob: "if you keep frowning like that, yes." Lakhe: "fine." I took my plate and we ate our early dinner. Fez took the dishes to the washer and I cleaned the table. Sands: "Fezile." Fez: "hm?" Sands: "izapha." Fez followed him to his bedroom. Closing the door behind them. Sands: "Uright?" he sat on the chair next to a napping Boogie. Fez: "I'm okay. Wena?" Sands: "perfect. I just wanted to check if you're okay. La Superman wetshomi yakho really pissed me off. I hate bullies." Fez giggled. Fez: "hamba Superman." Sands: "why didn't you defend yourself? Uyakwazi mos Uthetha." Fez: "hayi wethu Sandile ndiyabayeka mna abantu abafana noThami. Its not worth it." Sands: "isn't it? So a life of being afraid is worth it? Mawukhubeke wena?" Fez: "well no. Its more complicated than that." Sands: "tell me." Fez: "I can't." Sands: "awuphumi ke kule room ungandixelelanga. And ndiyasuza ke mna." he said with a straight face. Fez laughed. Fez: "khayeke Sandile." Sands: "you think I'm playing?" Fez: "no...I just don't feel like digging that part of me. Not even my friends know this." Sands: "ooohh. Thami is your ex girlfriend? So?" Fez: "euuw. Ndingu notsitsi mna Sandile, kutheni ndizodyola nabanye oonitsitsi?" Sandile stared at him confused. Sands: "okay, whatever, anyway, tell me ke." Fez: "I can't. Its embarrassing." Sands: "Kutheni ungandithembanga kodwa ndiku instagram wakho?" Fez: "fine." Sands: "thought as much." Fez: "Well, ndicela ungaxeleli mntu." Sands: "hehake. Bendizoxelela bani?" he picked Boogie up and put him on his chest brushing his fur. Fez: "Thami is my half sister." Sands: "wow, ndicimba yitshomakho mna." Fez: "No. Ngumntana ka tata wam. Sikhule kunye well until I was 14 then ndagxothwa ngutata kuba ndiyi gay. Ndayohlala nomama and my stepdad. Utatam used to blame my mother for me being gay esithi ndilinyala amthuke nase stratweni. So eventually noThami ke started doing it." Sands: "bayekwa nguwe." Fez: "they're my family Sandile." Sands: "according to me, and probably the rest of the world, when they disowned you they stopped being your family." Fez: "its more complicated than that." Sands: "Fezile, uzohlala ukhubeke kude kuthini? You being gay isn't depriving anyone their salary. Their shelter or anything else. Bahlutshwa Yinton? Nothing. They're being bullies. And bullies kill people. These people will push you over the edge, next thing sidibane nawe sowuzityisa ipilisi apha. You need to put them to order right now." Fez: "how?" Sands: "you want the legal way or illegal way?" Fez: "legal obviously but for curiosity sake what would've been the illegal way." Sands: "if I tell you, we'd have to go through with it. Khame ndilalise uBoogile. He's restless." Fez: "put him down uzolala myeke. Ngunonjana mos." Sands: "ngumntanam uBoogile and uyamngxolela ufuna ulala." he looked at his phone. Sands: "we'll have to reschedule our adventure. Something has come

up that needs my immediate attention. Sothetha ngomso." Fez: "okay ke. Goodbye. Bye bye Boogile." Sands: "hayi ke iworse. Uzokuva njan ume apho? Khaphume wethu." Fez walked out the room to the lounge. Fez: "peto." Me: "hey." Fez: "cela undikhuphe. Goodbye Mr Rob, bye bye bhut'Lakhe." Lakhe: "sho." Rob: "goodbye Fez." I walked him out to his car. Me: "Uright friend?" Fez: "tshomi ndiyamthanda mna uSandile. I think I'm falling for him." Me: "what happened?" Fez: "he listens when I talk and he is understanding. I feel connected to him." Me: "Okay babes. Don't worry about it. Just relax." Fez: "you're not gonna tell me I'm crazy, and he's straight and I should forget about it?" Sandile is serious about keeping people out of his bedroom, if you're in there by his order, you're one lucky motherfucker shame. Me: "no Fez, I'm your friend. If Sandile is showing signs of comfortability nawe then that's that. I have no business in meddling. I always support you no matter what. I've only known Sandile for a few months, maybe he is bisexual, and if he is, he would be lucky to land a great wifey like you." Fez: "that means so much to me my friend." I hugged him. Me: "Uhambe kakuhle ke sthandwa." he got in his car. Fez: "love you mommy." Me: "love you too sweetheart. And andingomama wenu nina." he laughed and drove off. I went inside the house and sat next to Lakhe staring at him. Lakhe: "what." Me: "nothing." he took his eyes off the TV and looked at me. Lakhe: "you sure?" Me: "you said andik'hoyi so ndim lo." Lakhe: "really? When a game of Manchester United plays, ufuna uzondihoya wena?" Me: "I give up." I took his phone and played a game. A few minutes later Dumi and Sibu walked in. Lakhe: "finally. Family meeting in 20 minutes, vasani izandla nitye and get seated comfortably." the guys did as they were told and everyone gathered after 20 minutes. Lakhe: "Spho received a call last night, actually right around midnight." Sands: "from whom?" Whom? Hamba Sandile. Me: "She said she was Anne from Groovmor Clinic." Sibu: "Anne? I know Anne. She usually takes care of the night shift and sometimes play chess with my mother xa engakwazi ulala. Shift yakhe iqala at 4 when I leave my visits." Me: "well uhm. Sibu, Anne called and said that your mother has said something. When I asked what did she say, and when, the phone cut off. I tried calling back but it didn't ring again." Sibu: "what do you mean it didn't ring? Njani?" Me: "it just beeps ayikhali. We wanted to tell you ksasa but you left early and we didn't want to disturb you from work." he shifted uncomfortably. Sibu: "I have to go. I need to speak to Anne." Sands: "I'm coming with you." he got up and took his keys. Lakhe: "nam. We'll be back soon baby." Me: "ucimba ndiyashiyeka?" Lakhe: "baby, please? We just want to know what is going on." Me: "its day time. I want to go too." Lakhe: "No Spho." he walked out. I went to my bedroom and closed my door locking it behind me. I took my laptop and carried on working.

Lakhe: "what the hell do you mean you can't find her Rose? She was here last night! She called my wife!" Rose: "I'm very sure. I haven't seen her today. And according to our register which I shouldn't even be mentioning to you, she didn't sign out this morning." Siby: "and what does that mean?" Sands: "that she didn't leave obviously. She's in here somewhere, Rose is it possible that maybe she's taking a nap? Do you have a place where your nurses rest?" Rose: "Yes. There is a break room. But Anne never stays, she goes home to rest." Lakhe: "I want to see that break room." Rose: "You aren't authorized to go there, sir." Lakhe: "Rose, I'm going to tell you one last time. We need to speak to Anne. Who else was working here last night?" Rose: "Timothy, he just signed in before you got here, let me call him." she dialed a number. Siby: "Bhuti..." Lakhe: "Yes?" Siby: "maybe....we should let it go." Lakhe: "njani Sibulele xa kulahleke umntu ongenzanga nto irongo?" Rose: "here he is, Mr Sobukwe." Lakhe: "Timothy?" Tim: "Yes, can I help?" Lakhe: "You were working with Anne last night?" Tim: "Yes. Why?" Lakhe: "Do you know where she might be?" Tim: "No." Lakhe: "Timothy, when was the last time you saw her?" Tim: "uhm....maybe before midnight I think." Lakhe: "what was she doing?" Tim: "she was...doing rounds." Lakhe: "and?" Tim: "uhm, that's all I remember." Lakhe: "Timothy." Sands: "what my brother is asking is, was there any other person around here? Besides staff? Was there anything out of place or awkward?" Tim: "come this way." he led them to the break room. Tim: "guys, I don't know where Anne is I swear, but....last night." Siby: "what happened?" Timothy looked down the passage and closed the door. Tim: "Well, I use the free internet to download some stuff to keep me company. We're not allowed to do it but, it gets boring on night shift so Ikind of steal it." Sands: "and then what happened?" Tim: "well, while I was using the company computer, downstairs, in private, I heard a bit of a thud. I thought it was from my videos so I didn't stop. Then.....the electricity went off." the guys looked at each other. Lakhe: "the power tripped? Or what?" Tim: "that's what I thought. I finished up, then cleaned up downstairs with my phone flash light-" Sands: "Timothy we don't care about your masturbation episodes, what happened next?" Tim: "I went back up, I think it was after 5 minutes after the electricity went off. I went to check the box and found the lever was pushed down. So I pushed it back up and the lights came on. I did try looking for someone else but I figured they were napping." Lakhe: "Where was the last place you saw Anne?" Tim: "at Block C. I know because she always takes her time on that floor if not the whole night. Did something happen to her?" Siby: "No. We just want to talk to her." Tim: "I have her husband's number. You can call him." he took out his phone. Lakhe took the number. Lakhe: "thank you Timothy, none

of what you told us will leave this room." Tim: "thank you." they walked out. Sibú: "I want to see my mother. She lives in Block C." Lakhe: "go ahead. Uzosifumana emotweni." Sibú went to register his name and walked to his mother's room. He knocked twice and opened. Sibú: "mama?" she was sitting on the chair, by the desk writing. Sibú: "Unjani?" she continued writing quietly. He looked over to see what it was. 'Komanded.' Written over 50 times. Sibú grew cold. He looked around the room. He came here. Komander had been in this room. Sibú: "Mama, I'm going to get you out of here. I swear. Just hang tight. I'm doing everything I can. Uyandiva mama? Nobody will hurt you." he held her shoulder. She scribbled again. 'Komand Will Come.' Sibú's breath hitched a bit. Sibú: "what did he say? Did he threaten you? Is he in the hospital? A doctor? A visitor? Another patient? Where is he?" she continued writing 'Komanded' over again. "Sibú?" Sandile stood in the doorway. Sibulele looked up. Sands: "we have to go." Sibú: "Look." Sandile walked in and looked at the diary. Sands: "let's go. Now."

#87

Lakhe knocked on the bedroom door. "Baby? Cela uvule umnyango. Spho?" I was finished with my work. I now browsed the internet for a car. I wanted a Range Rover and I needed to make sure if I could afford it first. This would mean a meeting with my financial advisor. I called him and he picked up almost immediately. "Hey Spho, how are you?" Me: "I'm fine Abo, how are you?" Abo: "I'm great, ndingak'nceda nganton namhlanje?" Me: "well I was thinking of buying a car, I want you to check for me if I'm good to go. I'm going to send my details after I speak to my lawyer then undijongele kwi Range Rover." Abo: "absolutely. Let me know when you've emailed me." Me: "will do. Thank you Abo." I hung up. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi, I can hear you talking, so ndicela uvule. I know you're mad at me. Frankly I don't know why. Please open this door." I was going to, but he had an attitude in that statement because he knows I would open. I have a snack bar, a packet of chips and a milkshake in the bar fridge inside this bedroom. There is also a toilet, there is a sink for water as well. I don't have to open that door. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi!!!!" Sands: "Yinton ngoku bhuti?" Lakhe: "tell her to open this door!" Sands: "Kuthen unomsindo kengoku?" Lakhe: "uSpho doesn't understand that I want to protect her and my child, just because ndithe kuye akanohamba aye k'la ndawo she's mad. Which is childish! Asiyazi mos yinton epha! Now she's locked me out of our bedroom because of that!" Sands: "yeah that is immature Spho. Uzotya ntoni? What about the baby?" I cuddled my tummy under blankets and listening to soft classic music in my earphones.

My phone was on flight mode and couldn't be disturbed. Sooner or later I fell into a deep sleep.

Friday morning I woke up feeling super refreshed and energetic. I changed the bed sheets and went to shower. After my shower, I went to get dressed. White leggings and a pink maternity top and my white Adidas Stan Smith sneakers. When I was done fixing myself and all, I took my handbag and walked out the bedroom. Everyone was in the lounge staring at the television quietly. Rob: "hello sweetheart, Unjani?" Me: "ndiphilile tata Unjani wena?" Rob: "I'm fine pumpkin." I looked for the keys on the key bowl in the lounge. Not even one key. Only eze moto ka Rob were present. Lol. Me: "Lakhe ndicela istixo semoto." Cwaka. I stood next to him. He stared at the TV quietly. Me: "Masilakhe?" no response. Lol. Izomxaka le ayenzayo. I took out my phone and went on to Uber. Rob: "Mntanam thatha ley-" Lakhe: "Tata." Rob: "hayi kodwa Masilakhe awunode u-punisha uSpho ngemoto." Lakhe: "imoto kaban? Endlin kaban? Uphi wena ngoku?" Rob: "Uske undibhide. Ubuthuzuzelwa ndim izolo oku, utshintshela mna ngoku?" I requested an Uber who was 2 minutes away. I took my bag and walked out. Rob: "what the hell was that for?" Lakhe: "une attitude uSpho." Rob: "nawe!" Lakhe: "if she can act childish, so can I." Rob: "Masilakhe, nitshatile. You're supposed to talk." Lakhe: "akafuni uthetha nam. So nam Andifuni ke. Uyaw'zibona ba makathini." Rob: "if something were to happen to her or your baby ehamba nge nyawo, uzothini Masilakhe?" Lakhe jumped up and looked out the door. Lakhe: "nankuya eyokhwela kwi Audi. Ndingenaphi mna?" Sands: "that's UberBLACK." Lakhe: "how the hell did you" Sands: "its what I do." he sat down. Rob: "Masilakhe, nika uSpho imoto yakhe. You're her husband no matter how childish she's being. You are supposed to nurture her." Lakhe: "Sandile uzobasa nini umlilo?" Sands: "izokwenziwa apha Le braai? I thought sizoya kuZ- never mind." he got up and walked out. Sibu: "I'll help him. Khaze ne beer Dumi." Dumi went to the fridge to fetch a carrypack of Corona and went outside. Rob: "What's really going on with you?" Lakhe: "nothing!" Rob: "nyana, talk to me." Lakhe: "cela undiyeke tata. I'm fine." Rob: "you know you're my baby boy-" Lakhe: "Tata, I'm not 2, ndiyeke. Please." Rob: "ndizokuteketisa ke mna ude uthethe uhlutshwa yinton. My chocolate muffin." Lakhe stared at him. Lakhe: "You're still in my house." Rob: "Thetha nam kaloku. Hayi Masilakhe andizokucenga kangaka awuyo cherrie." Lakhe: "mxim. Tata bendirongo phi? I just want to protect her. I don't want her to lose this baby. Is it wrong xandingafuni aye kwi ndawo ezinjeya? I'm not being mean but I've attached to my baby, I don't know what I'll do if I were to lose him." Rob: "kengoku kutheni ungathethi noSpho and make her understand."

Lakhe: "Spho is stubborn, kudala ndimxelela. Akafuni undiva." Rob: "then mxelele some more until she does. Keeping quiet and moping around usixhaya isn't going to help. And hiding the car keys isn't helping either." Lakhe: "unditixele mos out my room mna ndidiniwe ndifuna ulala. She didn't care about that." Rob: "she was upset." Lakhe: "why uthanda umthethelela uSpho? Why for once mna ndingathethelelwa?" Rob: "uyindoda umdala ungaka? Khaxole wethu. Women must be treated like golden eggs mntanam, if it means tiptoeing then so be it." Lakhe: "hayi ke tata naxa erongo? Andicingi mna." Rob: "you know the secret to a happy marriage? Happy wife, Happy Life." Lakhe: "but that didn't work for you." Rob: "no matter what I did, nothing could make Stella happy, except the jewelry and cars I bought her, her issues with me were never really with me. They were deeper than that. But Spho is not your mother, she is completely different, she is kind, she is sweet, she cares about you genuinely and does everything for you. Uyakthanda lomntana Sobukwe. She even cooks for you on a daily basis. Uyayazi ndagqibela nini uphekelwa ngumamakho mna? NEVER." Lakhe: "is that why you won't leave my house?" Rob: "that's not the point. Uyathandwa, the least you could do, is treat her like royalty. Please. Even not for wena, but for the baby. Imagine what she's going through, what she's feeling. The baby is slowing down her life and wena awuyiboni lonto." Lakhe: "I didn't think of that. Ndithin ke tata xa enditixela phandle and not talk to me?" Rob: "apologize, make things right. Make her listen if she won't talk. I shouldn't have to tell you what to do to your wife, if anyone knows her, its you." Lakhe took the remote and switched channels.

All the baby stuff was back in the house and I'd be damned if I had to go back there today. Lakhe was damn near driving me crazy. I just didn't want to see him at all. Zintle: "Spho, we need the baby presents to take to Zingi. Uzoqumba kude kuthini?" Me: "he revolts me." Fez: "heee Sphosenkosi, you're pregnant, his child, OBVIOUSLY he is going to revolt you but this is not about you ngoku. You need to go back there and fetch the things." Me: "uxuthe istixo semoto, mandizule ngo Uber mna ngoku. Sies." Zintle: "then we'll take my car." Me: "I'm not going back there. I have a meeting anyway." Zintle: "Who could you possibly have a meeting with on New Years Eve?" Me: "my financial advisor. Ndifuna uthenga imoto. Besides, my insurance paid out a few weeks ago, I'm thinking of adding a few bucks kuyo and buying a Range Rover." Fez: "Range Rover? YASSS Gyal!! I'm 100% with you. Ibene panoramic roof please. Ibe bomvu tshomza. Yuuuuh uzoba gorrrrge." Me: "not Red. I want it blue. Or maybe white." Fez: "u-white unditshisisa ngomchamo mna tshomi. Iyadika. Funeke i-color e-pazaaaz. Maybe yellow." Me: "yellow?"

Really?" Fez: "okanye ibe pink ke friend. Your choice." I giggled. Me: "how about wena uye endlin uyolanda ezinto. You'll talk to Sandile, he's your hubby now." Zintle: "ewe masiye Fez." Me: "I hope to God you're not hoping to meet with Rob." Zintle: "khayeke wethu Spho. Utata uRob ukuba ufuna impundu ezi fresh, nazi. Qha qwaba. Akazongatyi, utyiwa nawe. Uzam'pha?" Me: "euw." Zintle: "then let us be." Me: "sizodibaneni kwa Zingi in an hour." Fez: "iza ndik'droppe kwi meeting sikushiye khona." they dropped me off at Walmer, Zest. I walked inside and sat down waiting with a glass of orange juice. Ukhona lomntu undisindayo yazi. Besides my baby. I looked around and found a set of eyes staring at me. Wow. Out of all the places in the city he had to come here? By the look of his table he'd been here a while too. He got up and walked to me with his glass. Siya: "are you stalking me?" I smiled. Me: "don't flatter yourself." he sat down opposite me and I could feel my insides melting. I had to leave. Siya: "Unjani? I see your attempts of avoiding me." Me: "I'm not avoiding you, I'm fine, Unjani wena?" Siya: "I'm okay I guess. Just got off a 32 hour shift. Accident patients." Me: "you should be asleep." Siya: "I can't. My body is too stiff." Me: "so you think alcohol is gonna help you? Because you will end up next to your patients bed uneyakho nawe. Nincedisana nge bathroom break." he laughed. Siya: "ubufuna ndithini? My mother is on some road trip with her old friends baya eKapa for the New Year." my juice arrived. Me: "so why don't you take some time off and relax." Siya: "and do what? With who?" Me: "sight see. Find a girl. Or A guy. Have drinks." Siya: "I'm not the right company for other people right now." I nodded. Siya: "except you. You bring out the best in me." Me: "Do I?" Siya: "Yes." he smiled. Siya: "so uzothini apha?" Me: "well, I'm meeting my financial advisor. He's helping me buy a car." Siya: "what happened to your car?" Me: "I had an accident." Siya: "when! Kwathini ungatsho Spho? Is the baby okay?" Me: "Relax! Not recently. I'm talking about the one months ago. That car was written off." he sighed. Siya: "you scared me." Me: "I'm okay. Don't worry." Siya: "but you have the ML, don't you use that?" Me: "that's Lakhe's car. All of them." Siya: "is he using them?" Me: "that's not the point." Siya: "it kind of is. You're married to him, what's his is yours, and I believe that includes cars." Me: "yeah well, I want my own." Siya: "did something happen?" Me: "No." Siya: "I like how you think you can lie to me." Me: "I just don't want to talk about it." Siya: "Fine, what car do you want?" Me: "a Range Rover." Siya: "Wow, so you just decide to dive in with the big boys huh? That's good." I chuckled. Me: "nanku Abo." I waved him over. Siya: "let me leave you to it then. Undixelele xa uhamba." I nodded and he left to his table. I started my meeting with Abo and we were done within an hour. He had to rush somewhere else. I was tired again. And hungry. I went over to the lounge where Siya was sitting. He looked so comfortable like in his own living room with feet on the table. I sat

down. Me: "I'm done." Siya: "andikakuboni usitya." Me: "yeah I just ordered now." Siya: "you want to get a take away?" he looked at me. Crap. Me: "uhm..." Siya: "relax, I don't bite." Me: "I have to go to a baby shower I'd planned and I'm already tired." Siya: "you have to be there?" Me: "Yes. She's my best friend." I untied my shoe laces. Siya: "izapha." he picked up my foot. Me: "No I'll be fine-" Siya: "stop fighting me." he massaged my foot. Siya: "zikubambile ezizihlangu and your feet are swelling. You're hurting yourself." Me: "andizonxiba eza sandal zika makhulu all the time, nam ndifuna ubamhle." Siya: "eziphi sandal zika makhulu?" I showed him a picture and he giggled. Siya: "I think they're adorable." Me: "you're just saying that." Siya: "yeah, they're horrible. But what's important is your comfortability more than anything. The baby is swiping a lot of your energy and the best way is to be comfortable. I don't want you to have aches and stress. Is Lakhe giving you back rubs like I suggested in the email?" Me: "yes, every night." Siya: "Perfect. Its a good thing he's supportive of you and his baby." Me: "why does it then feel like he's too much?" Siya: "don't give in to that negativity. There's a lot of women out there who go through this by themselves and they wish they had a supportive husband like yours. Don't take it for granted. Let him help you. If you need space, let him know. Don't just shut him out. Okay?" Me: "Okay." Siya: "how did your car meeting go?" Me: "really well. I can afford it. He has 3 places on standby. I'm going to check them out next week." Siya: "good. I wish you all the best." Me: "so are you just going to spend New Years alone?" Siya: "yeah. I'll be at the hospital though. Not really alone there." Me: "do you have to be at the hospital or awunayo enye indawo yokuya?" Siya: "funny enough I do, I just don't want to. An old friend of mine is in town. Wanted me to go with him to a pool party. Andisemdala for i-pool party." Me: "what would be your ideal New Years eve then?" Siya: "if I had a wife, it would be with her. Sihlale endlin. Watch TV with our dog Meryl. Cook together, when midnight strikes put on the fireworks outside and watch them together." Me: "no party? Invite friends?" Siya: "maybe just a few. I'm just not a party person. Maybe a small gathering, for a few hours then that's it." my phone rang and I almost swore at it. Who the hell could it be! I took it out and stared at it. Me: "its my friends. Hold on." I answered the call. Me: "hello." Fez: "awukagqibi babes?" Me: "no I'm still busy sweetheart, ningakhabe nisiya ndizonifumana khona." Fez: "okay then." I hung up. Siya: "you should go." Me: "Yeah." Siya: "Khame ndiye bathroom I'll be back." he got up and went to the bathroom. I pressed my phone while I waited. The waiter brought my refill of juice and food. I started eating. Siya came back in a short while. He took a piece of my meat and tossed it in his mouth, chewing. Me: "uyathanda undityela wena." Siya: "is that so? Ngoku ndisithi ndiyancedisa." I laughed. Me: "mxim vha." Siya: "can I touch your stomach?" Me: "uhmm." he put his hand on my belly and

felt a soft kick. He smiled. Siya: "undikhabile." Me: "I know." Siya: "she likes me." Me: "is that what you think?" Siya: "ewe tshi. Its so obvious." Me: "uyavuya wena. She usually kicks during the evening. Adlale ke until I fall asleep, I don't even mind anymore." Siya: "so did you ask for the gender?" Me: "You're the doctor." Siya: "I never looked to be honest. I was kind of disturbed." Me: "by what?" Siya: "You." Me: "its not like You'd never seen me before." Siya: "True. Its just that bendingak'lindelanga and for you to say you're pregnant.....I just blacked out." Me: "yeah I remember you looking at me like I'd committed murder." Siya: "I'm sorry." Me: "its fine." Siya: "nanku uyaphinda uyandikhaba." Me: "you know she's inside me right?" he chuckled. Siya: "its so exciting. A new life is just amazing. Delicate. Its like writing a book. Something you're creating from scratch." Me: "Wow Siya, You've just compared my baby to a book." Siya: "the best book ever written, by the best author." I smiled. Me: "I think I want a girl. I'm the only woman kulandlu except Nosi who's in and out. I want a daughter." Siya: "I thought you wanted a boy. What changed?" Me: "from the experience of living with them, I've changed my mind." Siya: "and what if kuphuma ikwekwe?" Me: "then I'd love him too. No harm." he nodded. He looked at his watch. Siya: "are you rested?" Me: "Yes." Siya: "then its time to go." Me: "you can go, I'll wait for Uber." Siya: "no way I'm leaving you here by yourself. Let me drop you off." he put on my sneaker back on my foot and laced it up. Siya: "there." Me: "you're going to work?" Siya: "No. I've got other business to attend to." he paid the bills and walked me to his car. Siya: "you look beautiful by the way. You got the glow. Pregnancy agrees with you." Me: "thank you Siya." he opened the passenger door for me and I slipped in. He walked around to get into the driver's seat then drove us out. Siya: "so ugqibele nini uncokola notatakho?" Me: "on Wednesday, he called and let me know he's okay." Siya: "you seemed stressed the other day. Was it about him?" Me: "Yeah." Siya: "are you okay?" Me: "Yeah. Its just...something really weird happened." Siya: "what is it?" Me: "well, the clinic where umama ka Sibuy is, called at midnight to report that she'd spoken." Siya: "why would they call at midnight to tell you that?" Me: "she'd gone mute the whole day." Siya: "oookay. Then what happened?" Me: "when I asked what she said, the call was hung up. Everything about it was weird." I was actually waiting to see a reaction. Siya: "nothing else was said? She didn't call back?" I shook my head. Siya: "you sure it wasn't Sandile playing with you?" he wasn't phased at all. Me: "I don't think he'd go that far. Besides I checked the number, the call came from inside the hospital." Siya: "Did you ask the hospital what happened?" Me: "Lakhe went there yesterday, but I'm not talking to him so I don't know what happened." Siya: "when he came back from the hospital did you notice anything different?" Me: "I didn't see him, I was sleeping." Siya: "and this morning?" Me: "no he was his usual self. All of them." Siya: "all of them

being? Sibuy and Sands and Dumi?" Me: "yeah." Siya: "Oh. So where is the lady that called you?" I looked at him. There. Me: "how did you know it was a lady?" he looked back at me. The most innocent look on his face. Siya: "I assumed. Most hospitals have majority lady nurses. Or Was it a man?" WOOW. He was good. Me: "no it was a woman." Siya: "Oh. I'm sure nothing is wrong. Don't worry yourself about it." Me: "you sure?" Siya: "maybe it was a power shortage. Maybe the signal was bad. There's probably an explanation as to why the call hung up." Me: "so you don't think anything happened to her?" Siya: "no. If something happened, someone must have seen. A hospital is huge and the lights are always on. There's cameras and There's always nurses and doctors walking around. I'm sure she's okay. Why are you so worried?" So it probably wasn't him. Me: "because this is the second call days apart that has cut from me. First ibingu tata." Siya: "maybe its your network provider. Have it checked." Me: "you're right." I directed him to Zingi's place and he parked outside. Me: "Thank you. For everything." Siya: "its a pleasure. I hope you enjoy yourself." Me: "I will. Please try and have some fun too." Siya: "I promise." Me: "goodbye then." I hugged him. There was a knock on the window of his side. SANDILE. He waved at us smiling. Siya opened the window. Siya: "Hey. Unjani?" Sands: "I'm perfect, are you coming in? We have plenty of everything. Food, cake, single women. You name it." Siya: "actually I'm good, thank you though." Sands: "really? You have plans?" Siya: "Yes." Sands: "On a scale of baby shower to real party, what are we looking at?" Siya: "I'm not going to a party." he looked over at me. Siya: "take care of yourself and little butterfly kicks." Me: "thanks Siya. Uhambe kakuhle." I got out the car and walked in the house. Zintle: "you made it!" Me: "I did. And why did you bring your friend?" Fez: "he insisted. I couldn't say no." Me: "you could. You just wouldn't." Fez: "Yuh mfazi. Don't crucify me. Geez. What's up with you?" I sat down on the couch. Me: "Uphi uZingi?" Fez: "she's getting dressed. What's up with you?" Me: "Nothing, I'm just tired. I had a long meeting." Sands: "with Siya?" Me: "No. With my financial advisor. Siya was at the restaurant, he offered me a lift qha." Sands: "oh. Why doesn't he want to stay for a drink?" Me: "you heard him say he had plans." Sands: "he's not going to a party though." Me: "Gee Sandile, your hobby is stalking people please go find him." Sands: "Well, aren't you spicy today." he sat next to me. Everyone else went to the kitchen. Me: "what the hell are you doing here? Uyayazi uDumi Uphi?" I whispered. Sands: "uyayazi uLakhe uvelaphi?" he smiled. Me: "If you think you're going to blackmail me, you have another thing coming. I was in a meeting." Sands: "and I was helping a friend. Why are you stressing?" Me: "Dumi is your best friend." Sands: "Lakhe is your husband." Me: "What are you implying?" Sands: "I'm not implying anything." Me: "Sandile." Sands: "I'm good at keeping secrets Spho. You know that. You let me do my thing, I let you do

yours. Without interruptions. I'm not Judge Judy." Me: "Oh. My. God. You still like her?" I hissed. Sands: "And you still like him. Looks like we butchered back to the same spot." Me: "I don't like Siya." Sands: "That's not what I saw." Me: "then you need glasses." Sands: "Spho we can go back and forth arguing about what's what. Truth of the matter is, we're in the same spot. You're my sister, you have my back. I'm your brother, and I got your back Jack. Understood?" his eyes were low and dark. It sounded more like a threat. I nodded. Sands: "perfect. Now, for some TV? I think I saw a repeat of one of your favorite shows airing." I was just cold in my seat. What game was Sandile playing?

It was well into the night after we had dinner at Zingi's thanks to Fez. It was delicious. Sandile had fallen asleep after his second plate. Zintle was getting ready for a party. Zintle: "tshomi kaloku masambe." Fez: "hayi tshomi andihambi." Zintle: "we've been looking forward to this for months!! Njani ungahambi?" Fez: "hehake Friend, wabuza i-bus ibhaliwe." Zintle: "Fezile, sundiphambanisa." Fez: "nganton ngoku Zintle. If you want to go, go." Zintle: "Fez uSandile ulele. Uzamthin elele?" Fez: "uneenyoka ke." Zintle: "Spho talk to him." Me: "Yeah she's right Fez. Sandile uyow'vuka ksasa shame. I don't want to lie to you. Besides, you don't want to be in his face all the time. Awufuni adikwe nguwe. Let him miss you." Fez: "you're right. Okay, fine. Masambe ke tshomi." he took his purse. Fez: "bye guys. Love you too. Don't go wild." I laughed. Me: "Funny Fez.." Zintle: "thanks Spho, love you babes. Nilale kamandi." Zingi: "love you too." they left together. Me: "I should get this one home. Sandile? Wake up sweetie. Its time to go." Sands: "hm.hm." he shifted and continued sleeping. Oh hell. Me: "Sandile vuka! We're going home." he opened his eyes. Sands: "You were doing so well." Me: "what?" he sat up on the couch. Zingi was tidying the house. Sands: "thatha imoto ugoduke. Tell them you left me at a club. Keep Sibu and Dumisani inside the house." Me: "Sandile, No." Sands: "Yes." he gave me his keys. Me: "Sandile please don't do this. Zingi talk to him." Sands: "Leave her out of this. Sphosenkosi, I don't care uyaphi, iya ku Siya. Just go. Please." Me: "ndizothini kuDumi? How can I look him in the eye." Sands: "the same way you do uLakhe. Go." Me: "Sandile, don't do this to our family. I'm begging you." now he kept quiet and just stared at me with the cold dark look that scared me to death. I took the keys and my bag then walked out to his car, driving home. It was drizzling a bit. In my thoughts I saw Siya, as he was sitting opposite me at Zest. The way my stomach somersaults whenever he's around. When we were at the lounge chilling. I stopped at the robots. I wonder if he went to the party or at the hospital. No Spho, Drive home. Yet my foot wouldn't press the accelerator.

My hand went to the indicators and instead I turned right. My heart was racing. I took my phone and dialed his number then stopped. I had to go home. I made a U-turn and drove home without thinking again. My heart hammered inside my chest. I parked in my driveway. It was full on raining now. I got out the car and went inside the house. It was empty. Lights off and all. I walked to my bedroom and Lakhe was on his laptop laying on the bed. Me: "hi." Lakhe: "hi." I took off my wet clothes. He stared at me quietly. After covering with my gown I went to the laundry room to put it in the washing then came back to shower. I walked back to bed with my lotion ndathambisa. The laptop was off the bed now. He was just looking at me. Lakhe: "I'm sorry I hid the car keys." he started. Lakhe: "it was childish of me. I guess I wanted payback for getting locked out. I deserved it to be honest, I was being a jerk. I just want to protect you and my baby." I massaged my breasts. Hearing him swallow almost made me giggle. Lakhe: "I'd lose my mind if I lost either one of you. Ndicela undixolele Spho." I looked at him. Me: "Where's everyone?" Lakhe: "the boys are playing in the game room andimazi Uphi uSandile. Tata is sleeping." I nodded. Lakhe: "ubuye nganton?" Me: "ngemoto ka Sandile. Left him at a club." Lakhe: "you went to a club?" Me: "ndiyinton kwi club ke mna ndimngaka? I just dropped him off." Lakhe: "Oh." I took my thigh long socks and wore them along with my night dress. Lakhe: "I missed you." I got into bed. Me: "I'm sorry I locked you out. I was just mad." Lakhe: "its okay." he kissed my lips and I let him but that's all he did. Lakhe: "how was your day." I kissed him again. Taking his hand to my breast. He pulled me closer and kissed my nipple. His hand slipped between my thighs and rubbed on my clit. Me: "yesss...." his finger found the entrance and he pushed it in. I held his face and kissed his lips. Lakhe: "baby...." Me: "shhhh..." he disappeared under the blankets and opened my legs wider then I felt soft tender kisses on my inner thighs. His finger still pumped in and out slowly. Then his lips landed on my clit. Me: "Ohhhhh..." he sucked on it softly and gently. Me: "No, harder baby." he went a little harder, devouring. Me: "YESS!!!" he pushed the second finger in. Me: "Oh honey!!!" my thighs were shaking. Me: "baby plleeease don't. Stop." he held my thigh up while his fingers and mouth worked. Me: "its coming daddy!! Yesss!!!" I was throbbing and ready for him, it came in splashes driving me into a spiral of crazy. He came up and pushed his erection in, slowly dancing in circles. Me: "baby faster....please." he pumped faster, I turned over to my side. Me: "Lakhe!!!" Lakhe: "Yess baby...." he groaned. Lakhe: "shittt..." Me: "get all of it daddy Yess!!" he crumbled the sheet in a fist lock. Lakhe: "baby wam...." Me: "its cuming baby..." Lakhe: "shiiit shit shiiiiit. Spho I can't...." Me: "almost there baby. Yesss!!!" I held his hand as I shook with orgasm. He flopped beside me. Me: "Wow." Lakhe: "Wow is correct." I got up and went to the toilet. Me: "nguwe ke ozolala kulondawo

uyenze manzi." Lakhe: "totally worth it." I came back to bed. He cuddled me in his arms. Lakhe: "is my baby fine?" Me: "yeah." Lakhe: "I don't want to hurt her." Me: "is that why you're so gentle?" Lakhe: "is that a bad thing?" Me: "Well, no. I just noticed you were holding back a bit." Lakhe: "I'm sorry." Me: "its fine. I think its safer that way." Lakhe: "I can't wait till You've healed after birth so I can tear you apart till the following week." Me: "you know that'll be 3 months after birth right?" Lakhe: "hayi ke ungaqali. 3 full months? Uthanda kangaka undiqhayisela ngempundu? Awusoze kaloku uzoyolala phe front." Me: "ndikuqhayisele nini ngempundu Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "awuziboni wena xa ugqibo vasa uthambisa apha?" Me: "awusena drama. Funeke kengoku ndinxibe bathroom?" Lakhe: "I didn't say that. But damn baby, awunondi punisher olohlobo. Please." Me: "uzolala efront kaloku." Lakhe: "at least one month." Me: "I said 3." Lakhe: "phof andina worry yam mna. Nguwe ozondinqika ndilele." Me: "enough about us, what happened at the hospital?" Lakhe: "Anne has disappeared baby. When your call cut off, the electricity tripped, I think someone did it on purpose, but how could they have been so quick? Omnye u-nurse obesebenza with Anne was downstairs only heard a thud. Then kwacima umbane. He went up 5 minutes later and put it back on. That was it. Nobody has seen Anne, not even her husband." Me: "This nurse she was working with, why did he take so long to go check for the electricity?" Lakhe: "he was watching porn and masturbating. He had to finish." I rolled my eyes. Me: "what if its him and he's using the masturbation as a cover up story? Why would a man admit to another man that he was masturbating at work? What if it was a distraction for you to stop asking?" he kept quiet for a while. Me: "and where was he watching the porn? On his phone?" Lakhe: "no he says he used the computer pha?" Me: "that's impossible. I'm sure, almost 100% that those types of websites are blocked from the hospital internet. He lied." Lakhe sat up. Lakhe: "yazi unyansile Sphosenkosi. He took us to a room away from the staff to talk to us and he was so willing to share that information." Me: "did he show you the downstairs he was supposedly masturbating in?" Lakhe: "he didn't." he got up and dressed in sweatpants and a vest. I too stood up and wore my nightie and long gown over it plus slippers. I followed him out of the room. He went to the game room. Sibu and Dumi, get this AND Sandile, I wish I was joking, were sitting together playing video games. When the hell did he get home? And How? But thank God. Lakhe: "We have a problem." Sibu: "yintoni bhuti?" Lakhe: "We got played. Timothy could have been lying. There is by no way he could watch porn on the hospital computer, he wasn't downstairs, he was the one who took Anne."

Sandile had made me hot cocoa and brought me biscuits. I don't know why. I wrapped a blanket around my legs because for some odd reason bendigodola. Lakhe also brought me thick warm socks for my feet. I was finally warming up. Sibú: "I have to get my mother out of there." Sands: "immediately. Tell them what you showed me." Sibú: "ndiye ndangena kula room ebekuyo, uhm, she was writing in some diary, the word, Komanded. Over and over again." Lakhe: "Whaaaat." he hissed. Sibú: "and then when I told her I'm going to get her out of there she wrote again, Komand Will Come." Lakhe: "and you didn't tell me this before!!!!!" he roared. Me: "Baby-" Lakhe: "Don't!! Sibulele uthulele nton! Were you just gonna bring this woman here to be found and get us all killed!!!!" he was super pissed off. I don't think I've ever seen him like this. Even with the Dez episodes. Sibú: "bhuti, I just want to get her out of th-" Lakhe: "don't you fucking give me that!!! Do you know what Komander will do, if he finds that woman!! She's as good as dead!!!!" Rob: "What the hell is going on!!!!" he walked in the lounge tying his gown at his waist. Lakhe: "Tata go back to bed. And you, I want to see you in private." Me: "Masilakhe, will you calm down and please explain to me what is going on? Why are talking about death?" Lakhe: "the less you know. The better. Sibulele, march." I held Sibulele's arm. Me: "he's not going anywhere with you like that." Lakhe: "I told you to stay out of this." Sibú: "its okay Spho, I'll be fine." Me: "NO. Sit. You too Lakhe." he stared at me. Me: "I said, SIT." he tightened his jaw and sat on the couch. Me: "Good. Now, who is Komander? And what does he want from your mother?" Sands: "Ko-" Me: "I'm not asking you. Sibú?" Of course I knew who Komander was, I watch the news. I think there was also a movie made about him. And that no one has ever lived to tell what he looks like. My question is, uyinton kweyam i-family? Sibú looked at Lakhe fearfully. Me: "he's not going to do anything to you, look at me, Sibulele, Look at me." I sat down next to him and held his hands. Me: "what's going on." Sibú: "The Komander is this guy, some international dealer." Me: "like a drug dealer?" Sibú: "Yes but not quite, he doesn't deal drugs directly. He creates, he is a brand. He owns the drug business, all over the world. Also, not just drugs, he's the head of many criminal activites, such as illegal car sales, human trafficking and.....no one has ever seen his face or dealt directly with him." Me: "Then how do you know he exists?" Sibú: "well, he has people he controls, people that carry out his messages, if you come across him knowing what he is, it is believed he kills you. The only way to protect his identity." I was confused. But okay. Me: "So what would he want from your mom?" Sibú: "because..." he looked at Lakhe again. Me: "look at me." Sibú: "because I was looking for him." Me: "after all You've just described for me about this man,

you still look for him? Why?" he closed his mouth looking behind me. Me: "Lakhe, please go to the kitchen-" Lakhe: "Spho, let me deal with this!" Me: "I'm not going to let you yell at my brother for a small mistake!!! Which by the way, I'm not putting past your orders, so you're going to sit and be quiet or leave!" Sibuh. Sibuh: "I had reason to believe, he was close. To us." Me: "Close how? Geographically or Emotionally?" Sibuh: "Both." Me: "Who?" Sibuh: "I thought it was.....uSiya." I broke into a giggle. Me: "uDr Siyanda Kusile?" Sibuh: "Spho, he's the only person I looked at, his life in joburg. After finding disturbing piece of information, this happens." Me: "wait....what disturbing piece of information?" Lakhe: "No!! Enough!" Rob: "Let Him Talk." Lakhe: "Tata, Hayi!" Rob: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "I dare you to spea-" Me: "I dare you to finish the rest of that sentence." Lakhe: "Spho, I can't let you hear this." Me: "Do you remember Loco? Your little extra mural activities in Durban, aka Laundromat? Do you remember Sis' Nolitha and your bail? Explain to me what more of you can't I take?" he sat down and sighed. Lakhe: "Qhubekeka Sibuh." Sibuh: "I found out that Siya had a friend called Rey, who used to work in the hospital morgue. They mysteriously stopped talking one day then Rey went missing. He was found 4 months later, mutilated, eyes, ears and tongue. With a X carved onto his chest." This I did not expect. I quickly recharged my energy back to being calm. I was in full panic mode. This was a guy I had lunch with. He massaged my foot. He told me I was beautiful. He gave me a lift to my best friend's house. Oh my God. Oh my God. Sibuh: "now I tried to track relatives of Rey and he only had one sister, who allegedly committed suicide a day after Rey's body was found. It was believe she drank cyanide." I was frozen cold. Lakhe: "see this is why I didn't want you to hear this!" Sibuh: "I tried finding someone who might have spoken to Rey the day he stopped speaking to Siya. But it seems, no one heard him say a word. Now the same has happened to my mother." he voice cracked. This Komander guy was really serious about his identity huh. Me: "So, let me get this straight, Rey stopped talking to Siya and apparently everyone, then disappears only to be found months later mutilated. Where was the body found?" Sibuh: "in some shallow grave in the bushes. Or forest or something." Sands: "what are you thinking Spho." Me: "Rey saw Komander, that's why his eyes were cut. He heard him speak, that's why his ears were cut. But he'd already gone mute, why would his tongue be cut out?" Sands: "maybe he threatened to tell someone?" Me: "No. From what I'm hearing, Komander reacts on action." Lakhe: "what are you saying?" Me: "Rey.....told someone." Sands: "Dear God, you're right!!" he clapped his hands. Lakhe: "wait, but maybe he told his sister?" Me: "Yes. But I doubt that's all he told. If you can find the connection, to your mother and Rey. We've got ourselves one more person that knows who Komander is." Dumih: "you should've been a lawyer." Rob: "Detective. I'm gonn build her her own homicide division. Right

in this lounge." I smiled. Me: "enkosi tata." I looked at the clock. It was 10 minutes after midnight. Me: "Happy New Year everyone." Sands: "that's today? Wow! Happy New Year!!!" the whole family embraced in hugs. I still felt a little eerie about this Komander guy. Would Siya really do such a despicable thing? Why? Was I safe? I see him every day and maybe I'll slip and say something then he'll know I know and what then?

We all went back to bed around 3 in the morning. I actually didn't think I'd be able to sleep at all. As much as I pretended, I was not just scared, I was mortified. Could Siyanda really do this? I don't even know! Lakhe: "Mfazi wam." Me: "hey." we cuddled under blankets. Lakhe: "I'm surprised at how well you're taking this." Me: "taking what?" Lakhe: "the fact that your friend could be a serial killer." Me: "Could be." Lakhe: "Have you noticed anything strange about him? Please tell me Spho?" Me: "no I haven't." Lakhe: "it doesn't matter what it is, please." Me: "akhonto Lakhe. He's just as he is." Lakhe: "I don't want you to get hurt. I don't think I fully trust Siyanda." Me: "gee, if he wanted to kill me I think he would've done so by now." Lakhe: "that's not making me feel any better. I'm afraid I have to ask you to stay away from him." With pleasure. Me: "I will, I promise." Lakhe: "really?" Me: "why are you so surprised?" Lakhe: "I thought You'd fight me kaloku ngo Vanilla boy wakho noSandile. Ndlela le nimthanda ngayo." Sandile is fake as hell really, you'll never know who he really likes. Me: "well, I don't want to risk it. Carrying precious cargo." Lakhe: "Damn right. Daddy's little princess. Do you need a backrub?" Me: "no, just my feet." he went to the edge of the bed and massaged my feet. Lakhe: "uyayazi ukuba Ndiyakuthanda Spho. With everything I have. You're my life." Me: "I love you too Lakhe. Where is this coming from?" Lakhe: "I made a vow, that I'd let you know. Every night and morning. That I'd protect you and our children. I intend to keep that promise." Me: "uzandikhapha ngomso? I'm going to visit my parents." he opened his mouth to speak then closed it again. Me: "its okay if you don't want to go." Lakhe: "its just that, its weird knowing that utatakho doesn't really like me, but pretends to really do. Its actually confusing because in my mind I really believe he adores me. Now I don't know." Me: "baby, you don't need to worry about that, ndim otshate nawe, ndim umntu you should be worried about being liked by. Nobody else. Unless its a client and has really good money." Lakhe: "that goes without saying." we laughed. Lakhe: "Thank you Spho, I don't remember ever being this comfortable and happy. Udenza umntu sisi. Like an actual human being, most important of all, a dad. I can never thank you enough for that." Me: "oh stop." Lakhe: "I can't." he lay between my legs and kissed my tummy. Me: "ungamvusi please." Lakhe: "uyeke umntanam

adlale undincede." Me: "ndifuna ulala mna Masilakhe." Lakhe: "uzolala kaloku. Lala." he brushed my stomach gently. I was ready to sleep, yesterday's exhaustion piled on like a stack of bricks and I was ready to crumble.

Saturday morning I was up by 8 and showered. Lakhe was still in bed, sleeping. Actually snoring. Me: "baby?" Lakhe: "no, no." Me: "honey, you're dreaming. Wake up." Lakhe: "huh?" he woke up and looked at me confused. Lakhe: "what are you doing?" Me: "I'm waking you, ndikushiye?" Lakhe: "why are you leaving me?" This one was still disorientated from his dream. I sat on the bed and held his hand. Me: "ndiya kwabazali bam for a visit, do you want to come with me or stay here?" Lakhe: "oh." I could not have been clearer. I don't think it was physically possible. Me: "Lakhe, wake up my love." Lakhe: "I'm awake." he sat up. Me: "did you have a bad dream?" Lakhe: "no...just, no." Me: "ufuna sithethe ngayo?" Lakhe: "no. Definitely not." my phone rang. Me: "should I leave you behind?" Lakhe: "huh?" I think I was circling the issue. The dream was something about me leaving him. Me: "Did the dream involve me leaving you? Ndikulahlile?" he stared at me wide eyed like a deer caught in headlights. Lakhe: "how did you know?" he whispered. Me: "its kind of obvious the way you're reacting about my departure really. I'm not going anywhere, just a short visit, matter of fact ndizobuya in just 2 hours okay?" he nodded. I went to get dressed. Jeans were my worst nightmare ndik'xelele. I didn't want to wear a dress either. A jumpsuit would just be downright inconvenient seeing that I pee 100 times a day. I guess I had to wear a dress. A warm one with stockings because bekukho just a bit of a chill outside. I looked at this outfit and it was a definite no. I would look like a granny. I looked for one of my warmer tops. All things summer sana. I went to Lakhe's wardrobe and found a white sweater. I wore it with a vest underneath it, then my jeggings and a white sneaker. Finally. After getting ready I was ready to leave. Lakhe was wrapped in a white Versace gown sitting on top of the bed. Me: "I like your robe Hugh Hefner. What's wrong with your face?" he smiled. Lakhe: "awusemhle." I sat on his lap. Me: "I'm not going to leave you, unless you do something incredibly stupid. I made a promise." Lakhe: "I won't do anything stupid I promise." Me: "good. Ndikulinde?" Lakhe: "No, I'm gonn stay here today. Go do your thing." Me: "alright. I love you." Lakhe: "love you too." I took my bag and keys then left the house. Masilakhe stared at the phone in his hand. Then listened to the message. "Hi Spho, its me uBulelani. The results of the blood work are available. Come and see me soon. There's something I need to tell you." Lakhe clicked the end button and walked out the bedroom. He knocked on Sandile's bedroom door. Sands: "I'm naked

what do you want!!!!" Lakhe opened the door and closed it behind him. Lakhe: "we have a problem, can you put on pants?" Sandile stood by the window stark naked and unbothered. Sands: "first of all, I told you before you came in. Khandithi ngena. Ndik'ncede nganton bhuti." he looked for his underwear. Lakhe: "why are you naked anyway?" Sands: "I was in the hot tub. Why do you ask? You wanna join me?" Lakhe: "Sandile." Sands: "sorry, uthin bhuti?" Lakhe: "I had a bad dream." Sands: "ooohh. Like Martin Luther King Jr?" Lakhe: "No, not that. Sphe is going to leave me. Soon. I didn't have a problem with that theory until I saw it in my dream happening. Sandile it can't happen." Sands: "you know what, you're right. I like her dumplings, her cinamon pumpkin, that chicken a la king she makes and her Italian lasagna on Saturday nights. I have gotten too accustomed to this lifestyle bhuti. If I let you take it away from me, I will never forgive you." Lakhe: "then help me." Sands: "first, tell me about the dream." Lakhe: "I don't know. I had blood on my hands and clothes and she just freaked out. I can't see the dead body's face on the floor. But she caught me with it. She was disgusted by me. The look on her face. The way she screamed." Sands: "okay, so, you're going to kill someone?" Lakhe: "or she might think I did." Sands: "meaning?" Lakhe: "Sandile, I received a meesage on her phone. Well she left it behind and I went through it ndafumana voice mail that just came in." he clicked the on phone and played it. After listening till the end he looked at his brother. Sands: "the t shirt." Lakhe: "she took it for forensics." Sands: "Shit. So, they have information." Lakhe: "incriminating information. He has to go Sandile." Sands: "are you....are you serious?" Lakhe: "I am not about to lose my wife and child! Make it go away!" Sands: "Masilakhe, bhuti wam-" Lakhe: "I said Make IT GO!!! Today!" he stomped out the room.

I was at my parents' house in the lounge with the folks and awkward silence. I really don't know what's happened. I'd left my phone at home even so I couldn't be bored online. Me: "niyitye njani i-New Year mama?" Mama: "kamnandi mntanam. We were with our neighbors." Me: "that's nice." Khaya: "wena busenza ntoni?" Me: "well, it was rather a weird night." should I tell them? Or not? I wanted to so badly. Khaya: "really? What happened?" Me: "nothing, I'm just not used to being inside on New Year. Plus it was a very bumpy year, I was living with uSimphiwe, had a good job, was happy. Then had an accident, got Lakhe, got married to him now I'm pregnant with his child." Mama: "yeah. But at least you're happy, right?" Me: "kakhulu mama. He is so sweet when I leave ingathi he's a little puppy. He just doesn't want me to go." Mama: "aawww. That's lovely mntanam." Me: "he's been so distracted for the past few days something about Komander or someone." Mama: "who

is that?" Me: "I don't know. Just someone he doesn't seem to like. For a second ebecimba nguSiyanda." Mama: "wait, now I'm confused. Is command a code name like Superman or what?" Me: "Komander mama, some drug dealer that's really dangerous." Mama: "why would Lakhe be worried about that? Is he involved?" Me: "No, but he has reason to believe, Siya might be him." Mama: "and what do you think?" Me: "I don't know what to think." Khaya: "I need a drink." he got up and walked out. Me: "is dad okay?" Mama: "he's perfectly fine. Tell me more about this command." Me: "Komander. I don't know much about him. Just that he's severely dangerous." Mama: "how does Lakhe know this? And why would he think Siya is dangerous?" Me: "oh its some story he heard about Siya's friend. Rey. Who was butchered." Mama: "ohh, I've heard about Rey. It was all over the news. Oh sweetie, that's demonic. Do you really think Siyanda would do such a thing?" Me: "I don't know him that well mama. What if he could?" Mama: "hayi mntanam. Get those evil thoughts out of your head. And let your husband know, I've known Siyanda for years, he is incapable of killing an ant, let alone a human being." I nodded. Me: "so who do you think it might be then?" Mama: "some deranged psychopath that's who. Uyenza njani intwenjalo kumntu?" Me: "you know what's even worse? Mama ka Sibubaba has just gone mute." Mama: "mute how?" Me: "she just stopped talking mama. Its been days now and they think Komander may have something to do with it. She has written in her diary, hints about Komander. We just don't understand yintoni ebadibanisayo." Mama: "Oh my God Spho! Didn't you say she was in a clinic?" Me: "yes, she is." Mama: "oh no." Me: "what?" Mama: "sweetie, you were probably too young to remember this." Me: "intoni mama?" Mama: "When we took you at the hospital wazohlala nathi umamakho wabhanjwa for selling drugs." I actually do remember vaguely endixelela! Me: "I remember mama usithi that ufunyenwe nezinto ezingekho semthethweni and I can't be near her." Mama: "Yes, maybe she got those drugs from this Komander and ufuna imali yakhe?" Me: "tshin mama yazi you're right!" Mama: "I'm glad I could help sweetheart but you need to stay away from this. Asimazi angakwenza ntoni lo Komander and you're pregnant. Leave this alone." Me: "I've left it alone mama. Andifuni nto izondidibanisa nomntu onjeya." Mama: "ewe mntanam. Please." Me: "uphelele Phi utata ngoku?" Mama: "Khaya?" she got up and walked to the kitchen. Mama: "that's odd." Me: "Inoba uphumile. Mandihambe mama, I promised Lakhe I'd be home in 2 hours. He's in a bit of a spiral today." Mama: "okay my love. Please stay far away from this Komander character." Me: "I will mama, I promise." Mama: "umamele umnyeni wakho xa ekunqanda because I know that u-stubborn wena." Me: "heee umama. I will." Mama: "Good and call me ufika kwakho endlini." I sighed. Me: "mama, stop stressing please. I love you, umxelele utata

ndimnkile and I love him too. Goodbye." Mama: "I love you my angel." I hugged her and went to my car, driving back home. In an hour Khaya came back home. Khaya: "Uphi uSphosenkosi?" Mama: "she went home. What happened? You just disappeared." Khaya: "Nothing. I just needed some air." Zama: "why? Taka Spho is there something you want to tell me." Khaya: "No." he sat down. Zama: "Spho says umamakhe stopped talking." Khaya: "I wish her real mother would stop talking." Zama: "Khaya, I'm being serious. What happened there?" Khaya: "nothing Zama. I went there that afternoon and spoke to her. That's it." Zama: "Oh. Because they found a diary." Khaya: "what diary?" Zama: "her diary where she wrote something in. Something about.....Komander. Would you know anything about that?" Khaya: "ufuna ukuthin ngam Zama?" Zama: "nothing. Just sharing interesting information about current news events." Khaya: "how is this current news- You know what? I'm tired. I need to sleep." Zama: "Khaya, you know that I love you." Khaya: "by doubting me all the time?" Zama: "I just need to be sure." Khaya: "that I should be the one to kill her?" Zama: "Now you're just being ridiculous. Maybe we should let Komander know that she snitched. Or is about to." Khaya: "I don't want to be a part of this Zama." Zama: "that's not the deal you signed Khaya. You did this for Spho. Don't forget it. Should any type of repercussion happen izaya straight kuye. Ndiyak'cela mntu wam." Khaya: "Zama, something needs to give. My child cannot be in the midst of this forever." Zama: "I know. I never knew izophuma oluhlobo but Komander will never let her go. He knows how much of a leverage she is to us. He's the only one who knows and understands how much she means to us. And he will use all his might to have power over us. If Miriam is out of the picture, he won't bother us again." Khaya: "Fine. Then I'll let him know first thing tomorrow." Zama: "tell him now." Khaya: "do you know what he will do to her if he knows about this? Zama this is someone's mother." Zama: "Khaya, kudala uMiriam wacengwa. She is paying for her sins. Komander would have killed her years ago when he found out about Spho and that evil man they call a father. You were the one that saved her ngomsa etrongweni for drugs. Now you want to give her another life line? Khaya, I can't let Komander get to Spho and he's so close this time. Rather sacrifice Miriam to him, not our only daughter. He will ruin my child's life. Ndiyakucenga mnyeni wam." Khaya: "You're right. Okay, I'll tell him. Tonight."

#89

I arrived at home in a short while, finding Lakhe standing by the door. I got out the car and walked to him. Me: "you okay?" Lakhe: "yeah. Just feeding

the ducks." we went inside the house. Me: "Uphi uSandile?" Lakhe: "he went out to his friends for a while he'll be back soon." Me: "but his car is outside?" Lakhe: "they came to fetch him." I looked at him. Me: "and everyone else?" Lakhe: "my dad went to his golf club uhambe noDumi. Promised to introduce him to a boxing legend who was his friend then Sibuy decided to tag along." Me: "and Boogile?" Lakhe: "he's playing with the ducks." Me: "please bring him inside. Then you and I can do a bit of playing too." I kissed his chin. He smiled. Lakhe: "Nyani baby?" Me: "bring the pup inside. Then you'll see." he went outside to fetch Boogie who had muddy paws. Great. Now he would need to be washed because this entire house will be filled with mud. Lakhe: "I have to put him in the bath first then feed him azolala." Me: "okay, but be quick, or I'll start without you." Lakhe: "yes maam." he rushed to the bathroom. I went to the bedroom and undressed, laying on the bed waiting for him. He appeared in 10 minutes flat. Me: "umenzi umntana Lakhe?" Lakhe: "ndimfakile emanzini. Dried him up watya. Now he's napping eroomin ka tatakhe. All exits closed. He's safe." he climbed on the bed and kissed me. Lakhe: "I missed you." Me: "me too." I took off his t shirt. He put his face on my breasts. Lakhe: "my breast friends.." Me: "really daddy?" he kissed my lips. Someone knocked on the door. Lakhe: "who the f... Ungubani!!!" Sands: "hey! Ukhona. I'm back." Lakhe: "okay." he kissed me again. Sands: "uhm.. Aren't you gonna open? Its kind of lonely out here. I have no one to talk to." Lakhe: "come the fuck on." he breathed. Lakhe: "Sandile I'm kinda busy." Sands: "Oh...I just.....never mind." yuh andakhubeka. Me: "please go to him." Lakhe: "what! No!" Me: "please Masilakhe. My conscience can't take it. I'll reward you tonight. I promise." Lakhe: "Yuh hayi kodwa baby." Me: "2 in 10 minutes." Lakhe: "Fine. I'm going. You owe me." Me: "I do sthandwa Sam. I love you. You're so brave and amazing." Lakhe: "don't try and sell me into liking it. I've already said yes." he wore his t shirt. Lakhe: "and I love you too." he opened the door and walked out to the lounge. Lakhe: "ndim lo." he flopped on the couch. Sands: "I thought you were busy." Lakhe: "I was. Not anymore." Sands: "oh. Bendizofownela uFey and hang out with him. He always has time for me." Lakhe: "Sandile, what is it with you and this guy? You know he's gay right? Ndiyakwazi kaloku wena you like to blindfold yourself to reality. So what's the deal there?" Sands: "I'm in love with him bhuti." Lakhe: "WHAT!!!" Sands: "yeah, I don't know who to tell. It was so weird." Lakhe: "Sandile, what the hell! You're gay now?" Sandile stared at him sarcastically. Lakhe: "oh thank God you're kidding. Stop doing that!!!" Sands: "only when it stops being fun." he giggled. Sands: "hayi ke bhuti, do I look like I would even hug another man, well except utatam. I'm not gay. He's just my friend." Lakhe: "ndaziphi na Sandile with your tendencies and experiments." Sands: "hehake bhuti. Ndingade ndiyo experiment enye indoda." Lakhe: "Fine but does he know that?" Sands:

"know what?" Lakhe: "that you're not interested in him? I've seen the way he looks at you, always taking pictures of you Sandile that kind of behavior might get you date raped. Do you know that? Next thing he slips something in your drink and experiments with you. Set the record straight." Sands: "Fez is not that kind of person. He knows that we're friends hence he always wants to hang out with me. Besides, Boogile enjoys having him around ebemenzele Weetbix when he was here." Lakhe: "whether he made the dog weetbix, corn flakes or instant porridge. Did you let him know his place in your life?" Sands: "Lakhe andinguwe mna. I don't give people positions as if they're my employees." Lakhe: "I don't understand how you've survived this long shame. Ndincamile." Sands: "you're jealous that you don't have someone take pictures of you." Lakhe: "my wife does that all the time. Key word: WIFE. Not friend because that would be creepy. Dumi has never taken a picture of me neither has Babalo." Sands: "Your friends don't love you like mine do. Sibulele's phone is filled with pictures of me. Because I'm his best friend plus I'm his wallpaper." Lakhe: "firstly, most of those pictures are selfies that you take with his phone, secondly I saw you change his wallpaper and threaten him not to take it off. You know what, I finally understand, you ARE a Fez. Now it makes sense why you're so attached to him." Sands: "he had the option of deleting and changing it yet he didn't. Why? I've already said. You, don't have a best friend so you naturally can't understand." Lakhe: "okay indidikile Le conversation. Did you do the thing?" Sands: "what thing?" Lakhe: "do you want me to spell it out?" Sands: "that would be great yes." Lakhe looked at him. Sands: "I'm kidding! Yuh, uske ungabi serious. Its done. Probably dead or dying." Lakhe: "I don't need probably I need definitely." they whispered. Sands: "don't worry, it'll be hours before someone finds him, and he'll be gone by then. His car is tangled up in some trees kude. Anyway, I took a further step of retrieving the paperwork. I burnt them. So There's no record of your t shirt being in forensics or who's blood it was on it. You're safe." Lakhe: "I owe you." Sands: "Yes. Change your wallpaper." Lakhe: "andisoze ndisuse umfazi wam ndifake wena ke usile. And what's your obsession with being wallpaper?" Sands: "I'm already on 4 wallpapers. I need 5 to be considered a celebrity." Lakhe stared at him. Lakhe: "Okay. Then change your own. Babuya nini ootata?" Sands: "ndiyobakhangela? I can bother them to come home." Lakhe: "you're a special case wena." the gate opened. Lakhe: "naba. I'm thinking of taking you guys out. We haven't had a family night out." Sands: "Sweet. Are you trying to win brownny points from Spho?" Lakhe: "I'm not having that conversation with you." Sands: "you don't have to. She already told me." he smiled. Sands: "that night when you screamed like a baby..." Lakhe: "she told you that?!!" Sands: "Oh yes." he crossed over his leg. Lakhe: "what business do you have discussing my sex life with my wife Sandile!"

Sands: "wait what?" Lakhe: "what were you talking about?" Sands: "what do you mean sex life? And they say I'm the disgusting one. Geeez." Lakhe: "what the hell were you talking about then!!!!" he yelled. Sands: "ungxolela ntoni kengoku?" Rob: "Masilakhe. Masilakhe. Masilakhe. Iyawa Yinton? Yazi you're like a grizzly bear that has tonsillitis. Hleli nje une nerves." Lakhe: "Sandile. Talk." Sands: "I'm not saying anything. Otherwise I'm gonna be known as the town gossip and nobody will want to tell me anything." Lakhe: "Sandile I swear-" Sands: "you'll what? Beat me? Ndiyow'biza uSpho mna. Spho!!!!" he yelled. Lakhe stormed to his bedroom. Me: "undibizelani uSandile?" Lakhe: "you told him about that night? When I specifically told you not to!!!!" Me: "which night?" I sat up from bed. Lakhe: "OH? So its all nights you discuss with my brother? What doesn't he know? Huh?" he took his jacket and keys. Me: "baby, hold on. I don't discuss anything with Sandile especially concerning you or.....nights. What did he say." Lakhe: "don't lie to me!" I grabbed him. Me: "I'm not lying to you!" Lakhe: "then how the hell does he know about our sex life!!!!" Me: "sex life?" Lakhe: "I'm not going to repeat myself! You know exactly what you did!" I love my husband I do, but he is the one and only person on planet earth who makes the least sense when angry. Andimva tuu mna. Me: "Baby please calm down." Lakhe: "I can't. I'm going for a drive." Me: "then I'm coming with you." Lakhe: "Andifun Uhamba nawe Spho because next thing uzoyondihleba kuSandile." Me: "baby I have never gossiped about you." Lakhe: "then how would he know about that night then?" Me: "I need you to specify what night and what he said." Lakhe: "I'm not doing that. You can go discuss it with your buddy." he walked out. I sighed and wore my slippers tying my gown around my body. He walked back in the room and stared at me. Me: "uphoxwe ngubani ngoku?" Lakhe: "how does Sandile know what happened ngobabsuku wayezongqongqoza emnyango Sphosenkosi." Me: "Ohhh. He asked. BUT ndithe kuye I beat you with a stick. Ucimba ndikubethile. That's it. Why would I share our bedroom things with Sandile of all people, matter of fact, any people." he put down his keys. Me: "ugxothwe ngubani efront?" Lakhe: "ngutata. He says he's taking us out for dinner and a movie." Me: "us being the entire house." Lakhe: "Ewe. Uzonxiba nini." Me: "before sihambe I want to tell you something, nonke." Lakhe: "okay, get dressed so long. Let me go prepare them." he kissed me and I pushed him away. Me: "ungekaxolisi ngale outburst ugqiboyenza? Heee unesbindi shame." Lakhe: "I'm sorry. I over reacted." I went to the closet. Lakhe: "ndicela undixolele sthandwa sam." Me: "ndikuxolele." Lakhe: "can I get a kiss?" Me: "no. Injani weather phandle." Lakhe: "sukhohlakala mfazi wam." Me: "Khange ndiqalise." Lakhe: "ziyak'fanela ezi sweater zam ke yazi. Akho need utshintshe nxiba olahlobo ubunxibe ngalo emini." Me: "okay." I got dressed warmly. Instead of sneakers I wore socks and boots, we walked out

the bedroom together and found the family in the lounge. Me: "molweni tata Unjani?" Rob: "ndiphilile mntanam. Wena?" Me: "ndiphilile nam tata." Rob: "Nyani? Its really hot outside you look like you're going ice skating." Sandile held his mouth. I stared at him. Me: "I know tata, but sometimes when There's a breeze, I get cold and afunekanga ndigodole." Rob: "if you say so. Uhleka ntoni Sandile?" Sands: "hayi tata ndihleke nini mna?" Rob: "uyotshintsha ke iskipa. We going out for dinner and a movie." Me: "before he leaves, There's something I need to tell you. Bendihleli nomama today and she shed some light on why Komander could've been connected to Miriam." Lakhe: "hayi Spho why would you tell her that!" Me: "if you think I'm going to keep quiet while a clearly crazy dangerous piece of Satan is surrounding us, you're unstable. Ndithini kengoku mna? Why must your entire family be involved but mine can't ingathi ndiyinkedama?" Rob: "That's true. We've kept quiet on most things zalapha endlini, and you just explode when someone tries to talk to you Masilakhe, ufuna uSpho athethe nabani?" Lakhe: "Mxim." Rob: "What did she say Spho." Me: "When I'd run from home, and landed in hospital, umamam came to adopt me. I don't know who called her or how it happened. All I know is, when I woke up, they were ready for me. When I moved in with them I asked her where my other mother was and if she was going to come back and she said no. She was arrested. For selling drugs." Lakhe: "Shit. Now this means, she really may know who Komander is. And we all know what that means, he's coming for her." Kengoku ibiyinton iqumbisa inantsi clue? Yoh hayi suka. Sibu: "Spho are you sure about this?" Me: "Yes. I remember from my memories I asked her and she told me, she was arrested for drugs." Sibu: "but how sure are we that she got these drugs from Komander? There's a lot of drug distributors out there!" Lakhe: "true but almost all of them belong to Komander. Maybe she owed him money." Sibu: "Bhuti, I need to get her out of there." Lakhe: "simthini Sibulele? Have you forgotten that my wife, your sister, is pregnant, nanku utata umdala, Dumi is paralyzed. Ndim nawe noSandile qha abakwazi ukulwa apha and Andicingi mna ndilwe uKomander Sibulele. That man is dangerous. We have too much to lose here. She cannot be in my house. I'm sorry." Rob: "kodwa nyana you're being harsh." Sibu: "its fine tata, xaningamfuni umamam apha endlini. I'll be the one who leaves. I'll find her a place and protect her myself!" Me: "Sibulele awuzoya ndawo-" Sibu: "no Spho, what I don't understand is that ngumamakho nawe lo but you don't care if she dies on the street." he walked out the house. Sands: "real smooth bhuti." he followed his best friend out. Lakhe: "kanti where am I wrong? Am I the only one who understands how dangerous this guy is? Am I wrong for trying to keep my family away from him?" Rob: "kodwa Lakhe, you could get extra security and a guard at the gate." Lakhe: "A guard at the gate? A guard at the gat-.....Tata lomntu

went through HOSPITAL SECURITY without being seen!!! What is a guard at the gate going to do to him? Chase him with a stick? Hayi tata! Hayi!" Rob: "Masilakhe you are over reacting now." Lakhe: "uzobuya uSibulele when he's calm. He understands this and he will accept it!" Me: "Lakhe you can't do that." Lakhe: "I can't? Heee! We might as well just invite Komander over for tea and jam scones ke mos. Get to know him and exchange Facebook names and Instagram handles while we're at it." Komander on Instagram? Now that would be funny. I held in a giggle. In my head I visioned a guy that had a floor length black coat and his head covered with the hood so we couldn't really see his face but he's holding a tea cup with dry ashy hands and long fingernails like a bruha. (witch) I was finding it really hard to keep a straight face. Lakhe: "hayi Andiyazi nifuna ndithini ke." he sat down. Sandile came back alone. Rob: "Uphi unyana Sandile?" Sands: "ndim lo." Rob: "I'm talking about Sibulele." Sands: "oh he said he needed space. He'll be back in 20 minutes." Rob: "okay, sizomlinda." Me: "ndikwenzele i-tea tata?" Rob: "please mntanam." Sands: "nam torho mntase." Me: "Dumi?" Dumi: "hot chocolate please." Lakhe: "ndizok'ncedisa." we went to the kitchen to make the beverages sabuya nazo to the lounge and everyone held their own. After about an hour I started to panic. Me: "Sandile Khange uthi uSibulele will be back in 20 minutes? Its been an hour." Sands: "I remember that is exactly what he told me. Maybe he took the long way home." Me: "would you please go check on him." Lakhe dialed his number and heard it ring. No answer. I tried to call him and also wasn't answered. Sands: "okay, I'm going out to look for him." Rob: "ndihamba nawe." Lakhe: "uyaphi ke wena tata?" Rob: "ndikhapha uSandile. I don't want him alone out there." they walked out. Lakhe stared at the TV. Me: "Dumi are you okay?" he looked at Lakhe. Then back at me and shook his head. Lakhe looked at him. Lakhe: "do you need anything?" Dumi: "No. I don't." Lakhe: "then what is it?" Dumi: "I'm just worried. I have a bad feeling." Me: "about Sibulele? Nam Dumi." Lakhe: "hayi kengoku. Sibulele is a grown man not a child." Dumi: "that doesn't mean something didn't happen to him." Lakhe: "something like what?" Dumi: "Lakhe, There's a lot going on. His mother's involvement with Komander and him searching for Komander." Lakhe: "you're exaggerating this. Why would he kidnap him? Uzamthini?" Me: "what did he do to Rey?" Lakhe dialed the number again, again without answer. We waited over 30 minutes before Sandile and Rob came back. It was nearing dark now and I was panicking even more. Sands: "akabonakali anywhere. And look what I found." he held Sibulele's cellphone, screen broken. Lakhe: "uyifumene phi?" Sands: "about a few streets away. On the ground." my heart couldn't take it. Me: "are you saying he was taken?" my voice shook. Sands: "that's a very high possibility." He threw the phone on the couch. Sands: "Sibulele never goes anywhere without his phone. Maybe he

knew we'd be looking for him and he dropped it on purpose so that we know he's not just mad but something has happened." Me: "can you unlock it?" Sands: "password is Sandile." everyone looked at him. Sands: "eyam ngu Sibulele mos Yinton ngxaki?!" he snapped. I unlocked the phone. Me: "The last call was a video call." Lakhe: "to who?" I read out the number. Sands: "I don't know that number." Me: "the duration of this call is a minute and a half. Ayingo mamakhe? Its not even on Truecaller." Lakhe: "I can ask someone to check it. Sapha." I gave him the phone. Dumi: "Do you think whoever it is might have saw it happen? Or did he end the call before it happened?" Me: "let's hope he didn't. Why don't I call it back?" Sands: "No. I'll do it." he took the phone after Lakhe transferred the number. The number hit voicemail. Sands: "shit." we waited another 20 minutes and Lakhe's phone rang. The house was dead quiet. Lakhe: "Yes Steve?" Steve: "Hi Mr Sobz, uhm, I've searched for this number and it comes from Grahamstown. And that doesn't necessarily mean the call came from there. Just that the number was registered there." Lakhe: "is there a way of tracking where the call came from then?" Steve: "They haven't invented something I can't track. Give me 5 minutes." I took Boogie and cuddled him on my lap. He was sniffing my belly trying to nibble on it eventually getting tired and lying on his back on top of my lap. Inoba ucimba he's a little baby yazi. Steve: "I can't get on to this number, look, I need the serial number of the Sim card that took the call." Lakhe: "how the hell am I supposed to know that?" Steve: "dial this on the phone then, and read me the results." Lakhe did as he was told. I listened as he recited the number again. Steve: "Got it. The call came from Joburg." Lakhe: "you sure?" Steve: "Positive. Do you need anything else?" Lakhe: "I guess I'd be pushing my luck if you could find the video call on its own, like recorded somewhere." Steve: "Yeah You'd be pushing your luck. That picture is long gone." Lakhe: "thank you, I'll run you your cheque." Steve: "sure thing." he hung up. It was dark outside now. I was at the brink of tears. Everyone in the house was dead quiet. Not even the TV was on. I didn't know what to do. Boogie was biting my thumb naye ngapha. Probably hungry now. Me: "ukhona umntu olambileyo?" no response. Rob: "its okay sweetheart. Hlala phantsi, I'll get take aways." Lakhe: "awuzokwazi uphuma kula gate. I cannot let that happen." Rob: "Lakhe uzosifixela kude kuthini aph-" Lakhe: "Sibulele has been kidnapped!!!! You walk out that gate, and who knows what happens to you!" Rob: "fine, I'll make a call." Lakhe: "Andifuni mntu endlinam tata! If anybody is hungry, naliya ikhitshi! Nx!" he walked out the lounge to the bedroom. Rob: "uzotya ntoni Spho?" Me: "I'm fine tata." Rob: "you haven't eaten in a while. You have to have something in your stomach for the baby. Please." Me: "I don't think I can stomach anything. Maybe just bread and tea." Rob: "okay." he walked to the kitchen. Everyone was in a stunned silence through out the

night. I barely finished eating and I couldn't sleep. Nobody could. Before we knew it, it had already dawned.

It took all of me to wait a whole 24 hours. The minute it hit I had already called the cops. Thankfully Lakhe agreed to it. We filed a missing persons report and they left. I doubt they were even gonna look. I pray to God he was still alive. At least until we find him. Sands: "I'm going back out. Lakhe: "Sandi-" Sands: "No bhuti. If they want to take me, so be it! I'm not going to sit around here all day long waiting." Dumis: "be careful." Sandile walked out. About 15 minutes later I heard the gate buzzed and I jumped up to answer but it was our stupid neighbor. After letting them in and waiting for them to get to the door I went to sit back down. Babalo: "molweni." Lakhe: "hi." Babalo: "uhm...are we disturbing something?" Lakhe: "no. Ubuye nini?" Babalo: "I just landed 2 hours ago. I was in Cape town with my family. I was supposed to come back tomorrow but I thought I'd just come prepare for work. Are you sure you guys are okay?" Dumis wheeled down the passage to his room. Me: "would you like something to drink? Juice? tea?" Babalo: "guys you're scaring me. Kwenzeka ntoni? Uphi uSandile noSibu?" I went to the kitchen. Lakhe: "They went out. We're just a little tired." Babalo: "ooh, well, let me leave you to rest, literally dropped the luggage in the lounge I just wanted to let you know ndibuyile before I sleep till tomorrow afternoon." Lakhe: "alright man. Sohlangana." Babalo walked out with his wife. After Lakhe saw them out he came to me in the kitchen. Lakhe: "I'm sorry baby. This is all my fault." Me: "how is this your fault? Did you kidnap him?" Lakhe: "I drove him to walk out enomsindo. I should've been more considerate." Me: "its done now, its not like besiyazi izokwenza lento." Lakhe: "I still feel bad." his phone rang. Lakhe: "what now." he picked up. Lakhe: "yes?" Babalo: "bra its me." Lakhe: "yeah, what's up." Babalo: "uhm, have you been to my house by any chance?" Lakhe: "No why?" Babalo: "Lakhe, my house has been broken into. The problem is, nothing is missing. I didn't notice this when I brought the bags in." Lakhe: "then how do you know it was broken into?" Babalo: "I'm going to need you to see this yourself man. I just.... I can't. My wife is crying. I don't know what to do!" his voice was breaking. Lakhe: "yima ndiyeza." he hung up. Lakhe: "masambe Spho, get the pupp and dad, ndiyolanda uDumisani." he went to fetch Dumis and I went to get Rob and Boogie. We all walked out after locking and went next door. Babalo was sitting outside with Hlumi who was crying hysterically. He himself looked visibly scared. Lakhe: "kwenzeka ntoni Babalo?" Babalo: "I don't...." he breathed. Dumis: "breath.....breath. Look at me." I took Hlumi aside and consoled her. What the hell was going on? If its just a house robbery then it shouldn't be a big deal,

they had insurance and money. Lakhe walked toward the house. Babalo: "don't touch anything! Please." he went with him and in just a few minutes they were back. Now the look on Lakhe's face was hard and unreadable. Me: "what's going on?" Lakhe: "tata call the police. Now." Babalo: "what if they think I did it?" Lakhe: "you just got here Babalo. You have records of you being away." Babalo: "okay." he came to his wife and held her hand. Babalo: "baby?" she went to him and held him tight. Was there a dead body in the house? I looked at Lakhe. Was it Sibuyi? As if he read my facial expression, he said: "No." Me: "kwenzeka ntoni Lakhe?" I was scared to go near the house even, because kaloku umntu uphuma pha ingathi ugalelwe ngamanzi e-ice. I didn't want to see whatever it is. Rob: "they're on their way." benditshiswa nangumchamo. The police arrived in 10 minutes flat. Perks of living in a suburb, people always had time for you and part of that pissed me off because if besise lokshin we'd have waited two hours, so already bendine attitude that was now for the policeman who has not done anything wrong. Yet. Lakhe took them inside the house. Babalo stayed right where he was with his wife. I wonder yintoni le ikwazi ukoyikisa uBabalo, I want it at my gate. The officers came back sezithetha efownin and within minutes arrived two more cars. Yellow tape surrounded the house, we stood out the gate, more neighbors joined us asking questions. I held on to the puppy and my husband quietly. Babalo: "Spho. Hlumi wants to talk to you." I went to the police car she was sitting in. Me: "yes, ndim lo. What's wrong?" Hlumi: "I think the stress has fast forwarded my periods." Me: "okay. I do still have some tampons and pads endlini. We can go." she nodded. After getting the go ahead from the detective we went to my house with utata uRob and Dumi, I let Boogie into his dad's room for his afternoon nap. I gave Hlumi Gyna guard intimate wipes and a tampon. Me: "iright i-tampon or ufuna pad?" Hlumi: "I'd rather the pad. You remember when we arrived here I was pregnant?" I do not recall. Me: "yeah?" Hlumi: "well, I lost the baby. We haven't really spoken about it. Its as though it never happened." Me: "I'm sorry to hear that Hlumi." she shrugged. Hlumi: "its life." I gave her the pad instead and she went into the spare bathroom. When she came out I had gotten her some juice and a pain killer. Hlumi: "enkosi." she took the pill sayohlala in the lounge. Hlumi: "I don't understand how someone could do such an inhumane thing." now I was confused. Rob: "Hlumi what happened in your house? Yintoni le ipha?" Hlumi: "tata, sifikile noBabalo, parked the car in the garage. I wanted to shower first but Babalo said masiqale sizoxelela uLakhe sikhona and then sibuye sivase and sleep. So we dropped the bags in the lounge and came straight over. When we went back to the house, I took my bags to the bedroom and.....I saw it. The whole bedroom was covered...in blood. On the walls, the curtains and on the floor. The bed was ripped off its sheets. I don't know where they

are. The duvet was soaked in blood. Everything was...." she started crying again. I was shivering in my skin as I hugged her. Hlumi: "I don't know who died in my house. Who killed them!" Me: "I'm sorry Hlumi...the police will find them. I'm sure of it." I had a lump in my throat. Someone was slain right next door and we didn't see or hear a thing. Lakhe came in the house in an hour. Lakhe: "ninjani?" he touched Hlumi's shoulder. Me: "we're okay." Lakhe: "can we talk?" I got up and followed him to the bedroom. Lakhe: "This is not Sibu. Okay? Please don't panic. The forensics say judging from the dryness, that scene is a few days old." I nodded. Me: "still Lakhe. Someone was butchered right next door to our house!! In our friends' house!" Lakhe: "yeah, and the body is missing. Baby, this is bad. I feel so sorry for them." Me: "I know." I hugged him. Lakhe: "I'm going to book them in my hotel for a while. They can't stay in that house. Especially because its a crime scene now. Unjani uHlumi?" Me: "she's quiet now. She told me. Maybe we should call a doctor. How about balale apha for tonight?" he looked at me puzzled. Lakhe: "hehake Spho, I said I'd book the hotel. They'd be in my suite pha." Me: "yeah but they need to be around people who care Lakhe. What they've seen isn't child's drawings. They're traumatized. Just one night." he sighed. Lakhe: "you're too kind for your own good." Me: "isn't that why you married me?" Lakhe: "fine. One night. I'll call the doctor. Khome ndiyolanda noBabalalo pha phandle." we walked back out. I went to start cooking.

At 9pm, Sandile finally came in. He looked at our guests and then at his wrist watch. Sands: "and then? Visiting hours are well over." Lakhe: "Sandile. Sit." Sandile sat down. Lakhe: "Babalalo noHlumi just flew in this afternoon and found a bloody scene in their bedroom." Sands: "What?! Who!" Lakhe: "There's no body or traces. Its as though they were carried out with the bed sheets because they are the only things missing from the house." Sandile looked at Babalo apologetically. Sands: "wait, when did this happen?" Lakhe: "asiyazi. The detectives estimate its been a few days." Sands: "no but we would've seen something!" Lakhe: "I gave them my gate camera recordings dating a week back. I'm not sure if the camera will catch it on film if bekungene umntu but bazobona." Sands: "I need a drink." Rob: "get three glasses." Sandile brought the bottle of Bourbon and three glasses. Pouring double shots for Hlumi and Babalo. Sands: "it will help you sleep." Hlumi: "I don't drink." Sands: "I will pour it down your throat." Me: "Sandile!" Sands: "I'm sorry. Just goggle it down. It won't do any harm." she drank the alcohol. We all stared at the TV because I'd be lying if I said we were watching it. My phone rang. Me: "hello?" I answered. Mama: "My angel. Unjani?" Me: "I'm fine mama wena unjani?" Mama: "you don't sound fine." Lakhe: "please don't say anything." he

whispered. Me: "I'm just a little tired mama. I was about to sleep." Mama: "okay mntanam. I was just saying hello sizothetha ngomso vha, I love you." Me: "I love you too mama." I hung up. Lakhe: "I don't want them worried and driving over here in the middle of the night kwenzek ezizinto. We'll tell them everything tomorrow." I nodded. Me: "I know." Lakhe: "Babalo, do you want me to show you to your room?" Babalo: "yeah." I actually felt sorry for him. He was not taking it well at all. Lakhe took them to their room. Me: "did you find anything?" Sands: "no. Its like he just vanished in thin air. Spho, how well do you know Siyanda?" Me: "as well as you do." he rubbed his eyes and sighed. Lakhe came back to the lounge. Sands: "when was the last time he was here?" Me: "it was Tuesday evening." Sands: "and coincidentally this happens next door." Me: "I don't know Sandile. I just don't know." Lakhe: "you were the one who said he didn't have a killing mechanism, Sandile." Sands: "I might have been wrong bhuti. Something strange is happening here, two people have gone missing, and one of them was killed next door, the other was kidnapped a street away and we can't find a body or a trace for either. I told you bhuti, I told you digging into Siya's life was a bad idea. But nooo, you just had to bring over him over here and for what? Now you've invited the devil into our house, and I don't think I can take it anymore. I can't." he buried his head in his hands. Rob: "this isn't a time to give up Sandile. We have to fight this-" Sands: "how are you going to fight this tata! Asimazi ngubani! He's a ghost! Tell me how the hell!" he got up and walked to his room. Lakhe: "Tata, myeke uSandile he's stressed, his best friend is missing." Rob: "I know. I wish there was something I could do." Lakhe: "me too. Funeke ngomso sifownele umamakhe in Durban and let her know. Dumi let me get you to your room." they left together. Rob: "ambolala mntanam. Akhange ulale izolo. You need to rest." Me: "nawe tata." I got up and went to my bedroom. After undressing and getting into bed, Lakhe came in and did the same. Lakhe: "baby." Me: "yes?" Lakhe: "ndicela your permission to try something." Me: "what?" Lakhe: "please give it some thought." Me: "okay, what is it?" Lakhe: "ndifuna uyolanda umama ka Sibhu kwesasbhedlele. Having her close to other human beings, may make Komander panic. I want to bring him near to us. That's the only way to bring Sibhu home." Me: "why are you asking my permission?" Lakhe: "because I want you to be the one to talk to her. She has to bring him here."

#90

Early on Monday morning I'd woken up again, it was the 5th time during the entire night I probably slept a collective of an hour only. I went to shower and

brush my teeth. Lakhe was not in bed, I'd probably kept him awake with my tossing and turning too. I went to find something to wear, after dressing in leggings and a wool dress I made my way to the kitchen. I made breakfast for everyone who was sitting in the lounge and we ate together quietly.

Lakhe: "Sandile ndizohamba naye siyolanda umama ka Sibulele at the hospital, tata ndicela wena ufownele his adoptive mother and let her know kwenzeka ntoni but keep it to minimal." Rob: "Got you." Babalo: "what happened to Sibulele?" Lakhe: "he's missing." Babalo: "What?" the blood drained from his face. Lakhe: "only since Saturday afternoon. I'm sure it's not his blood in your house." Babalo: "do you know who might have seen him? Why not hire a PI?" Lakhe: "I don't think anyone saw him. And there's no trail anywhere of him." Babalo: "Lakhe how sure are you that wasn't his blood?" Lakhe: "Babalo calm down. The detective said that scene is a few days old." I took my plate to the kitchen. I was near a breakdown honestly and I didn't want to think of the possibility of Sibulele murdered in cold blood. I can't bare to think of the last thing he said to me. The gate buzzed and Lakhe opened it. Lakhe: "it's your parents." Now was absolutely not the time. They drove in and came up to the front door. Khaya: "molweni." Me: "molo tata." everyone also mumbled a greeting. Zama: "what's going on?" I looked at Lakhe. Lakhe looked at his father. Khaya: "Spho." Me: "cela nihlale phantsi tata, I'll make tea." Khaya: "I don't want tea. What's going on? Why niqumbile nonke endlini? Robert?" Rob: "Khaya, we have a problem." Khaya: "what is it?" Rob: "it seems as though uSibulele has been abducted." Zama: "What!!" Khaya: "yenzeke nini lento!" Rob: "Saturday afternoon. We were having a discussion and he got upset waphuma ethatha walk, to cool down, Sandile followed him but wathi ufuna uba yedwa, wabuya uSandile esithi he said he'd be 20 minutes. He never came back. Instead we found his phone on the ground a few streets away." Khaya: "did you report this to the police?" Rob: "Yes. There's no trace of him anywhere." Zama: "hayini Somandla umntana. Who could have done this? Is it this Komander man Spho? Khandithi kuni yiyekeni lento?! Jonga ngoku!!" I looked at the floor. Lakhe: "you remember uBabalo tata, he came back yesterday afternoon from his holiday. Someone had gone into his house, they noticed that their bedroom was a crime scene." Khaya: "a crime scene how!" Lakhe: "there was blood on the walls, the floor and-" Zama: "No!!" she cried. Lakhe: "there was no body. And no sheets. They said the scene was a few days old so ayingo Sibulele." Khaya: "kwathini ningas'fownelanga Masilakhe'ikhaya! Whoever took Sibulele, also did this kulandlu! Who knows what kind of animal this is! How could you let this happen!" Rob: "this was beyond his control Khaya. All of us. It was just a matter of time and it so happened Sibulele was out at the wrong time." Khaya: "so what are we doing to get him back home?" Lakhe: "the police are working on it. Sandile goes out to look

everyday. Nangoku siyaphuma." Khaya: "ndik'xelele phezolo Zama something was off and we should've come then! Jonga le mess yenzekileyo." my mother was still quietly crying. He took out his phone and made a call. I felt so helpless. After he was done. Lakhe and Sandile left. Rob called Sibus other mother. "Hello?" Rob: "hello, ndithetha nomama ka Sibus?" She: "Yes. Ndithetha naban?" Rob: "ndingu Rob, utata ka Sandile noMasilakhe." She: "Oh!! I see. Is everyone okay?" how do you tell a mother her son is missing? I got up and went out the sliding door to get some fresh air. Hlumi came to stand with me. Hlumi: "can I make you some tea?" Me: "No I'm okay." Hlumi: "why didn't you tell us that your brother was missing?" Me: "it seemed insensitive after what you saw in your house. Plus I didn't want to scare you. You were already traumatized. Uleli njani?" Hlumi: "barely. But better than uBabalo. He didn't even sleep a wink. I was thinking of taking him to the doctor again." Me: "that would be a good idea. It can't be easy witnessing that kind of scene like that." Hlumi: "he's already thinking of selling the house. I'm so numb, I don't even know what to do. I heard the neighbors saying there might be a serial killer on the loose hunting people's vital organs." Me: "don't ever listen to those bored housewives, they watch too much television. There's no serial killer." Hlumi: "I heard your mother mentioning Komander. Who's that?" Me: "someone I hope we never get to meet." "Spho!!" I heard my dad call me. I went inside. Me: "Tata?" Khaya: "uyephi uMasilakhe. He needs to come back, I've called a police friend of mine they'll be here in 30 minutes." I called Lakhe and told him. We waited until they came back. The car parked in the driveway and they came up to the door. Khaya: "what the hell. Uzothini lo apha?" referring to Mirriam who carried her little bag close to her body. Lakhe: "I've ordered for extra security around the house, they'll be here shortly." Khaya: "WHAT IS SHE DOING HERE." Lakhe: "tata uSibulele was worried about his mother, and landawo ahleli kuyo is not safe-" Khaya: "lendawo wayehlelise mntanam kuyo yayi safe yona?!" Zama: "Khaya calm down, Spho are you comfortable having her here? Yindlu yakho lena." I quickly glanced at Lakhe, he had a pleading look in his eyes. Me: "yeah, its fine." Khaya: "you cannot be serious! Masilakhe, why did you bring this woman here knowing fully well urhuka lamabhadi akhe? Spho is pregnant! Nizoyithin into fikelwa ngulomntu uKomander?" Lakhe: "that's why I ordered the security tata, he won't get through it." Khaya: "God help us all because seemingly you don't know who the hell you're dealing with." he sat down. The friend my father spoke about arrived wabuza the exact same questions as the police did, in fact, he irritated me. Me: "excuse me but what difference are you going to do? The police are stuck with no leads. What do you got?" Guy: "I have resources the police don't plus, I have the time. This case is my priority." I rolled my eyes. That is exactly what the police said, to be honest. I'm

so over this. I went to my bedroom and decided to just pray. I had no other option at this point.

Days went by and there was still no sign of my brother. His mother in Durban called 10 times a day, a lot of begging and pleading took place to convince her not to come here. I really couldn't accommodate guests and I was in no mood to talk to people. Hlumi and Babalo had gone to her parents' house. Sleep was not even on the agenda now. It just refused. I only ate for the baby because I definitely wasn't hungry. It was an abnormally cold Thursday morning in the beginning of January ke phof. Sandile was now full on mute too. Nobody in the house spoke. I tried asking Miriam where Sibulele could be. She refused to say anything. All she did was draw in her book, she didn't even know who I was or pretended not to. Namhlanje I wasn't even gonna bother really. I was with Rob in the lounge, Dumi was working in his room. Lakhe and Sandile disappeared early this morning. Instead of the TV the radio was on. Something needed to be alive in this house. "Poppy." at first I thought it was the radio. "umntanam." no it was coming from the lounge entrance. I looked up and saw Miriam in tears holding her skirt. What's happening now nkosiyam. Me: "tata cela fownele uLakhe." she came to hug me. This was so uncomfortable but I let her and kept my mouth shut. I didn't even know what to call her. Miriam: "you're alive." Me: "I have been. For a very long time." Miriam: "they told me you'd died." Me: "You've been in this house for 4 days. You're trying to tell me only now you recognize me?" Miriam: "they told me you died. They want to take me from you." Me: "who?" Miriam: "your father, he wants to take me from you. They told me you died." Me: "andifanga mama ndim lo !!" I was so mad, you wouldn't believe. Miriam: "he's coming. He wants you away from me." we were running around in circles, which concluded one thing kum. She was mentally unstable. None of what she was saying was making any sense, she saw me as the little kid who ran away. Only now she wants to protect me from that so called father. Rob: "Miriam we need you to tell us who visited you in hospital." Miriam: "He did. Your father came to see me. He wants me gone." Me: "my father? Why would he do that?" Miriam: "he wants to take you away from me." I swear if I hear that sentence one more time. I'll snap. Me: "Uphi uSibulele? He's gone missing. Who took him?" Miriam: "uBhubhu. They want to take my babies away from me!" she cried. Khaya walked into the house. Miriam jumped up and looked at him. Me: "tata, can you explain to me why you went to visit Miriam in hospital? Scaring her." Khaya: "I never scared her. I went to check on her. She is unstable. I wanted to make sure she got everything she needed in terms of psychiatry." Me: "You didn't say that tata! Akhange usixelele ubuye pha!"

Khaya: "when have I ever discussed my patients?" Me: "tata, how has Miriam only seen you and Sibulele and is scared of YOU!" Khaya: "kanti funeke nditsho kangaphi that she is unstable!!" Me: "Tata Andicingi ndinyukelane nawe because I respect you too much, but I need to know the truth. Why is she so scared of you." Khaya: "ask her!" Me: "mama? Why are you scared of him." she held her mouth shut. Great. We're back to square one. Me: "tata, please.... You have to go. You're scaring her." Khaya: "Spho you're going to choose the woman who abandoned you over me?" Me: "Dad, do you have something to do with this abduction? Do you know where Sibulele is?" Khaya: "Spho why would I kidnap a grown man just to torment you? Ndizamthini uSibulele?" Lakhe and Sandile walked in. Lakhe: "I drove as fast as I could. What happened?" Me: "She spoke." Sandile: "uthini? Does she know where we can find Sibulele?" Me: "unfortunately not. She just goes around in circles. Then she just stopped." I looked at my dad. Khaya: "Do you really want me gone Spho? Is that it?" I just sat down. I was so exhausted. My body was failing to hold me up any longer. A phone in the distance rang. It was mine. Me: "Lakhe." he took it and answered it. Lakhe: "Spho's phone? This is her husband speaking." I looked at him. It sounded serious. Lakhe: "Yes of course! Where!" I stood up. oh God please let it be him. Lakhe: "we're on our way." he hung up and sighed. Lakhe: "they found him." my heart leaped in joy I almost cried. Me: "we have to go fetch him! Uphi! Where did they find him?" Lakhe: "They're taking him to Provincial hospital, apparently he just appeared at the Mount Road police station. Masambeni." Rob: "I'll stay here with uMiriam and Dumi. You guys go." we took two cars. One with my father and Lakhe, the other with Sandile and me. We arrived at the hospital and looked for him. The detective and the doctor luckily were together when we came in. Detective: "Great, you guys are here. Sibulele is in a bad state. He came in crawling at the station. Barely able to speak and collapsed on the floor. I recognized him from the picture you gave us. Here's his doctor." Doc: "I need immediate family." Me: "I'm his sister. This is my husband and his brother. This is my dad." Doc: "perfect, so all of you are family. Sibulele seems to have a bump on his head, I'm transferring him to Greenacres hospital to get an MRI scan but only after he regains some energy. He's still dehydrated and faint. I'm going to need you to sign these." Khaya: "Okay, I'm one of the head surgeons in Greenacres hospital." I took the papers. Doc: "perfect then, I'm giving him an hour to recuperate then we'll take it from there." Me: "can I see him?" Doc: "before we move him yes. I'll let you know. Excuse me." he rushed off. Thank God he was still alive. I sat down and started to pray right then and there thanking the Lord for sparing his life. Who knows what he went through? After an hour the doctor called us. Doc: "Spho? Your brother is asking for you sweetie." I jumped up and followed him eagerly. When I entered the ward he

was in and saw him I was near a breakdown. Me: "hey you." I held his hand. Sibulele: "hey." Me: "Unjani?" Sibulele: "I can't feel the bones in my body. I think they're all broken." Me: "at least you're alive. You're here. They're going to fix it." Sibulele: "I'm alive." Me: "of course. You're safe now." Sibulele: "I don't think so. I barely escaped Spho. I was supposed to have died. God sent an angel to save my life." now I was crying. Me: "that's true. We're taking you to Greenacres hospital soon, you'll have your own room and nice food. Then soon we'll take you home." Sibulele: "okay. Please don't leave me here alone." Me: "I'm not going anywhere bhuti wam." Soon the doctors came to transport him to the ambulance that took us to Greenacres hospital. He could walk on his own but was clearly in pain and limping. After his MRI scan they gave him sedatives to help him sleep. Sibulele: "Spho, please don't leave me." Me: "I'm not going to leave you." Sibulele: "I don't want to be alone." Me: "I'll be right here next to you." Sibulele: "I love you." Me: "I love you too. Get some rest." he dozed off eventually. Lakhe and Sandile came in with the doctor. Doc: "I'm waiting for his results, it'll take a few days, but I'm positive he's okay, just a little shaken and in pain. The drip hydrated him and put him back to the land of the living." Sands: "when can he go home?" Doc: "as soon as he wakes up. I do suggest that you keep him another day but in cases like these such as him being abducted and kept hostage, it is much better for him to be home in a familiar environment. Where he feels safe. If he's not up by 6pm, he has to stay overnight." he walked out. This doctor was super prompt. I like that he didn't beat around the bush or waste time with big medical words. Uyazazi ukuba uthetha nabantu aba normal. Who didn't even go to medical school. My heart was back in its place and for the first time I yawned. I lay my head on the bed while still sitting on the chair. It was just before 3. I wanted Sibulele to wake up before 6 pm so that we could go home. Lakhe walked out the room. Sandile just stood there staring at his best friend. I was too sleepy to even ask what he was thinking. In a few minutes Lakhe rolled in a bed. What the... Me: "where did you get that?" Lakhe: "doesn't matter, awuzokwazi ulala olohlobo. It might be a few hours before he wakes." Me: "he asked me not to leave him alone." Lakhe: "okay kaloku, here's your bed. I'll find a blanket." Sands: "There's one in the car." Lakhe left again. I got onto the bed and lay down my head. Sandile sat on the chair. Sands: "I should've insisted. At least we would've been together. I'm glad you're back Sibulele. Life couldn't have been the same without you." Lakhe walked in with the blanket and covered his wife. Lakhe: "there." he sighed. Lakhe: "2 hours max and you wake him up. Do you understand? He's not staying the night here." Sands: "ewe bhuti.".....

I was up around 5pm and to my surprise Sibú was awake or trying to be. This had Lakhe written all over it. Me: "Sibú are you okay." Sibú: "yeah, wanna go home." he slurred. He was definitely still sleeping. Lakhe: "signed and done." he gave the discharge papers to the doctor. Doc: "he's to be back in two days time for a check up. I'm not liking that bump but its not too bad. The swelling will go down in a few days. On your way out don't forget his medication. I'll see you in two days." and he left. I really like that doctor. He was so cool and calm. We made our way out the hospital and drove home. I'd last seen my dad when we arrived at the second hospital. When we got home, Sandile took Sibú to his room. Sands: "he's sleeping in my room tonight." Lakhe: "okay, Spho, its time for you to sleep baby." and for once I didn't fight him. I was legit exhausted. Me: "okay. After a shower." Lakhe: "and food. I'll make you something." Rob: "I already did. Its in the microwave." Lakhe: "enkosi tata, mbovasa Spho ndiyeza." I went to the bedroom shower. Lakhe heated the food. Rob: "how is he?" Lakhe: "bad. At least he knows us, and remembers most things. We just haven't mentioned the incident. He's in so much pain tata. I just didn't want him to spend the night in that place." Rob: "that's good. The extra security is here." Lakhe: "I see. My house is looking like an army base." Sandile came into the kitchen. Sands: "he's asleep." Lakhe: "that's good, keep an eye on him. I don't want him out of your sight." Sands: "got you. Ndizolanda ukutya qha ndibuyele kuye." Lakhe: "at least we're all getting some sleep tonight." Rob: "bendine worry ngo Dumí noSpho. At least its over now." Sands: "my question is, how the hell did he escape? Did he see him?" Lakhe: "I don't think so, he would be dead by now. Sandile try not asking these questions. Let him rest." Sands: "I won't." he took his food and walked away. Lakhe: "Nguye oyena mntu bendine worry ngaye mna. For a second it looked as though he was going crazy." Rob: "I know. Manditixe nyana the entire house. We also got a new security system, every window and door has a sensor, if opened it will trigger the alarm. There's new cameras outside and in. And we have electric current on all knobs and handles. Try not to touch any door knob or window until its been disabled in the morning." Lakhe: "okay. Let everyone else know. Goodnight tata." Rob: "Goodnight. I'll be in the lounge with Dumí. Go rest." Lakhe went to his bedroom. I was already finished with my shower but I was extremely tired. Even putting on lotion would be too much work. Lakhe: "hey baby." Me: "Hmm." he put the food aside and took the lotion, squeezing some in his hand. Lakhe: "eat so long. Take a few bites." esandithambisa, ndatya ecaleni at least half the plate before I just dozed off. Lakhe put the plate aside and dressed his wife in her silk red gown and warm socks. He covered her with the duvet and he sunk into bed. It had been a long day. Hours felt like mere minutes, when an ear piercing scream shot through the walls of the house.

Lakhe jumped to his feet, I was instantly awake my heart hammering in my chest. Both of us froze and stared at the door. What. The. Hell. Was. That?

#91

I went to the door first and ran down the passage to go check where the scream was coming from. Lakhe: "Spho!!!!!" Sandile's room flew open and he appeared almost as frightened. Me: "did you hear that?" Lakhe caught up. Sands: "Yep. I was right next to it. It was Sibú. He had a nightmare." Me: "what?" he moved away from the entrance of his bedroom and I walked in slowly. Sibú was sitting in the corner hugging his legs. Me: "oh honey." I went to him. Sibú: "he wants to kill me." Me: "who?" Sibú: "the Komander." my body felt like ice. I hugged him tight for warmth. Me: "he's not going to hurt you. He won't come near you." Sibú: "he's outside." Lakhe walked out that second. I knew there was no Komander outside. It was a futile exercise really. Why would someone just be lurking in the yard to torment one human being. That's just cray cray. But then again Komander was just as cray cray too. Me: "Sandile fetch your brother please." Sands: "Andicingi kaloku ndiphume pha ph-" the alarms of the house went off right then sending a shocking wave of noise throughout the house. Sibú started shaking immediately. I had to hold him tighter to make sure he didn't lose grip and start screaming again. Me: "nguLakhe lo uphumayo, don't be afraid bhuti." he couldn't even speak ndlela le ebengcangcazela ngayo. Me: "Sandile!" Sands: "fine! Fine! Who cares what happens to dear old Sandile anyway." he walked to Lakhe. Rob and Dumí appeared. It was a whole scene. Rob spoke on the phone running around the house and finally the alarms shut off. Sibú: "he wants me gone, Spho he wants to take me away." something clicked in my brain immediately that second. If I wasn't already scared, I was damn near wetting my pants now. This is exactly what my mother had said just yesterday. Was it my imagination or is everyone that meets Komander emotionally scarred? What in the damn world does he tell them or show them? It seems as though he brainwashes them into thinking they'll never be safe as long as he lives. What does he do to them? This cannot be a human bethuna yhini kangaka. Me: "he'll never take you away from me. I promise you that." Lakhe and Sandile came back. Lakhe: "its all clear outside. How is he?" I shook my head. Lakhe: "okay." he walked back out and came back with Sibú's pills and water. Lakhe: "he should drink this." Me: "hayi Lakhe." Lakhe: "baby he's going to be distraught all night, its best he just sleeps qha." Me: "Sandile, can you take my place?" Sands: "you mean cuddling another man? No." Me: "Sandile, hold my brother while I talk to yours." Sands: "fine." I went to Lakhe. Me: "he's not

having nightmares." Lakhe: "what do you mean?" Me: "Komander is controlling his mind Lakhe." Lakhe: "what the hell do you mean?" Me: "I mean, Miriam and him said the exact same thing to me less than 24 hours ago, and they weren't together ever since he came back." Lakhe: "so.....he controls what they think and dream?" Me: "well, I don't know about dreams but thinking? Yes. Baby, Komander could be some cult leader of some sort. Torturing his victims into thinking that they'll never have peace while he's still around. Can anything explain Miriam's sudden mental instability? Sibulele's fear and tragic nightmares? They've both seen him. And he did something to them." Lakhe: "sithini kengoku baby?" Me: "we have to be patient. Miriam didn't speak to me for days. Yet izolo she just came and told me that someone was trying to take her away from me. She was so scared." Lakhe: "my dad said she was scared of your father Spho. What if your father is Komander?" Me: "I thought of that theory but Sibulele would react to him too if he was. For now, only my mum does and that's a debate on whether it is because he adopted me." Lakhe: "Spho, sizoyithini lento? Let him just drink the pill." Me: "and make him worse? He's already restless imagine being drugged?" Dumi: "yeah that would be bad." Rob: "but what choice do we have? Won't it be better if he's weaker? Uzolala-" Me: "aphuphe kablungu angakwazi uzilwela. He needs a doctor, unfortunately not this time of night. We gonn have to supervise him one at a time. At least its 2am now, I'll stay with him till 3. Then the next person will stay till 4. And so forth." Lakhe: "ha.a Spho, you need to sleep, you haven't slept properly in days. I'll stay with Sibulele till morning." Sands: "yeah nam I don't think I'll be able to sleep." Rob: "then that's sorted. I'll make a call to the doctor in the morning." I took the pills from Lakhe's hand. Lakhe: "I wasn't going to." Me: "I have to be sure. Goodnight everyone." I went back to my bedroom and fell asleep almost immediately.

I was up by 6am Friday morning. I'd had a terrifying dream. I was still shivering from the memory. Remember when I was imagining Komander having a long black cloak with a hood on, not able to see his face and also long dirty fingernails. That's exactly what I dreamt and he was carving an X on someone's chest licking the blood off his nails. I was tied up in a chair forced to watch this gruesome action. I went to the bathroom and sat there for a while thinking to myself. Is this what Komander could have done? My goodness this was so frustrating. I took a shower and wore clean pajamas and a gown. Lakhe came into the bedroom winding his wrist and flexing his fingers. Lakhe: "hey. My hand is still sore, the door knob electrocuted me ekzeni. Forgot about that stupid security system." Me: "I'm sorry baby. You should get some rest. At least I'm awake now. Naye utata uRob, he'll call the

doctor and we'll take care of Sibbu." Lakhe: "okay. Call me when you need anything." Me: "uhleli uMiriam?" Lakhe: "I don't know. Ndimgqibele izolo. Thank goodness she didn't wake up kuyo yonke lanto. I don't think I would've been able to cope." Me: "I need to try to talk to her again. She knows something, I just need to dissect it from all the gibberish she keeps saying." Lakhe: "okay my love. First eat please." I decided to dress in a black leggings and a thick white jersey. I wore warm socks and slippers then walked out to Miriam's room. I'd wake her up and go make her tea so that we can sit in the garden and talk. Hopefully. I really felt sorry for her. As angry as I was in the past, and mostly at her for not protecting me. I could move on and we could start afresh. I mean not as traditional mother and daughter but as civil human beings. At least for Sibbu. I knocked on her door. No answer. I knocked again. Still quiet. Are you trying to tell me she's still sleeping? I turned the door knob and pushed open the door slowly. She wasn't in bed. Where could she be. Me: "sis'Miriam?" I heard a creak. Almost like wind. The windows were closed though. I walked into the bedroom looking at the bed on my left. It was as though she didn't even sleep on it. Maybe she ran away? Where was her bag? Supposedly in the wardrobe on my right. I turned around and was faced with horror. My heart stopped instantly. I started shaking from head to toe. I couldn't utter a sound kwaveske kwamnyama. I just stared at her, hanging from the ceiling, a white sheet in a tight noose around her neck, her body swaying in a twisting form until it stopped, and faced me. Her eyes still open but clearly had no life in them. I stumbled out of the bedroom holding onto the wall in the passage and threw up on the floor. That's when I started to fall apart. I could see the shadow of someone coming to me and then saw nothing.

I opened my eyes to bright lights. It was a dream. Oh Thank God. But why am I in hospital? Me: "I was dreaming wasn't I? But why am I here?" Lakhe stared at me quietly. The doctor came forward. Doc: "what did you dream?" Me: "I'd just woken up, showered and dressed, after talking to my husband I went out to my mothers room. I walked in and found her hanging in the ceiling." Lakhe turned around and faced the wall. Doc: "do you remember your conversation with your husband?" Me: "uhm...yeah, he said his hand was sore and I told him to sleep a bit, not much." Doc: "Spho, that wasn't a dream." then it all came back to me in a crashing wave. Doc: "what you saw was reality, you discovered your mother's body, hanging in her bedroom ceiling. She's dead-" Lakhe: "doctor!" Doc: "she needs to come to terms with it, she literally blacked out because of shock." Oh God. Me: "she committed suicide?" Doc: "well yes. She hanged herself with her bed sheet." fresh tears

ran down my face and when I closed my eyes I saw her lifeless body hanging there, swaying until it faced me. As if to mock me. How lucky was I to discover both my parents' dead bodies months apart. I must be golden shame. The doctor was talking and Lakhe just stared at me quietly. I couldn't hear a word. I was just blank so I got out of bed and got dressed. Lakhe: "uyaphi baby?" Me: "home." Lakhe: "The doctor thought it would be bes-" Me: "I'm pregnant. I'm not staying here for thoughts. I'm going home." he didn't argue with me. Instead kept quiet all the way home. It was already in the afternoon, I hadn't eaten all day and I was really moody for some reason. There was a strange man sitting in the lounge with the rest of my family. My parents were also here. Lakhe: "uzoty ntoni?" Me: "because I'm supposed to know?" Lakhe: "uhm-" Dumis: "Don't." Me: "I asked a question Lakhe. How am I supposed to know!" Dumis: "I think what he meant was, would you like a peanut butter sandwich? Your favorite." Me: "I don't want peanut butter." Lakhe: "you have to eat." Me: "I know that!!!" Mama: "okay, I'll make the food. Lakhe, can you give Spho a foot rub? Sit down honey." Me: "I don't want him to touch me. Don't touch me-" Lakhe: "I'm not touching yo-" Me: "why are you shouting?" Lakhe: "I'm sorry. I won't touch you." Me: "because I disgust you?" Lakhe: "what is happening?" I walked to the bedroom. Sands: "maaannn, you are in tr-ou-bl-e." Lakhe: "Nx." he walked to the bedroom. Lakhe: "baby? Kwenzeka ntoni ngoku?" Me: "who's that man sitting in my lounge!?" Lakhe: "I don't know njena nam, ndingena nawe. Do you want me to kick him out?" Me: "yes!" Lakhe: "done." he walked to the lounge and sighed. Lakhe: "please leave." Rob: "Masilakhe!" Lakhe: "Spho doesn't want him here. She asked that he leaves tata." Rob: "this is the pastor." Lakhe: "Oh." Rob: "he came to pray for the family." Lakhe: "nice, so is he done?" Rob: "No, he would like to talk to the both of you." Lakhe: "I don't think that's a good idea. She almost bit my head off." Rob: "Lakhe, Spho is reasonable. Stop making her out to be a monster. She will understand if the pastor wants a word." Lakhe: "can't he come back tomorrow?" Rob: "Masilakhe." Lakhe walked back to the bedroom. Lakhe: "sthandwasam." Me: "is he gone." Lakhe: "it turns out-" Me: "IS. HE. GONE." Lakhe: "well no bec-" Me: "why don't you ever listen to me?" Lakhe: "he's a pastor-" Me: "I don't care." Lakhe: "hayi Spho. You love church-" Me: "is he church?" Lakhe: "well-" Me: "then he leaves. Okanye ufuna axelelwe ndim?" Lakhe: "sweetheart what's going on?" I wore my slippers and took off to the lounge. Me: "Can anyone who is not a resident of this household please leave?" Rob: "Sph-" Me: "everyone. I want everyone gone. You have two minutes before I call the cops." I went to my bedroom and took my phone dialing the police number. In two minutes I'm really pressing the call button, I'm not gonna have this. *Back in the lounge* Rob: "Spho needs some time to calm down." Sands: "No she doesn't, I do suggest that

you do as she says. She's not bluffing." Khaya: "Spho would never throw out a pastor." Sands: "maybe he's not really a pastor then, is he?" Pastor: "of course I am. You know what Khaya? I'm leaving. I don't want to be part of a scandal." he walked out. Sands: "I heard her say all non residents." he clicked on his phone. Dumi: "Same." Rob: "Sphosenkosi is going through a rough time. She just saw her mother dead. Obviously she's not in a right state of mind." Sands: "you're still a temporary resident, I wouldn't risk it if I were you." Rob: "You're exaggerating this." Sands: "Tata, you of all people should know Spho, you live here, this mood that she's in is the mood she kicks people out. I remember egxotho uLakhe and he bought this house ke yena. Go ahead and play with it." Rob: "its been a tough night. Uzolala uSpho avuke eright." I walked into the lounge hearing my name. Me: "I think I heard myself correctly ndisithi if you're not living here permanently." Khaya: "are you throwing your parents out?" Me: "ewe tata." Mama: "hayi Spho!" Me: "mama, utata is keeping secrets. Deep secrets. Tata you are the only one, who spoke to Miriam in her right mind. You knew what was wrong. Until you decide to tell us the truth, you and your pastors are not welcome in my house." Khaya: "you can't blame me for Miriam's suicide!" Me: "oh I'm not blaming you. I'm accusing You. A woman went missing in a hospital you went to. My brother disappeared and miraculously appeared in a police station, now a suicide? Not to mention next door's bloody scene." Khaya: "Spho I am your father! How could you think I'd do something like that!" Me: "then tell me what Miriam told you." he stared at me. Khaya: "You've already made your decision about me, so what's the point. Masambe Zama." he walked out. My mother followed after him. I went to the kitchen. Rob: "What the hell." Lakhe: "tata please." Rob: "Masilakhe, it has been a very eventful day. First Miriam's body, Spho fainting after finding it then she's throwing her family out. What is going on?" Lakhe: "She's taking a lot of strain today. Can you please let it go? Right now, you need to keep a close eye on her. I have something to sort out." Rob: "What's something?" Lakhe: "Like who killed Miriam. There is no way she committed suicide. Someone inside this house killed her."

#92

Friday afternoon, I went to bed early. My heart was broken and I had a headache. Lakhe: "baby, I need to go somewhere for a few hours." Me: "Why?" I didn't want him to go. He had to stay and hug me to sleep but then again. Lakhe: "I just need to sort out arrangements for Miriam. I'll be back soon." Me: "promise?" Lakhe: "I promise." Me: "okay." Lakhe: "sthandwasam." he sat on the bed and held my hand. Lakhe: "I'm sorry about everything that

has happened to you." Me: "its not your fault." Lakhe: "I feel like it is, its just that at this point in my life I can't lose you, for the first time ever I have something to live for. You and my child. I can't mess around people like Komander because he has no regard for things like family and true love. He's a demon. I realize my mistake, putting up security means nothing to someone like him, I have to face him head first." Me: "I don't want you to face him, please Lakhe, promise me you won't do that. I can't lose you too. Let's just leave this guy alone now." Lakhe: "I want you to know that you're my universe and I love you. I'll do anything for you." Me: "I know baby. I love you too." Lakhe: "take care of my baby." he kissed my forehead and walked out. Sandile was in the lounge with Dumi and Sibulele watching TV. Lakhe: "Dumisani, can you drive?" Dumi stared at him sarcastically. Dumi: "Dude, I'm paralyzed." Lakhe: "I need a driver." Sibulele: "I'll drive bhuti." Lakhe: "Sibulele-" Sibulele: "I just had one nightmare bhuti I'm fine!" Lakhe: "I'm not talking about your nightmare. Your mother just died-" Sibulele: "its not like I can bring her back by sitting here feeling sorry for myself. Let me drive. Please?" Lakhe: "fine. Dumi, you're going to stay here with utata. The security is still outside. Lock the minute we step out, you don't open for anyone, do you understand?" Dumi: "yeah." Lakhe: "masambeni Sandile." they walked out the house, Dumi locked behind them. Sibulele drove Lakhe's car out the yard with Sandile in the passenger seat and Lakhe at the back. He gave directions from his ipad. Sibulele slowed down at the robots and stared ahead. They turned green. Sandile: "Sibulele?" he looked at him. Sibulele just stared ahead quietly. Lakhe: "Sandile please take the wheel. Sibulele come to the back." Sibulele: "no I'm fine." he swallowed and stepped lightly on the accelerator. Sandile: "you're not fine." Sibulele: "I am. I swear." he sped up a little. Sandile: "Sibulele you don't have to be brave. We understand you're going through a tough tim-" Sibulele: "You have absolutely no idea what I'm going through!!!" he snapped. Lakhe: "Sibulele." Sibulele: "bhuti." Lakhe: "slow down the car." the car slowed down. In a few minutes they'd reached their meeting point. Lakhe: "come with me." they got out the car. Sandile walking in front, Sibulele next to Lakhe. They entered the building and followed the staircase downstairs. Sandile pushed open the door and walked into a room with his brothers. Sergio: "My Sandcastles." Sandile: "wassup Sir." Sergio: "Mr G." Lakhe: "funny how you greet my brother so endearingly before me as if he pays your salary. Where's the rest?" Sergio: "my apologies sir, all of them are two minutes away." they waited and the rest of the team arrived. Black Stallion in his usual bubbly mood. Bull Cloak very quietly staring at him annoyed. Lakhe: "Has anyone seen Frank the Snitch?" Black: "I have." Lakhe: "where." Black: "Not so much as seen but heard of." Lakhe stared at him with a stern face. Black: "Oh, where? I heard from a contact of mine. He joined the K.U.G." Lakhe: "what." he hissed. Black: "uhm. Yeah. He saw the tattoo on

the back of his neck and the symbol on his left wrist. He's under their protection." Sands: "you're trying to tell me Frank was so scared of my brother he went to join Komander's group? The guy much worse?" Black: "clearly. He knows you can't touch him if he's under their protection." Lakhe: "oh can't I? We'll see about that. This is my brother in law, Sibulele. He was abducted last Saturday afternoon, and returned on Thursday morning. I want whoever was responsible to be found and brought to me immediately, whoever can get the information to me as quick as Usain Bolt, you'll earn yourself 10 bars." Black: "now by bars do you mean like merits in a school report or we're talking real live bars like 10 million." Lakhe: "do I look like a fucking primary school principal to you???" Black: "No." Lakhe: "the second task, I need to find Komander, anyone who knows anything, no matter how. Tell me." Sergio: "Sir, Komander? What would you want with him?" Lakhe: "that doesn't matter. I want his whereabouts, that on its own is 10 bars. You pass both, you get 25. Is anyone confused?" Everyone: "No sir." Black: "I am. Now I don't mind looking for the abductors. But Komander himself? That's suicide. Nobody has ever seen him and lived to tell the story." Lakhe: "yet he's around and runs operations all over the world? Matter of fact, I change my statement, I want YOU to personally find him. I'm giving you 48 hours otherwise you'll lose a limb." he walked out. In the car, Sandile took the driver seat. Sands: "where to next?" Lakhe: "Groovmor clinic. I need Timothy in my hands." Sandile drove straight to the hospital centre.

Sandile went inside the hospital in search of Timothy and found him by reception. Sands: "sweetheart, I've been looking all over for you." he stood behind him with hands in his pockets. Timothy turned around and looked at him. Tim: "excuse me?" Sands: "I thought I'd take you out for lunch. Are you busy?" Tim: "first of all, Who are you and what do you want?" Sands: "Wow, this is how you treat all your boyfriend's? Or is it just me?" Tim: "you're not my boyfriend. I don't know who you are." Sandile took one step toward him. Sands: "Baby... I would kindly suggest, you stop playing with me. You don't want your love to be upset. Take your things, and join me for lunch." Timothy swallowed but stood his ground. Tim: "No." Rose: "is everything okay here?" Sands: "Just trying to surprise my fiance for lunch but he's still mad at me for last night." he had a menacing look in his eyes. Rose: "awww. You're so sweet. You can go Tim, its almost your lunch break." she walked off. Sands: "you heard the lady. Let's go my butterfly." he held his forearm and pulled him out. Tim: "who the hell are you!!" he asked as soon as they were outside. Sands: "who I am, is none of your concern, and if you don't want me to drag you I suggest you calm the fuck down. I am not below killing you. Move." Tim:

"people will ask about me you know! You can't kill me! There's cameras in that hospital." Sands: "all it takes is one phone call to get rid of that evidence, and a 12 foot grave to get rid of you. Timothy, I don't like to cause a scene but if ufuna ndikucenge kwedin, I'm going to kick your asshole wrong side out. Don't fucking test me." Tim obeyed quietly and got into the car. The backseat was available with only Lakhe. Sibu in the passenger. Sandile drove off. Lakhe turned his head to look at Tim and smiled. Lakhe: "Hi." Tim: "what do you want from me? I told you everything I know." Lakhe: "Yeah. Except you lied. Now, my brother is not that nice....but if you're going to deal with me, You'd wish I were him. Since I'm having a pleasant day, I'm going to give you a chance to collect your thoughts. We're going to drive around, tour our beautiful city, maybe get some food, you eat McDonalds right? We'll get you a burger. Then, once you're full, and your thoughts are aligned like ballerinas. You tell me the truth." Tim: "but-" Lakhe: "a.a.a.a.... I said we're going to drive around, tour the city while you gather you thoughts. We've only passed one street. You have about an hour." he looked back at his ipad. Timothy sat in his seat shaking. He only had one option, run for his life. Something dangerous was illuminating around this man in the back. He was obviously Satan. Shit. Lakhe: "the doors are automatically locked but obviously if you try anything stupid I'd cut your fingers off." he never once took his eyes off the ipad. Tim thought deeply. What the hell had he gotten himself into? All he needed was extra bucks that's it and those extra bucks came in 10k. Who would refuse an extra 10k? It wasn't a problem. He didn't think it was at first. All I had to do was keep in my lane. Tim: "I need to pee." Lakhe: "do you need a cup?" he looked at him. Tim looked back at him and saw a vile look in his eyes. He wasn't joking. God... He wasn't joking. Tim: "erh...you..." Lakhe: "I'm not going to stare at your dingaling but you're not getting out of this car until I get what I want and I'm satisfied. Try one more thing Timothy. I promise I'll ruin both our days at the speed of light." Tim: "its okay, I can hold it." Lakhe: "that's good." he went back to his ipad. Tim: "if I tell you everything, will you let me go?" Lakhe: "of course Timothy. I'm a man of my word." Tim: "okay." Lakhe drew out a knife as shiny as a reflective mirror. Tim's eyes widened. Lakhe: "Are you hungry?" Tim: "No. Thank you." Lakhe: "even McDonald's? I'm paying of course." Tim: "no its okay. I'm not hungry." Lakhe: "Suit yourself. Tell me where Anne is." Tim: "I don't know where Anne is." Lakhe: "see, this is why I needed an hour to show you this beautiful city, because your thoughts aren't ballerinas. And I happen to like ballerinas, now, you're pissing me off Timothy." Tim: "sir, I swear I don't know where she-" Lakhe grabbed his collar and pulled him close. Lakhe: "Don't. Fucking. Lie." he hissed. Tim: "I'm not lying I swe-" the knife landed on the side of his neck. Lakhe: "the next thing that comes out your mouth had better be the Bible truth or so help me God. I dare you, Lie To Me." Timothy looked at

him pleading. Tears streaming down his cheek. Tim: "he just met with me one night and he offered me cash to keep quiet and mind my own business." he sobbed. Lakhe: "Who." Tim: "he said his name was Comfort. I asked what he needed me to be quiet about and he said he would fetch something from the hospital and that I had to disappear for a certain period of time and only reappear 5 minutes after the power goes off." Lakhe: "and then?" Tim: "he gave me about 2k. Then that night the weird incident happened. He left me 8k on my desk. I never saw him again. I don't think he hurt her." Lakhe: "you don't? What makes you so sure?" Tim: "because....Anne, her husband....he's a drug dealer. He beats her sometimes and she doesn't come to work for weeks. I figured maybe he did it. That's why I gave you his number. Please." Lakhe: "Do you trust me?" Tim nodded quickly. Sands: "bhuti." Lakhe looked at him. Sandile shook his head. Lakhe: "you're lucky my brother likes you. And you better pray to God himself, that you don't mention a word of this. Otherwise I will come find you and do worst things you could've ever imagined than dying. Do you understand me Timothy Wilson? Do you realize that if I can't find you, I will surely find your sister Melanie at Diaz primary school. Or your brother Oliver at his soccer practice at Lawson Brown high?" Tim: "I understand." Lakhe: "that's good." he let go of him. Lakhe: "drop him off." after dropping Timothy off Sandile drove around. Lakhe: "who the fuck is Comfort." Sands: "obviously from the Komander Ultimates Group. All his minions' names start with kom." Lakhe: "SHIT! This is exactly what I fucking need!!! I have a court case I have to prepare for in two fucking months, and this bastard of a human demon thing has to appear! Why can I not seem to catch a break!" Sands: "and even if we found this Komfort, he would rather die than let us know of Komander." Lakhe: "I know that! And obviously if he goes missing then shit will literally hit the fan. Actually not even the fan, the air conditioner! Just take me to my wife." Sandile turned the car around and drove back home.

Lakhe walked into the house after a few hours he had left. I was cooking dinner. Lakhe: "hey baby." Me: "hey." he hugged me. Lakhe: "you smell so good." Me: "thank you. Are you okay?" Lakhe: "yeah, I'm not sure if you want a service for Miriam or just a burial." Me: "I actually really don't know. I guess a funeral." I closed the pot and sighed. Me: "you know I was ready to put everything behind me and start a new relationship with her. Then she decided to do this. I was going to make her tea, sit in the garden with her and talk." Lakhe: "I'm sorry baby. Maybe the stress was too much for her." Me: "she could've said something Lakhe. My dad doesn't live here so he wouldn't be able to hurt her. Why would she just kill herself?" Lakhe: "Stop worrying

yourself about this, baby. We don't have the answers. Its sad but we have to face reality that she's gone. At least we have Sibuyela back and I intend on keeping all of you safe." I hugged him. Me: "thank you daddy. Thanks for the extra security, although it feels like Nkandla but I feel safer." Lakhe: "You're welcome my wife. I'd do anything for you. Do you need any help?" Me: "dinner will be ready in two minutes. I need you to set the table and let everyone know." Lakhe: "done." Boogie paddled into the kitchen, his little paws clicking on the tiles. Lakhe: "and then?" the pup sat down and stared upward licking his little mouth. Lakhe: "uyabawa ngoku Boogie? Is that it?" the puppy wagged his little tail. Me: "khayeke umntana Lakhe and set the table." Lakhe: "makabene yakhe ke plate andifun nyama ishotayo mna." he walked to the dining table. Once the meal was ready I took the plates to the dining room as well and dished up. The gate buzzed. Who the hell now. It seemed as though no one was getting up to open either. There was a mob of armed security just at the gate kakade. They wouldn't move unless instructed. They even had black helmets on covering their faces with tinted glass, completing their bullet proof attire. They looked like ninjas honestly and I trusted them with my life. The gate buzzed ag- oh for fucks sake. I went to pick up. Me: "hello?" I looked at the camera and found Nosi and her evil mother. God, why now? Please. Nosi: "Hi Spho. Ndicela uvule." I was so defeated. I opened ndabuyela ekuphakeni ukutya oku. They entered in a few minutes carrying suitcases. Ndaske ndanukiselwa yiDoom. I promise. Stella: "good evening family. How are you?" Sands: "siphilile mama Unjani?" he hugged his little sister. Stella: "splendid darling. Oh, Spho honey do you need help?" I stared at her and continued with my task. Stella: "I took the courtesy of getting you a present. Spoiler alert, its a maid. Its literally the best gift a woman could ever ask for. Your back must be aching and your feet swollen. You deserve some rest and let someone else do the work." Me: "I actually enjoy my wifely duties, cooking and cleaning for my family. Doing their laundry and ironing. I don't need help." Rob: "ooooooh snap." I felt like laughing. Why so petty Rob? Stella: "at least a doula to help you through the pregnancy?" Me: "I'm fine but thank you for offering." I wondered why she was so nice all of a sudden. Nosi: "bhuti, can mama stay with us for a while?" ooh that's why. Lakhe: "This is Spho's house. She decides who stays and goes." I stared at this nerve of mine. Since when? I hated this. I didn't want to decide this. Throwing a woman out? Why me? God never gave me a cold heart shame. But then again I happened to have one a few hours ago. Ndadalwa ngolunye uhlobo mna. Me: "she can stay for a few days." Stella: "oh sweetheart thank you. I promise I'll be as quiet as a mouse. You won't even know I'm here!" she took her suitcases to her bedroom with her daughter. Rob: "you don't have to let her stay you know." Me: "its fine tata." I

went to fetch extra plates in the kitchen. Rob: "you have a rare and beautiful wife who happens to have the kindest soul I've ever seen. You mess it up one time, and I will swoop in like an eagle and marry her for me." Lakhe stared at him. Sands: "euw tata. You just had to take it there?" Lakhe: "stay away from my wife man." Rob: "I'm just saying." Lakhe: "Tata. Life would never be able to prepare you for what I'd do to you if you came close to my wife like that." Rob: "That's cute." Rob laughed....

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After dinner Stella had left again, since bekumnyama I figured that uzobuya ksasa not that she told anyone. I finished cleaning up the kitchen and answered my ringing phone. It was my mom. Zama. Well there was only one left anyway. Me: "hello mama." "Spho." oh that was my dad's voice. I looked at the number again. He used my mother's phone to call me? Its not like I wouldn't answer his call mos. Me: "hello tata, is everything okay?" Khaya: "You mean after you kicked me out?" Me: "I only asked you to leave. You brought a strange man to my house and you weren't being completely honest. You know, you only wanted me to speak to the pastor just so that he can brainwash me to being quiet. Am I wrong tata?" he kept quiet. Me: "Dad, You've done this ever since I turned 16. You kept things from me and whenever I asked, you brought a pastor who would scold me into silence. This, proves you know something that I don't. I didn't want to say this in front of Lakhe's family because abangeni ndawo, but you're my parents, I let you in on every aspect in my life, why can't you do the same?" Khaya: "Spho, its not like that." Me: "then how is it like tata?" I was greeted by silence again. Me: "uyabona ke tata why I get frustrated? I'm not a teenager anymore-" Khaya: "Yes but you're still my child Spho and its my duty to protect you!" Me: "Tata, on my wedding day, you handed me to Lakhe. He is the one who protects me now. Why are you doubting him?" Khaya: "Spho this is dangerous grounds that he has dragged you in. Why would he bring that woman near you esazi she has a bounty on her head!" Me: "where was she supposed to go? Tata ungumntu olungileyo ohamba icawa. Why can't you forgive her for the past?" Khaya: "Spho, that woman has made my life hell, I will never forgive her. I'm not sorry she killed herself at all. She deserves it after what she did." Me: "tata uthetha ngant-" he hung up. I looked at my belly. Me: "utheni utamkhulu wakho mntanam?" Lakhe: "hey." Me: "hi." he walked in the kitchen. Lakhe: "I couldn't help overhearing." Me: "what exactly did you hear?" Lakhe: "everything." Me: "then that's eavesdropping. Not overhearing. Unondaba wam." I kissed his nose. Lakhe: "baby I know uva kabhlungu, you don't have

to hide it." Me: "I'm not hiding it. I'm just frustrated and scared. I can't stop thinking." he sat on the bar stool. Lakhe: "thinking what?" Me: "What was so awful that Komander did to Miriam that she had no choice but take her own life?" Lakhe: "baby kutheni ucinga ngalento when I told you not to." Me: "my dad knows something Lakhe. I feel like I don't even know him anymore." Lakhe: "what makes you think that?" Me: "he says he'll never forgive Miriam and he isn't sorry that she killed herself she deserves it for what she did." Lakhe: "baby, I'm sorry to say this but utatakho might have a leg to stand on. Your mother kept quiet and stood by as your own father molested and raped you in their house. What kind of mother does that? Hell, she would have never lived another day ngowam umntana mna. I understand why Khaya is so angry at her. You're his only daughter." I didn't want to think about this anymore but something was nagging me. My wounds had reopened when I regained my memory it still hurts to think about it yet I couldn't avoid it. Me: "But Lakhe something is fishy, everytime he brought a pastor to our house, he was covering something. It started when I was 16. Everytime I asked questions he couldn't answer, he brought a pastor who bombed me with Bible verses of obedience and respect and so forth." Lakhe: "is that why you can't throw my mother out even when she treats you like trash?" Me: "This is not about your mother right now. What if my dad is connected to this Komander person? I don't know anymore." Lakhe: "Babes, I know your dad. There is no way he would know Komander. I mean I had my doubts recently too, but honestly, utatakho is the most law abiding citizen I've ever met I'm surprised he doesn't have a Noble prize yet. Do you want me to show you abantu that associate with Komander banjani?" I shook my head. Lakhe: "uyoyika ngoku?" Me: "No." Lakhe: "baby your dad is clean." he hugged me. Stella walked into the kitchen, when did she come back? Stella: "oh my babies." we looked at her. I needed to get to bed. Stella: "sweetheart, You've met Vicky right? She used to work for us in our house in East London." Me: "yes we've met." I remember she was going to enroll for a short business course and Rob would help her start a Supermarket business. What was she doing here? Me: "Unjani sisi?" Vicky: "ndiphilile Spho Unjani wena?" she smiled sweetly. Me: "I'm fine thank you." Lakhe: "mama, uzothini apha uVicky?" Stella: "to help Spho with the household chores of course." Lakhe: "I believe Spho said she's fine." Stella: "This is a huge house, I mean not as big as mine but still huge. Especially for a pregnant lady. She needs rest. Masilakhe you grew up with a maid. Your wife can't be slaving away for you." Me: "iza ndik'bonise room yakho Sisi." Arguing with Stella or anyone else for that matter was not in my to-do lists today. My brain was genuinely tired. I took Vicky to her room then I went to rest. I had a headache. My feet were sore. And I was hungry. My husband walked in the bedroom. Me: "sweetheart, can you please get me some zinger wings?"

Lakhe: "I'll ask Sandile babes. He drives faster than me." Me: "Baby, Sandile didn't make me pregnant. I want you to get it for me." Lakhe: "haibo. Aren't they the same zinger wings regardless?" Me: "no. You must bring them." he stared me clearly stunned. Lakhe: "fine. Ndiyabuya." he walked out. I sat in bed quietly and recalled the events of today, I kept shaking in fear. Everytime I saw Miriams lifeless body, swaying till a standstill. Facing me. As if she summoned it to. What was going through her mind when she did this? Did she even know what she was doing? Because the last few days she was unstable. A soft knock on my bedroom door disturbed me. Me: "come in." the door opened and Sibuh stepped in. Sibuh: "Uphi uBhuti?" Me: "he went to kfc. Left just a while ago. Ufuna yena?" he closed the door behind him. Sibuh: "No, I want to talk to you." Me: "come." he got into bed. Me: "what's wrong?" Sibuh: "promise me you won't tell anyone?" Me: "I promise." Sibuh: "not even uLakhe." My spouse? Sibuh: "Please Spho, promise me." Me: "I promise." this had to be serious. Sibuh: "when I was walking, the day I was kidnapped, I got a video call. From someone called Shyla. She was the head detective in Rey's case. It was weird for her to video call instead of a normal phone call, but ndibuze ufuna ntoni, She said, she saw my picture in Rey's belongings and she wanted to check if it really was me." I stared at him. Shocked was the understatement of the year. Me: "but....how?" Sibuh: "the picture was taken when I was 4. When she showed me, I had no doubt in my mind ukuba ndim. And she also showed me one of yours, una 2." I swallowed hard. I've never even seen a pic of myself ndina 2. Sibuh: "I asked her how was that possible because I've never met Rey, I don't know him. Why would he keep a picture of me in his wallet? She couldn't answer me. So, I asked her if she found who killed him and she said no. They never caught the killer. She says Rey died only a month after he was reported missing. Which means his body remained unfound for another 3 months. Rotting." I could feel the bile working up my system. Sibuh: "I told her that I'd have to call her back. I wanted to digest yonke Lento and possibly ask my mother if she knew Rey. We hung up, then I bumped into someone. Before I could say I was sorry, a taxi stopped next to me and he threw me in. I was blindfolded. Tied up then injected ngento. Immediately after I felt the injection prick I grew weak ndalala." I pulled the blanket up closer to me ndigodola. Sibuh: "I woke up to darkness, I don't know where but it felt like I was in a silo." Me: "like a tin?" Sibuh: "Yes, it felt like a giant tin, there was no way out. No door, no window in sight. There was also a putrid smell like a dead dog or feces. I couldn't move. I thought I was paralyzed. A very long time later, something opened from far up. When I looked up....." he paused. I held his arm encouraging him to go on as much as I didn't want him to. I couldn't stomach it. Sibuh: "they threw someone in and he landed right on his head on the cement and his skull split open. They closed the door after that. I sat there

for two days with a dead rotting body. In that heat." I wiped my tears with the back of my hand. Sibú: "on the third day. A door opened, I noticed that it was a lower door than that first day. I heard a voice that said 'Come here.' it was dark I couldn't see. When I didn't move he spoke again. He said: 'I will leave you here to die if you don't move.' I followed the direction of his voice. He pulled me out and took me into the bushes. My legs gave up in a few minutes and I fell. I could hear him talking but two voices now. Both of them carried me to this cabin. Again they injected me bandishiya khona. I woke up hours later I should think. Someone was standing on top of me. He had a tattoo on the front of his neck that looked like a snake. I couldn't look at his eyes. He....I couldn't see him. I begged him to let me go. He asked if I knew who he was, I said no obviously. He asked if I know why I was taken, I said no I don't. He told me that he had the power to take and give. That if he asked for something, he would make sure he receives it, that if someone asked him for something, he would also give. But, he was the only one. He could take me, to wherever he pleases and no one would ever see me again. He said he'd found hell and he had plans for it. That's where I began to remember, I was in front of Komander. He was speaking to me. I think he saw me start to panic because he held my arm and told me not to worry. His words were, 'Don't worry about you, its not you I'd take, its the one who means the most to you.'" he held his head. Me: "did he tell you why he took you?" he shook his head. Sibú: "he just said I must let my mother go." Me: "did you know she was going to die?" Sibú: "no... I didn't know." Me: "after your dream you kept saying, he would take you away, he wanted to take you, what did that mean?" Sibú: "Spho, Komander knows everything. He knows everyone. Their secrets and desires. He can't be fooled. You can't hide from him. He's Satan incarnate." Me: "and you saw him?" he nodded slowly. I was stunned. Me: "why do you think he let you live?" he shrugged. Sibú: "I think he was trying to prove a point." Me: "What else did you see?" Sibú: "my final night....I was tied up, my neck hurt badly. I hadn't eaten or drank, I felt so weak. I remember seeing four other people in chairs. Tied like me. Their heads were covered with a black cloth. He removed the first one and said 'for He who has not sowed shall not reap, and so he had not worked would starve but breeds no importance therefore shalt go.' He said this so many times. Spho.....he....he cut out their eyes while they were still alive. Their tongues and ears. He carves the X on their chest with a blazing torch. Their screams haunt me every time I close my eyes. Their pleading. He leaves them to suffer and the next day reopens those open bleeding wounds. Imagine being cut in an open scar?" andaminca ingathi kusikwa mna. I'd heard enough. Sibú: "I can never let anyone know. You're the only one I trust. Spho, if you tell someone, he will kill me." Me: "I won't tell a soul." I don't think I could. He hugged me tight. Sibú:

"All I prayed for was to see your face again." Me: "I'm sorry you had to go through all of that." Lakhe walked in the room and stared at us. Sib: "goodnight." Me: "did you take your pills?" Sib: "just before I sleep I will." Me: "Don't forget to pray." Sib: "okay." he walked out of the room. Lakhe stared after him. Lakhe: "and then?" Me: "Can we pray before we sleep?" I was seriously scared to death. Lakhe: "What's going on?" he closed the door. Me: "someone died in our house just last night." Lakhe: "What did Sib say?" Me: "Nothing." Lakhe: "He was in my bed." Me: "I was just asking how he was, and he said he was okay." Lakhe: "Did he tell you about what happened?" Me: "No, he didn't. I don't even want to know actually." he hopped into bed with the KFC paperbag. Lakhe: "do you think he saw him?" I opened the wings bucket and started munching. Me: "saw who?" Lakhe: "Komander obviously." Me: "I wouldn't know." Lakhe: "what if he did?" Me: "then that's that. Not much we can do about it." Lakhe: "but why would he let him live if he did? Only one explanation." Me: "what." Lakhe: "he's working for him." Me: "that's absurd." he took a wing and ate. Lakhe: "Did you ask him?" Me: "Lakhe, I don't want to talk about Komander. I never want to hear his name again in my house. Let. It. Go." Lakhe: "Fine."

Saturday morning, Khaya walked into his house. Khaya: "my love." Zama: "Hi." she stirred the porridge boiling on the stove. Khaya: "I'm sorry, you had to go through that. I wish there was something I could do to make it better." Zama: "There isn't Khaya." Khaya: "Did he hurt you?" Zama: "Why in the world would Komander hurt me?" Khaya: "then what happened?" Zama: "I can't tell you." Khaya: "Zama." Zama: "you know the deal, I can't say anything but I'm fine. He didn't touch me." Khaya: "Well, he contacted me, he said thank you. And he sent us gifts." Zama: "Oh God, not again!" her voice shook. Khaya: "Let's just see Zama..." he put the bag on the table and opened it. Inside was a black box engraved with the letter K. He gave it to her. Zama: "this doesn't seem like a human tongue type of box." Khaya: "That's a good thing right?" he smiled nervously. She opened the box and stared at the most beautiful piece of jewelry she's ever laid her eyes on. Zama: "WOW." a diamond necklace with a single emerald stone in the middle. She stared at the price tag still hanging on it. Zama: "700 000 dollars. Khaya I can't take this, its more than 9 million South African Rands. That's triple the cost of our house." Khaya: "There's a note." she took the note and read it: 'My faithful Zama, You are as rare as this necklace, I had it specially designed just for you. Its a 3 piece, make sure you wear the light pieces at all times. The ring and the bracelet. You never take them off.' Zama looked at her husband. Khaya: "now to open mine." he took out his box, slightly smaller and opened it. He smiled. They

stared at the chrome black diamond watch. It looked like royalty. Zama: "Audermar Piquet." he opened his note. 'My loyal Khaya, You are as ferocious and timely as this watch. I had it specially made, just for you. Its a 3 piece, make sure you wear the light pieces at all times. The ring and the bracelet. You never take them off.' Khaya: "its beautiful. I love it." Zama: "why did he get us such expensive jewelry?" Khaya: "To say thank you obviously, as for never taking them off, they probably have safety devices on them. Umvile ke Zama, never take it off." Zama: "of course. Sizothi sizifumanaphi ke?" Khaya: "from each other obviously. I bought you yours, you bought me mine, the prices should never be mentioned to anyone. Ever." they wore their light pieces. Zama: "God, even the light pieces look exquisite. Would you hate me if I replaced my wedding ring with this one?" Khaya: "not if you hate me for doing it too." they laughed. Zama: "Ill thank him after breakfast." Khaya: "okay. At least now, everything will be back to normal." Zama: "yes. I hope so." she switched the stove off. Zama: "want some porridge?" Khaya: "Yes please. Let me wash my hands."

I woke up quite later than usual. Even Lakhe was still asleep. I felt so confused and dizzy, my way to the bathroom was short and when I got there I was even more confused. I didn't even dream. After my shower and brushing of teeth. I sat in my underwear staring at my closet. I wore my yellow maternity dress and granny shoes then went to the kitchen. Nobody in the lounge. Which was odd. In the kitchen I got the shock of my life to find Vicky already making breakfast, I'm not going to lie that annoyed me more than necessary. This is why I don't want a maid. When I wake up, I'm the one who makes breakfast. Only me! Vicky: "hello Spho Unjani?" Me: "I'm fine. What are you doing?" Vicky: "breakfast." You're doing it wrong. But mandiyeke. I went to the lounge Sandile appeared too, then Sibu after that Dumi, a while later Stella. After greetings we sat down for breakfast. So I was not the only one feeling glum today. Thank Goodness, I thought it was the pregnancy. Sands: "Where are my boiled eggs and roasted toast?" a lot of you may be asking how do you roast toast, trust me if you live with Sandile, you learn to make it happen. Vicky: "you like the normal toast nje." Sands: "not anymore, Spho ndicela roasted toast?" Me: "okay. Dumi?" Dumi: "sunny side up egg. And my bacon in medium heat olive oil." Sibu: "Ill have the same. But no crusts on my french toast. With melted cheese on my eggs." I went to the kitchen to start breakfast again. By the time I was done Lakhe and Robert were awake too. We sat down to eat once again. Stella: "so you're trying to tell me, all of you have a specialized breakfast menu?" Sands: "Yep." Nosi doesn't even eat breakfast yilento esalele ke. Stella: "Why?" Sands: "Spho makes it special,

asifani sonke. That's why the custom made breakfast, that's if you're a permanent resident. Visitors get the other boring scramble egg shit." Lakhe: "who eats scramble egg?" Dumi: "not me." Sibu: "too messy." Stella looked at Rob. Stella: "You're awfully quiet. Which eggs do you like?" Rob: "the kind that creates my babies." YUH. That shade would last an entire year. I wanted to giggle so bad. Sandile choked on his food. Lakhe: "relax tata. So early in the morning? Hayi." Stella: "myeke mntanam, Your father has always been a risk in the morning. I can't believe I actually missed it. How many months are you Spho?" Me: "Six." Stella: "wow. You're at the end of the second trimester. Good thing that all the sickness is behind you." Rob: "how would you know?" he sipped his coffee. Stella: "I read, Robert." Rob: "Really? You mean real live books or just fashion blogs, because There's a difference." Stella: "and what is the difference?" Lakhe: "Okay, I'm not having this in my house. If you're both going to live here, you act civil or leave. I'm not going to take this squabbling. Tata, If you have nothing kind to say, you gonn keep quiet. Nawe mama. My wife is pregnant and we're trying by all means desipte our circumstances to keep a positive environment. So, please." That was so sweet of him. For once he used his adult words instead of screaming like a toddler. The gate buzzed, Sandile went to pick up. Sands: "yes?" he looked at the camera and opened the gate, rushing out immediately. Lakhe stood up and followed him. Rob: "what's happening?" he stood up. Sibu: "yima tata." he went after his brothers but stood by the door. Stella: "what is it!" Sibu: "its Babalo. Our neighbor." I got up and walked out too. Me: "kwenzeka nton?" Lakhe: "let's go back inside. Izani Babalo." he took the box in his hands and walked into the house. We all stood in the lounge. Sands: "What happened?" Babalo was in a stunned silence. He was just quiet, tears rolling down his face. Hlumi was crying as well. Me: "open the box." Lakhe: "Babalo, you need to talk to me. What is this? Must I open it?" Babalo shook his head. Hlumi: "There's a note." Lakhe took off his t shirt and held the letter with the shirt not his bare hands. 'I have found hell in your house, If you leave me there, you will curse the sun that set on the day you were born.' Lakhe: "who the fuck sent you this!" Hlumi: "it was on the doorstep when we came home. Babalo was in the process of selling the house." Sands: "what's in the box? Did you open it?" she shook her head. Hlumi: "the note was stuck on top of it. I was scared." Sandile took a knife and sliced open the tape. He opened the box and stared inside. Sands: "Wow." Stella: "what is it?" they looked inside. I'd already had a traumatizing day yesterday thank you very much. I stood behind my husband quietly. Stella screamed. Dumi: "Jesus Christ." Sands: "What in the fresh hell." Babalo oko ejonge kwasathana sana. I must say, seeing him like this didn't make me feel good at all. I felt so sorry for him. Rob: "you need to call the police." Lakhe: "azothini amapolisa tata!! Nako bexakwe yila scene from last week. What the

hell can they do!! They're bloody useless man!" Rob: "either way Lakhe, this is human parts. We can't keep it in our house." Hell, why did he have to say it? Stella and Vicky sat far away holding each other. Hlumi held on to her stale faced husband. Dumi called the police. Me: "get dressed baby." I took his hand to the bedroom. Lakhe: "My God Spho, what the hell is happening kulandlu?" Me: "I have no idea. Maybe this Komander has really found a nest and it happens to be Babalo's home. Baby, he needs to see a doctor, did you see the stress veins in his forehead. I don't think he has slept ever since Sunday." Lakhe: "eish Spho." He wore his t shirt. Lakhe: "he needs more than a doctor. He's beyond traumatized lomntu. Wear your jersey." Me: "ndiyaphi mna?" Lakhe: "There's no way I'm leaving you here." I wore my jersey and we walked back to the lounge. The police were on their way. I avoided that box with every might of my body. Njebe ndizithanda indaba, ezi bendingazifuni tu. How could something like this happen, Again. Sandile brought a bottle of cognac and two glasses for Hlumi and Babalo. He means well, but why the alcohol? Me: "Not now Sandile. They still have to talk to the police and the doctor." Sands: "Fine. Ndiyabuya." Me: "uyaphi?" Sands: "Next door to go check what the hell is living in that house." Me: "No You're not. Sit down. The police are on their way." Sands: "Spho, We can't wait for those useless things! The police won't do anything!" Me: "I'm not going to argue with you. Sit. Nobody is leaving this house, until the police get here, take statements from everyone then leave. If any one of you knows something. You better speak up now, because the minute the police arrive, you're on your own." Lakhe: "crap." Me: "what?" Lakhe: "I left the house the last night remember undithuma your wings?" Me: "We have cameras all over those gates. You will tell them the truth, nothing is going to happen. Whoever went in that house, will be in those cameras."..... I hope.

#94

Saturday afternoon.

After the police had taken down all the statements and verified alibis, the forensics took the mysterious box. We all sat in the lounge. Sandile brought the cognac bottle to me. Sands: "Now can they drink?" I just shrugged. I don't know why he was so obsessed with getting others drunk. Hlumi was seated next to her husband and kept glancing at him. Me: "would you like some chamomile tea?" she shook her head. Sands: "Cognac?" Hlumi: "No thanks Sandile." Lakhe: "so what now? You gonn live in a house that is someone's so called nest?" Babalo didn't respond. I was sure he didn't even know how to. Hlumi: "maybe we'll just move in with our parents for now. I can't stomach the

thought that someone was butchered in my house." Sibulele was oddly quiet. I wonder nyani if Lakhe was right. He claims to have seen Komander but he's alive. Why? Plus he didn't even get to tell me how he "escaped". What if they struck a deal and now he's part of their clique? So we're living with a soldier of Satan now? Oh my God. Sibulele: "what's wrong?" he looked at me. I realized I'd been staring at him for too long. Me: "Nothing." I got up. Me: "I'm going to feed the ducks." This was just scary. What if Sibulele killed Miriam and created a distraction by his screaming nightmares? My mind started reeling. Was it possible that he could've killed his own mother? I don't even know who to trust anymore let alone who to talk to. A person could go crazy. Is this why he didn't want me to tell Lakhe about his experience with Komander? I got the bird seeds from the kitchen and went to the garden. There was at least 30 guards around the yard. All armed and ready. I went about my business to the duck penthouse, yes Lakhe's ducks have their own penthouse. I fed them quietly. Sandile: "Everything okay?" he had followed me out the house. I looked at him and smiled. Me: "of course." Sandile: "you don't have to lie to me. We're family." Me: "I know." Sandile: "I saw you staring at Sibulele as if he was a terrorist. Why?" I chuckled. Me: "You have a wild imagination. I was just thinking." Sandile: "That he may be working for Komander?" Me: "Uyathakatha wena." he laughed. Sandile: "Witchcraft? Me? No." he looked around then took a step closer to me. Sandile: "You're not the only one that thought that by the way. The night of his nightmare. I fell asleep deeply, waking up feeling a bit dizzy during the night. I can almost assure you right now, he was never in bed." he whispered. I looked at him completely surprised. My heart stopped. How come he never said this before? Lakhe appeared. Sandile: "So they're shooting the new season now, I can't wait for it to come out. Anyway, nice chatting. Bye." he rushed back to the house. Lakhe: "gossiping again I see." Me: "how is talking about a series gossiping?" Lakhe: "you two were whispering like mice before I got here. It must be really juicy." Me: "heee." Lakhe: "Baby tell me." Me: "about Empire?" Lakhe: "you and I both know you weren't talking about Empire." I was scared to tell him actually. If I told him, I'd have to tell it all. Sibulele's life was on the line. Whether or not he was working for Komander, I didn't want his blood on my hands.

A few hours went by. Actually it was close to 5pm. Robert's phone rang. We were still in the lounge, just after a late lunch. Each of us were scared to do anything even if it meant going to our bedrooms. The only free people here were Lakhe and Sandile, they roamed around freely without thinking. Robert: "Robert speaking." he listened. Lakhe: "maybe we should watch a movie to get our minds off this madness. There's a cinema in this house that's barely

ever used." Sands: "I'll get the snacks." Rob hung up his call. Rob: "not just yet." Stella: "Good grief, what is it now!" Rob: "that was the mortuary that I'd chosen to store Miriam's body. It has gone missing." Lakhe: "What has gone missing tata." Rob: "her body Masilakhe." Lakhe: "haike bayanya kengoku! Somebody had better come up with a fucking good explanation when I get there!!" he grabbed his keys, storming out. Sandile followed him. I looked at Dumisani. Me: "What was in the box?" Rob: "No Spho." Me: "tata, I need to know." Rob: "What was in that box has nothing to do with Miriam." Me: "I'm not so sure tata." How does a whole body go missing? Nosi came to the lounge. Nosi: "What's going on?" Yeyi iyalala le girl. I would so love her sleep schedule. Stella: "Sweetheart, I think its best you sit this one out. This is adult business. Go back to your room." Nosi: "hayi mama. You're scaring me. Where are my brothers?" Sibu: "They're fine. Just running some errands. We're just having an important discussion right now okay? Everything will be fine." Nosi: "Alright then." She went back to her room. I sat in my spot and did some calculations. Nothing came up in my head. Lakhe and Sandile came back after almost an hour. Rob: "What happened?" Lakhe: "indeed she's missing. There is no sign that she was ever there." Rob: "that's impossible. I was there!" Sands: "So was I." Rob: "What the hell does this mean!" Finally, my calculations add up. Me: "This means Komander took her. Cut off the essential parts. Sent them as a package to Babalo's house because he knows they'll come straight here." Its not rocket science really. They all stared at me. Sibu: "Spho you can't think like that." he had genuine tears in his eyes. Sibu: "that is our mother not some piece of meat. We must have hope." Me: "What hope Sibulele? You think Jesus himself came to fetch her? Hope is the last thing we have. Its painful but There's no avoiding it." Lakhe: "this isn't helping. They said they'd contact us when they get hold of the guy that was in charge of locking up last night. We have to wait." Sands: "I'm not going to wait for that bullshit. I'm going to look for him myself if I have to." Sibu: "I'm with you." he got up. Lakhe looked at his phone. Lakhe: "let's go. Baby, ndiyabuya, lock these doors." he kissed my cheek and left. I had to do something about Babalo. He needed to sleep. I called Hlumi to the kitchen. Me: "I have a pill that can put him to sleep, he needs to close his eyes Hlumi." Hlumi: "I agree but he doesn't want to take a pill." Me: "I can crush it into his juice." Hlumi: "That's a good idea. Please do it Spho, I'm really worried about his sanity." I crushed the small pill and put it in his juice and stirred. As small as this pill is, it would knock him out in minutes and for long hours. Hlumi took the juice and gave it to him. Thankfully he drank it all. Me: "You can use the same room as last time." Hlumi took his arm and they went to the bedroom. She came back almost immediately. Hlumi: "he's asleep. Enkosi Spho." Me: "that's why I'm here. Now, you need to eat." Hlumi: "I can't." Me: "its not optional. Uzondincedisa ngopheka, then sihlale

sitye, nantsi ice cream for now, tell me more about you. We need to get our minds off this situation." Stella: "Can I join?" she walked in the kitchen with Vicky. Me: "Yes. The more the merrier." I took out the pots. Hlumi dished up the ice cream for them all. I took out a bottle of coffee liquor I couldn't indulge in. Hlumi: "What's that?" Me: "chocolate sauce." I poured a bit in all their bowls of ice cream. I chopped up the beef into chunks and put them on boil with water and a bit of worcster sauce. Me: "where did you grow up Hlumi?" Hlumi: "in Cape Town. Only until I was 9 then my family moved here. Sahlala KwaMagxaki. I attended Pearson High, then I went to NMMU. My dad bought a house in Rowallan Park. That's where they live now." Me: "what were you studying?" I chopped the vegetables. Hlumi: "I was doing Public Relations. I met Babalo, in my second year, he was working for an insurance company then. Studying part time. We fell in love immediately. After I'd graduated, I got a job. He wanted to study full time but obviously he was used to being independent I offered to support him and he said no. Then we started fighting and broke up for the first time. I moved to Bloem, and worked there for a while. About a year later we met up again when I came to visit PE. We chatted and fell back in love again but never pursued a relationship. He graduated finally and started his own business. We decided then I'd move back to PE and try again. So I did, now here we are." Me: "that's so sweet Hlumi, its a good thing you didn't give up on him." Hlumi: "oh but I did. In Bloemfontein I was dating this great guy. Everything about him was perfect. He frustrated me so much because he had no faults. It was the best relationship but I didn't feel enough for him. I'd always wanted to marry someone like that, but when I got him it just didn't feel right. With Babalo, he has faults, always fighting but I felt passion with him. So I left perfect guy for my average guy and I've never been happier." Stella: "So you married for love?" Hlumi: "Yes." Stella: "Well, its understandable because your love has money too." Wait.... Hlumi: "So you never married for love?" Stella: "Robert was anything but inlove with me. He was a superstar. Every single woman wanted him, when he asked me out. I wasn't interested because he was such a drag queen." we laughed. Stella: "I'm serious. Your father in law loves attention Spho. Cameras followed him. Journalists wanted interviews. Only after 3 months of dating he asked for marriage. He said he needed to settle down. He wanted kids, a family. That's it. Not love and fairytale endings. Just a family." she stared at her ice cream. Stella: "I guess in the end he ended up with what he's always wanted. A loving supportive family. You take good care of them Spho. I'm sorry I treated you the way I did." Me: "Its in the past now." I took out the dough in the fridge. Me: "how about you sis Vicky? Tell us about your love." she laughed. Vicky: "khayeke udlala man Spho. I don't have a love. Never had." Me: "Hayi sisi, we must get you a date." Vicky: "with what!"

Me: "A Man." they laughed. Robert stood at the door and looked at us, with a surprised look on his face. Me: "do you need anything tata?" Rob: "No sweetheart. Just checking if nise right." Me: "Yes we are. I'm making dinner so long." Rob: "alright." he walked back out. Stella: "how do you get him to be so polite?" Me: "I don't know actually. They're all like that." Stella: "I call him Risky Robert. You never know what mood he's in. It was always risky." Me: "so Mam' do you want to find love sometime? Now that you and Mr Rob are officially divorced." Stella: "I'm not a love person dear. I need security. Someone to take care of me. When I say this, people like to think I'm greedy, do you know I met Robert while he was a boxer? I was the one who encouraged him into investment and studying further then opening his own company. I groomed him to be a businessman. He just wanted to box, nothing else. Seeing him succeed was the only fuel I needed, not this love nonsense." Me: "awww. That's what love is njena." Stella: "No its not." Hlumi: "it kind of is. If you didn't love him, you wouldn't put that much effort in ensuring he has a great future." Stella: "Well, it wasn't just his future but our kids' and mine too. I couldn't just let him waste it away. Look how comfortable he is now. He's a multi millionaire. He's happy. We would be living in a four bedroom house in the township had he not listened to me. Look at his boxer friends. Are they millionaires? No." Me: "so you still love him." Stella: "Don't be ridiculous Spho. Robert is a ghou. Impossible to love. He makes everything difficult." I giggled. She's so in love she can't even hide it. Me: "Ma, you need to be nicer to him and see how he reacts." Stella: "I tried that once he accused me of trying to poison him." I burst out laughing. Stella: "You don't know Robert like I do. That man is crazy for cray cray." she had finished her ice cream. Stella: "I'm feeling a bit tipsy, what did you put in that ice cream?" Me: "coffee liquor." Stella: "hmm... Is there still some left?" Me: "of course." I gave her the bottle and she gulped it twice. Stella: "That feels good." then dished up more ice cream. Stella: "I think I need something stronger." Hlumi: "There's the bottle of cognac Sandile keeps dangling in my face." Stella: "Yes! That!" I just looked at them. I didn't even envy them drinking. I was happy they were letting loose despite recent events. Who wouldn't get drunk after witnessing someone's body parts? Vicky: "I'll have a small drop. That's enough." Stella: "Nonsense darling. Here, bottoms up!"

Masilakhe sat in the underground basement of his warehouse. The team walked in and lined up. Lakhe: "Does anyone of you have information for me." Nobody responded. Lakhe: "I gave you a task." he stared daggers at Black. Lakhe: "I believe you owe me a limb." he stood up holding his saw. Black: "Mr G, now hold on." Lakhe: "for what reason." Black: "I may not have

Komander, or his whereabouts BUT, I have some info." he stepped closer to him. Lakhe: "What did you do." he hissed. Black: "I didn't have a choice." Sands: "Oh my God he didn't." Black: "I don't want to lose a leg man! Look, I got initiated yesterday, they see me as one of them. I'll get you Komander come hell or high waters." Lakhe: "Are you fucking insane!!!! Are you fucking insaaannnee!!!!!!!!!!!!!" he growled. Black jumped back a whole meter. Black: "Sir-" Lakhe: "Do you realize what the fuck you've done!!!!!" Black: "Sir, Komander is not in this city. He travels under the radar with a different alias." Sands: "What do you mean?" Black: "I mean, its almost impossible to track him down. He doesn't use the same name twice. He has a right hand man, named Komodity. He is the leader of Ultimates. He is the one who does the rituals. He is the only one in the world that knows where Komander is and the only one that Komander trusts, he does the name changes and plans his routes. Plus, he lives right here. In Port Elizabeth." Lakhe: "Who is he?" Black: "I haven't gotten to that yet." Sands: "You do realize that if and its a matter of when, these people find out you double crossed them they hang your balls on the Eskom Electricity poles, and you won't be attached to them?" Black: "I know. I'm very discreet." Lakhe: "Get out of my sight." Black: "I promise I'll never disappoint you." he walked out. Sergio: "We're fucked." Kyle: "Should just kill him boss. He's too much of a liability." Bull: "Seconded." Sands: "thirded." Lakhe: "Sandile, I want you to follow him, drag him back to me when he least expects it. I have plans for him." Sands: "done." Sergio: "but don't we want to know who Komodity is first? How else are we going to know if we kill Black?" Lakhe: "then we'll have to do it after he tells all. Either way, I don't want Black breathing." Sibulele: "Wait.." they all looked at him. Sibulele: "I'll do it." Lakhe: "You don't kill." Sibulele: "I'm not going to kill him, you won't be able to get to Black without alerting the K.U.G. They'll be monitoring him even in his sleep. There's a good chance if you kill him, the entire group will come wipe us out. I can get him, and I can find Komodity too." Lakhe: "And what exactly is your plan Sibulele." Sibulele: "To put it in your words? Drag him back to you. Kicking and screaming." the darkness in his eyes was absolute. In that instant the basement illuminated in bursts of stark white light, as a bullwhip crack of lightening thundered above them angling Sibulele's face in a demonic rage-filled emotion. Something about him had changed, Lakhe thought. Something deep and dark. Finally.....

#95

Lakhe and Sandile were on their way home, Sibulele dropped off at some point to fulfill his task. By now the rain came in a deluge, the sky had

darkened already, only lighting up a few strikes of drumming thunder at a time. Sands: "I'm kind of disappointed. Sibulele was like our baby brother. Now he seems to have changed." he looked out at the stormy weather. Lakhe: "I think its good that he can get out of the bitch panties every once in a while." Sands: "No, bhuti I think There's something wrong." Lakhe: "how can YOU of all people see something wrong?" Sands: "I know I'm fucked up. No doctors can fix me but with Sibu its different. He isn't sick, nobody just switches over night like that." Lakhe: "don't worry about uSibu. He's fine." he parked in the garage. They walked into the house, everyone seemed to be in a weirdly creepy happy mood. Stella was singing. Kissing Rob on his cheek and brushing his bald head. He looked pissed off but sat quietly without moving. Lakhe: "what the hell is going on?" Rob: "Your mother is drunk." Vicky giggled. Rob: "and Victoria, and Hlumisa. All of them, they're drunk." Lakhe looked at me. I looked back at him innocently. Lakhe: "don't even dare give me that Boogie look, what did you do?" Me: "Nothing." Lakhe: "I know you did something. Uphi uDumisani." Rob: "also drunk. Passed out in the bathroom." Sandile hurried off to look for him. Lakhe: "Tata, how do I leave the house for a few hours and come back to the entire house drunk? What were you doing?" Rob: "I was watching sports. I'm nobody's baby sitter." Stella: "My sweet pumpkin punch." she kissed his mouth. Lakhe: "You deserve that." Rob: "Nokwakha get off of me. I'm not playing with you." Stella: "My chukulukululu with the butter lips. I've always loved your butter lips. Taste like strawberries." Lakhe chuckled. Rob: "I'm counting to five. You ought to be off me by then or I swear." Stella: "I'm not going anywhere, my superstar." Rob: "1, 2, 3..." Stella: "4, 5. Do you remember when I met you." Rob: "Lakhe, get your mother off me." Lakhe: "I'm not doing that. That's what you get for wasting my expensive alcohol." Rob: "Spho got them drunk, not me!" Lakhe stared at me. Lakhe: "Not my beautiful wife, suphosisa tata. Akanxilanga yena uSpho. How can she get people drunk when she doesn't even drink?" Rob: "I love that you asked, let's review the camera footage." Oh shit. Lakhe: "I don't care about footage. I need to get those two in bed, you will deal with your wife.....wait, Where's Babalo?" Hlumi: "Spho drugged him." Rob: "Told you." Lakhe: "Hayi baby." Me: "he needed to sleep. These ones needed a distraction. Everyone is happy-" Rob: "except me!!" Lakhe: "hayi wethu tata. Its return investment, still get your wife benefits. When last did you get a kiss?" Rob: "You're lucky you're my son. Phakama wena, masambe." Stella: "ooohh sexy!" she held on to him as he pulled her to his room. Lakhe: "be safe." Rob: "I am still your father boy!" Lakhe laughed. Me: "Uphi uSibu?" Lakhe stopped and looked at me, thinking. As if he was trying to think of a lie. Lakhe: "He said we should drop him off at his mom's old place. Needed some time alone." Me: "Oh. How is he?" Lakhe: "better. He's being strong." Me: "did you find the guy in charge of

the mortuary?" Lakhe: "not yet baby." Sandile appeared again. Sands: "alright ladies, let's get moving." they held each of his biceps and walked with him to the bedroom. Me: "The box that arrived with Babalo and Hlu-" Lakhe: "Don't worry about that box baby." Me: "Can you let me finish?" Lakhe: "fine." Me: "is it possible that could be Miriam's parts." Lakhe: "Baby, I don't want to talk about this. You're pregnant, this is too much stress for the baby. Please?" Me: "Why are you trying so hard to lock me out of this knowing fully well I'm good at piecing together information?" Lakhe: "I'm worried about our child Sphosenkosi." Me: "the child is fine. I'm not stressed." Lakhe: "Spho your mother just died. Her body is missing. How about you focus on grieving." Me: "I haven't felt anything for her for as long as I remember. If I start crying and mourning now that would be a failed attempt of pretense because I'm not affected. Yes, seeing her body threw me off a bit, but that's it. She's more of a stranger to me. Umamam ngu Zama mna." I hated to admit that seeing Miriam's body conjured my current nightmares and thoughts. I had to keep busy for the sake of my sanity because if I didn't I kept seeing her hanging body twisting on that noose facing me. Sometimes it smiled at me. Other times it just stared. And in the past two hours as I sat here with my drunk family. I saw it again in my head, without eyes. I was probably one tear away from a mental breakdown. Lakhe: "I know that Spho. I just can't let you be close to this." I sighed. Me: "Fine." I got up and walked to the bedroom. Lakhe: "Spho, come on baby." Me: "I just need to be alone Lakhe, go about your business." Lakhe: "Am I wrong for wanting you to be safe and stress free?" I didn't respond. Just closed the bedroom door and sat on my bed with my laptop. Lakhe stood in the lounge by himself. Lakhe: "I wish you could just understand." he whispered. Rob: "understand what?" he appeared from the passage. Lakhe: "Spho wants to be so involved with this thing." Rob: "like any other human being." Lakhe: "She's pregnant tata." Rob: "she knows that and you treat her like an invalid because of that. She feels unappreciated, and useless. Why do you think she wakes up so early to make us all breakfast and clean up after us? Making her sit down all the time and fold her arms, she feels like a baby machine and that's not all she's good for. Spho is smart Lakhe, being pregnant didn't wipe that away maybe just slowed her down. Stop treating her like a child." Lakhe: "How do you know this?" Rob: "I spent all day talking to her like a normal human being and I understood her. I told you I make a better husband." Lakhe: "Tata, don't even try me. I'm warning you." Rob: "relax!" Sandile came back to the lounge. Sands: "I smell dumplings. Good God, I love that woman." Lakhe huffed and puffed furiously. Sands: "Yinton ngoku wangu Batman?" Rob: "he's mad because we love his wife." Sands: "If anyone could cook for me like she does, I'd marry them on the spot. Impregnate her with triplets. Call them Lucky Sands Junior. Get it? Since

you're Lucky? And my name is Sands? Then the babies are junior?" Rob laughed. Rob: "awuphilanga mntanam." Lakhe was fuming, clicking on the remote furiously without a word. Rob: "hayi nyana suqumba siyadlala. We're just playing with you. Spho is like my daughter." Sands: "Not to me." Lakhe shot him a death glare. Sands: "You think I'm scared of you?" Rob: "Sandile..." Sands: "but we're playing tata, why does Lakhe get so sensitive with jokes? She is my twin, he knows this." Rob: "Leave your brother alone now. I'm going to do a bit of work. Spho already dished up for you. Don't disturb me unless it's an emergency." Sands: "Your back is got. And everyone else is asleep." Rob: "Good." he went to his bedroom/office and locked himself in to catch up on his banking.

I read the article of the murder of Reynold 'Rey' Khumbulani Peter. He used Reynold Peter for reference. According to the description, he was a tall, broad shouldered, well built man. The picture supplied was a little blurry. Maybe he had a Facebook page? I logged on Facebook to check his profile and found it luckily public. There was something very familiar about him. I could've sworn I'd seen him before. I read more about him. Then found a bit of information about his family. Grew up in Mthatha. Raised by grandparents. Parents died in car accident, something about brakes not working. He was also in the car when it rolled but luckily survived and was moved to the rurals with the grandparents after recuperating in a private clinic. He moved to Johannesburg at the age of 22 to study Mortuary science then later on studied Pathology. Graduated top of his class at Wits and started working immediately at a private hospital. Six years later. Butchered. Something about this story was nagging at me. That car accident wasn't an accident, it was staged. They were supposed to have died, but he didn't. He recovered and disappeared without a trace to the rurals. Then moved to Joburg once he was old enough. How did this relate to me and Sibule though? He couldn't have been our older brother right?. Maybe an uncle? Its a pity Miriam and Rey were the only ones who know but both are now dead. But wait, maybe the grandparents know? Are they still alive. I needed a PI.

Lakhe and Sandile watched TV alone together quietly. Each in their own thoughts. Sandile thought about the tractor he was watching on TV, how it could pierce into someone's skin and bury them same time. Very effective, then about Boogie and when he ate last, then about the food he just ate almost an hour ago, his last thought was getting another plate for himself of the dumplings and beef stew Spho cooked before he gave Boogie his

dinner. Lakhe about his child's name. If it was a boy or girl. Not sure which he wanted the most. Maybe a girl so that she would look like her mother. A beautiful face and pretty toes. Curly black hair and a smile that pulled at his heart strings. She would get away with anything just like her mother. And he would protect her with all he had. He wanted a daughter. Nobody would touch her or hurt her. What if he gets a boy instead. He thought deeply. Would he be like me? Damaged but unbreakable? A mighty force and a killer? Someone who everyone feared and stayed far away from? He wouldn't have friends. He would be an outsider. People would poke fun at him for being weird. I can't let that happen to my boy. Lakhe: "Tell Sibulele to get his ass back here. Tell him I said he should leave it." Sandile stared at him? Sands: "Why?" Lakhe: "because I damn well said so!" Sands: "Then no." Lakhe: "its pointless taking out Black. He'll never last in the K.U.G. Leave him there." Sands: "what's gotten into you?" Lakhe: "Don't fucking question me and do as I say. I want him back here in 30." he got up and went to the bedroom. His wife was on her laptop with her serious work face on. Nothing could disturb her with that expression on. Nothing could get in her way. He wondered if his daughter would inherit the same trait. It would be fun trying to irritate her while doing school homework, like he's about to do with his wife. I looked at Lakhe standing in the middle of the bedroom, he had a stupid grin on his face which meant he was about to do something stupid and I wasn't having it. I was in no mood for stupidity, I had work to catch up on, I was going back to work on Monday and most of my clients had already resumed work a week before. I didn't have time for his games today. Me: "what do you want?" Lakhe: "nothing. I'm not here for you." he crawled in between my legs and kissed my stomach. Lakhe: "hi pumpkin." he whispered. So that's what he wanted to do. Good. I continued working not listening to his little conversation. Lakhe: "your mother doesn't want to talk to me my love, she's shutting me out. Kick her." I looked at him. How you gonn send the one soldier attached to me to attack me? This one was unstable shame. Lakhe: "go on my mighty force, kick." I felt a little nudge. Lakhe: "yes baby, again." he poked my stomach. Lakhe: "You go my angel! Come on." I felt the baby kick again more aggressively now. I stopped working and stared at him and his demonic tendencies. Lakhe: "I'm so proud of you my angel." he kissed my belly over and over again. The baby was active moving around, Lakhe nibbling at him/her. I'm not going to lie, I was melting quickly. I couldn't help smiling. He looked at me. Lakhe: "hi." Me: "what do you want from me?" Lakhe: "but I told you I came to play with the baby." he took his phone, revealing my tummy. Lakhe: "I can see her moving around, baby look." Me: "I can see." Lakhe: "I'm going to keep this until she's 18. Graduated from high school and play it for her when she goes to university." he started recording. Lakhe: "hi my

sweetheart." Me: "I'm going to tell her or him you're trying to embarrass them in front of their friends." Lakhe: "that's gonna be for the rest of his or her life then, I will embarrass every chance I get. Can you see yourself growing in mommy's belly? You'll always be a part of her and me, which means you'll always have us in your corner. The same corners you're in right this second, look, I'm hoping this is your hand. High five." I giggled. He stopped recording. Lakhe: "when are we going to the doctor? Paul is back from his vacation now." Me: "on Tuesday babes. What's the word on Miriam's body. We can't hold a funeral with no corpse. That's just creepy." his phone rang. Lakhe: "Its the mortuary." he answered, Lakhe: "Masilakhe Sobz speaking." he listened quietly as his head turned to stare at me in shock. Then he jumped off the bed and walked out. He stood in the lounge, where Sibulele had just arrived, Sandile laying on his back on the couch. Lakhe: "I just got a call from the mortuary." Sands: "they found her? I bet she just took a walk, never meant anyone harm." Lakhe: "Worse." Sands: "She went for ice cream too?" Sibulele stared at him fiercely with an unspoken pain in his eyes. Sands: "I'm sorry Sibulele, that was uncalled for." Lakhe: "The guy who was in charge of the mortuary the night Miriam's body went missing is dead." Sandile sat up straight. Sibulele: "what!!!" Lakhe: "They just found his body in.....a plastic bag. In one of the fridges they use. My contact informs me that.....he was butchered. His eyes are missing."

#96

Sibulele sat down slowly in the lone couch. Sands: "this some bull. Bhuti this guy needs to be stopped! He kills innocent people just because they saw him? They didn't do anything wrong! He kidnapped Anne, he kidnapped Sibulele, he kidnapped Miriam's body and now the undertaker is killed? Its not even been two weeks, this man is a lunatic bhuti." Lakhe: "You're saying someone is a lunatic? The whole of Sandile?" Sands: "I've never touched an innocent human being and turned them into meat! And I am not crazy!" Lakhe: "I didn't say you were crazy." Sands: "Then why are you looking at me like that!" Lakhe: "like what?" Sibulele: "Did they say anything about my mother?" he asked quietly. Lakhe: "No, they didn't." Sibulele held his head. Sibulele: "I arrive here looking for my birth parents, my father seems to have vanished off the face of the earth, my mother commits suicide and she too, vanishes like air. This is nothing short of being cursed. I'm probably the unluckiest guy ever." Lakhe: "Don't talk like that man. You're not cursed." Sibulele: "then how do you explain this? How does this happen to one human being?" Lakhe looked at him unable to say anything. Never being good with words, he turned around

and walked to the bedroom. Lakhe: "baby?" he entered the room. Lakhe: "Sibu is not okay, I think he needs to talk." Me: "then talk to him." Lakhe: "I can't." Me: "Why not?" Lakhe: "I don't know what to say. My contact from the mortuary says they found the person who was in charge. He's dead." I can't say I was entirely surprised. At this point, it seemed murder was our daily bread. Lakhe: "Sibu is upset, he thinks he's cursed." I got out of bed. Me: "if he's cursed then I guess I am too." I wore my slippers and went to the lounge. Sibu was beside himself, I wasn't sure if he was crying. He just had his head buried in his hands. Me: "sweetie." I sat down on the arm rest of his chair, he looked up at me and hugged me. Me: "what's wrong?" Sibu: "everything is a mess." he sobbed. I looked at Lakhe. He just stood at a far distance with a strange look on his face. Sandile was on the next couch staring at the TV. Wow, so much for support. Me: "its going to be okay Sibu. You have me, you have ubhuti and Sandile too. Plus, spoiler alert you're going to be an uncle. Doesn't that excite you?" Sibu: "a bit." Me: "it should because I can't rely on these two. This baby is going to look up to you, run around after you. You have to be strong." Sibu: "Okay." he wiped his tears. Me: "do you want me to come with you to mom's house? We can sort her things out together." Sibu: "Yeah. We have to sell the house too." Me: "Sure. What about her furniture?" Sibu: "She didn't have any. She sold it to buy alcohol. But there's a bed." Me: "we can donate the bed to an orphanage." Sibu: "I'm an orphan too." my heart broke. Me: "we've got each other. Its all going to work out okay, I promise." Sibu: "I'll get ready." Lakhe: "How about you go tomorrow? Its raining furiously outside right now." Sibu: "it stopped raining two minutes ago." he stood up and walked to his room. Sandile stared at Lakhe, Lakhe looked back at him. Sands: "How?" Lakhe: "Baby, you can't go anywhere with him." he whispered. Me: "why not?" Lakhe: "There's something wrong with uSibu. He's not stable enough to drive." Me: "I can drive." Lakhe: "how would he know it stopped raining two minutes ago? Exactly?" Me: "Nothng wrong with that. We won't be long. We're just packing her clothes, then wash them and take them to a donation centre." Lakhe: "Baby please." Me: "Why are you afraid?" Lakhe: "I'm not afraid I'm worried. Sibu is not in his right mind." Me: "and what gave you that assumption? Did he do something out of the ordinary?" Lakhe: "not yet. We can't wait until he does." Me: "Sibu is my brother, he'd never do anything to hurt me." I went to wear shoes. Sibu was done and waiting by the bedroom door. When I came out he smiled. Sibu: "Is it a boy?" Me: "I haven't asked yet. I want it to be a surprise." Sibu: "I think its a boy. Let's go." we walked to the car and got inside. Sibu drove all the way to our mother's house. The car was quiet, no radio, no conversation. I felt calm, I liked it that quiet. When we got to the house, he got out first and I stayed in my seat. Even though I didn't grow up in this specific house but it lived the

two people that I didn't like that much. Sibú opened my door and held out his hand. Sibú: "Princess?" Since when did he call me princess? I looked at him and saw something nerving in his eyes. Why were they completely dark? Doesn't he have brown eyes? I got out the car and we went into the house. It smelled a bit musky since no one has been here in a while. I stood still feeling completely uncomfortable. Something evil resided in this place. I don't know what the hell it is, but it was here. Looming all over around me. Sibú: "Do you want some tea?" I shook my head. Sibú: "let's get to it then. Here's her room." we walked into her room. Indeed there was a neatly made bed. A dressing table and a night stand next to the bed. The cupboard was on the opposite side. Sibú: "I think the wardrobe holds more of anything here." he opened and we sorted her clothes. Packing them in a box. At the bottom of the wardrobe was something that felt like a hollow space. It was underneath. It needed a key to open. It was an underground safe. Me: "What's this?" he looked. Sibú: "I don't know. I'll get a hammer." he got up and left. My phone rang and I stared at the I.D caller. Lakhe. Me: "baby?" I answered. Lakhe: "Are you okay? Where are you?" Me: "sikulendlu. I'm fine. We just finished sorting the clothes. Sibú went to fetch a hammer-" Lakhe: "a hammer for what!!" Me: "Relax, There's a locked safe under the wardrobe. We want to open it." Lakhe: "Okay, text me when you're done." Me: "okay babe." I hung up. Sibú: "Got one. Stand back." I moved back. He hammered the lock out of place and opened the safe. Sibú: "Wow. Really? A box in a box? How exciting." he said sarcastically. I took out the box chuckling. Me: "do you think we should open it?" Sibú: "Yes. We were her kids." we opened the box. Filled with photographs, letters and newspaper clippings. I saw the first picture of a little girl wearing a floral pink dress. At the back of the pic was written: Spho, 2. The second picture was of a boy dressed in a navy tracksuit: Sibú, 3. Me: "Its us." Sibú: "Yeah. Look at this." he gave me a letter. I looked at it. "Take Care of my children, I can't have them here. Its too dangerous. I cannot do what you can as their mother. Make sure my baby girl is safe. Away from harm. Away from me. She is going to make me weak Miriam. I care too much. Let my boy grow up away from all of this, send him away. Here's a number. This woman will take care of him. Make sure they never find out who I am. We should have never done this, stopped while it was still good. Thank you for the memories..." I looked at Sibú. Me: "This isn't from the guy who raised me. He wasn't my biological father. So who is?" Sibú looked back at me. Sibú: "I don't know. But I'm going to find him." Me: "You know I looked Rey up? A lot of weird things came up. The story about his life, There's something odd about it." Sibú: "You think that's where we should start?" Me: "Yes. Maybe that can reveal some other things which can give us a clue of who our father could be." Sibú: "I'm not having a good feeling about this Spho. Our father didn't

want us in his life. He sent us away for a reason." Me: "You think looking for him could be dangerous?" Sibulele: "Not dangerous more than disappointing. What if he chases us away?" Me: "Do you want to know him?" Sibulele: "Yes. Obviously." Me: "So do I. Then we don't have a choice. We've got to find him."

Lakhe: "Sandile. I'm panicking. She's not answering." Sands: "If you're going to keep telling me mundane things I'm going to tape you onto that chair with an apple in your mouth. Leave me the hell alone!" Lakhe: "How can you be calm!!!" Sands: "You've already taken the hysterical role what am I supposed to be? A sheep?" Lakhe stared at him. Lakhe: "Mxim!" Rob walked into the lounge going to the kitchen. Rob: "Hey, what's up." Sands: "Sph-" Lakhe: "Nothing." Sandile looked at him. Robert went to the kitchen for something to drink. Sands: "Why are you hiding this? If Spho is in danger-" Lakhe: "When. Sibulele wouldn't hurt her, she's his little sister." Sands: "We don't have the same Sibulele in mind. You mean the sadistic maniac that was sitting in that chair a few hours ago? How can he go from animal to emotional tsunami so quick? That can't be taught, it's a gift from Satan on its own. He should teach a class. I'm gonn register first for that module." Lakhe: "Sibulele is dealing with a lot of shit right now, he just got kidnapped, brought back barely alive, his mother died and he's traumatized. Give him a break." Sands: "A break is not what I'm going to give Sibulele. You don't see it now, but soon you will. He saw Komander, he is part of him. They have put demons inside of him. He has gone bat shit crazy. Watch." Lakhe: "Dad was right, awuphilanga wena." Sands: "fine, then we'll wait. I for one am dying to eat the 'I told you so' cake. Its tasty." Lakhe: "its going to be stale because you won't get to eat it. You don't have feelings, this is how people who are in an emotional turmoil act. First they're fine, then they're strong and can handle it. Then they fall apart. Its science." Sands: "Okay. I want to see how this plays out. What are we going to do with Miriam's body?" Lakhe: "What can we do? Its missing. We can't have a funeral until we find it." Sands: "Sue the mortuary." Lakhe: "For what? I have enough money already. Besides, There's no point in closing the place down. They didn't lose it because of negligence, it was stolen. Not much they could've done. We know its Komander and we don't want to draw attention to ourselves." Sands: "okay. Here's your tag team pulling up." the car drove up the drive way. Lakhe: "I told you she was fine." Sands: "You were panicking like a stick. Don't even try to act brave." Lakhe: "Get married first. Then we'll talk." I walked into the house with Sibulele carrying boxes. Me: "You can put them in the laundry room, I'll wash them tomorrow. I need to see my dad." Sibulele: "cool." it was already dark outside. Me: "hi honey." I kissed Lakhe's cheek. Lakhe: "You didn't answer my calls." Me: "When?" I checked my phone. Me:

"oh, I didn't see these. I'm sorry sweetheart." Lakhe: "I was worried Spho." Me: "I apologize Lakhe. I didn't see the calls." Babalo walked in the lounge. He had just woken up, clearly. He looked confused and still sleepy. Sands: "Hey lover boy, did you have a nice nap?" Babalo: "Can someone drive me to the hospital?" Me: "What's wrong?" Babalo: "My mind. I feel like I'm going crazy. Everything I look at looks like blood." Sands: "You need a drink?" Babalo: "No, just a hospital. I want to book myself in the psych ward." Lakhe: "But Babalo that's for people who have lost their mind." Babalo: "I'm close to that, and I don't want to reach it. I just want to be okay again. Please." Lakhe: "Okay, I'll take you. Masambe, do you need anything." Babalo: "change of clothes maybe and toiletries." Lakhe: "Did you let your wife know?" Babalo: "She'll try to talk me out of it. Spho, please tell her once I've gone." Me: "Okay." It must be incredibly difficult to decide this type of decision. Sending yourself to the mental side of a hospital? Yuh. I'd rather just go all the way crazy then. Lakhe: "Okay, let's go."

Zama was in her kitchen cooking early supper. Khaya walked in. Khaya: "hey sweetie." he kissed her cheek. Zama: "you sound awfully cheerful. What happened?" Khaya: "Nothing. I'm just happy." Zama: "Okay. Dinner will be ready in 10." Khaya: "I'll wash my hands so long." he went to the bathroom. Zama carried on with the pots, turning down the stove to let her meal simmer. She stood cold in her spot. There was a shadow behind her she was almost afraid to turn and look. His fragrance introduced him. A sweet but rough scent that brought the smell of a freshly cut forest with wild flowers. The cologne could send knees buckling to the floor. Something expensive and enticing you wouldn't give a second thought. She couldn't avoid it anymore. She turned around with her head bowed down. Zama: "Sir." The door opened and he stepped inside. Khaya stood in the passage way and bowed his head down. Kom: "Good evening." Them: "Good evening sir." Kom: "You can commence to your places." they went to the lounge as he entered and sat down on a single chair. They sat in front of him. Kom: "So How is everything going? I'm a bit bored, nothing this place can do to entertain me." Zama: "Everything is going well sir. All is in order as you requested." Kom: "Good, that's good Komary." he looked at Khaya. Kom: "I need to leave soon. Not sure exactly when, but I'll need the usual. Passport and personal." Khaya: "Yes sir." Kom: "How is Spho? Your daughter." Khaya: "She's doing well sir." Kom: "She pregnant I see." he scratched his neck revealing his tattoo. Khaya: "Yes sir." Kom: "hmm....who's she married to?" Khaya: "A boy named Lakhe." Kom: "Lakhe..... Is he good to her?" Khaya: "Yes sir." Kom: "Mkay. As long as he's good and respectful to your child, that's all that should matter. Is he busy with

anything." Khaya: "Just a distributor sir. The usual but covers with his other job." Kom: "And what is his other job?" Khaya: "CEO. GoldenCell." Kom: "That huge company? You go boy. I like that. Iss good. What about his family? They treat her well? Your child is a princess Khaya." Khaya: "Yes sir, Robert Sobukwe is the boy's father. He's harmless." Kom: "You mean Rob Sobz? The boxing champion? Hahaaa! This is funny. I got him those boys." Zama: "Lakhe and Sandile sir?" Kom: "That's the ones. Couldn't get them via the normal route. Its a pity he doesn't know who I am, he dealt with the usual personnel though. You know I don't touch what I own." they kept quiet. Kom: "How far along is she. Your daughter." Zama: "six months sir." Kom: "Perfect. Is it a boy?" Khaya: "Yes sir. Its a boy." Kom: "Even more perfect. I want you to name him King. He is a ruler, a leader, a figure they will bow down to. You hear me?" Khaya: "Yes sir, His name shall be King." Kom: "Great." Zama: "Can I dish up sir?" Kom: "I don't eat that kind of food. Anyway, I just came to tell you, I need a name. I need to go. Two days maximum. I've been here too long." he stared at the door. Kom: "You expecting someone?" Khaya: "No sir." Komander stood up, nostrils flaring. Kom: "Who did you call here!!" he demanded. Zama: "I swear, nobody sir. I'll chase them awa-" a knock interrupted. "Mama?" the door opened. Komander stared quietly and sat down. The expression on his face showed nothing but anger. Spho walked in. Me: "Hi guys. I'm not here to stay, I need to talk to dad." I stared at the guy sitting on the couch. My God. Can somebody call GQ Magazine please? Who the hell is this! I stared at him in awe. If I wasn't married and needed a sugar daddy, I'd choose this one. He was in great shape. The color of his skin a milky caramel, with pink pinched lips like he was pouting or was he mad? Either way, he looked drop dead gorgeous. His eyes dancing around and stopped in my mid-section. The corner of his mouth lifted up a little. The muscles in his face relaxed. He looked up at my face. Me: "Who's this?" he looked at my dad. "You're not going to introduce us?" Mystery man asked. Zama disappeared in the kitchen. Khaya oggled and breathed hard. I sat on the other couch. Me: "Dad?" Khaya: "My angel." he responded. Khaya: "uhm. This is, a friend of mine. Tyrone. Ty, sir, uhm, this is Spho. My daughter."

#97

Tyrone? I'd never heard of a Tyrone before. He was staring straight at me without blinking. A sweet smile on his face. Why was he wearing a polo in this heat? Me: "its nice to meet you Bhuti Tyrone." Him: "The pleasure is all mine." Khaya: "What did you want to talk about mntanam? Its getting late." Was he chasing me out? Me: "Not much. I just wanted to apologize to you for the

way I treated you." Khaya: "I understand my child." I'm not even done. Me: "Tata its more than just that. I love you dad, and sometimes I lose my cool because I share everything nawe. You don't share a single thing back. Which is why I get suspicious. I realize now, I was wrong. I should've spoken to you and the pastor. I'm sorry." Ty stared at Khaya. Khaya: "Its fine Spho, really. I understand. You're pregnant-" Me: "Please don't blame the pregnancy. The baby has nothing to do with this." Khaya: "Fine. I forgive you." Me: "Great." Ty: "You have an amazing daughter. You raised her well." Khaya: "Thank you sir." Ty: "Sir? You're funny. Let me get going. I'll call you. It was an absolute delight to meet you Spho." Me: "Thank you Mr Tyrone. Same to you." Although you barely said a word. Ty: "By all means, just call me Ty." he looked at Khaya then walked out the lounge. If that wasn't sarcastic, I don't know what was. In the kitchen. Zama was dishing up dinner. Komander stood behind her. Zama: "I'm sorry sir, I didn't know she'd show up." Kom: "Its fine. There's nothing you could've done. Spho is your child. She comes running, you open that door wide. That's what being a mother is." Zama: "Yes sir-" Kom: "Stop calling me sir. I'm not a soldier with just you. Look at me." she turned around and faced him. Her cheeks heating up. Kom: "You feeling sick?" she shook her head. He touched her cheek drawing her closer to him. Kom: "You're burning up." Zama: "Just you." he broke into dimple smile. Zama: "Please." Kom: "Khaya is your husband. You stay loyal to him. I am your boss, you stay in that lane for me. Understood?" Zama: "Yes." Kom: "Good. Mrs Ngudla, enjoy the rest of your evening." Zama: "You too." he walked out the door and was gone. Back in the lounge. Me: "Tata, I've never heard of Tyrone. Where's he been all this time?" Khaya: "We met in Cuba." Me: "Oh? I didn't even know you had friends. How long you known him?" Khaya: "Why am I being interrogated?" he snapped. Me: "I was just.....asking." I slowly got up. Me: "I should get going." Khaya: "I'll drive you." Me: "No its okay." Khaya: "Its late, the roads are slippery, you're pregnant. I'm taking you home." Me: "Its okay, I'll ask Lakhe to come fetc-" "NO!" they said together. Zama: "Just let your father drive you baby." Me: "I'm not really a baby anymo-" Khaya: "Spho." Me: "Fine tata." Why were they acting so weird? Zama: "eat first." Me: "I already ate ma. Thank you. I really should get going." I hugged her goodbye and we went to the car. My father drove quietly, I also kept my hole shut because kalok sana he didn't want to be interrogated. When we arrived at my house, he had his phone ready. Khaya: "My Uber is pulling up." I looked behind me and saw headlights. Me: "Thank you tata." Khaya: "Anything for you my angel. I love you, goodnight." Me: "Did you change your wedding ring?" I noticed when he was driving that it wasn't the same one I know. Khaya: "oh yes. We decided to spoil ourselves." With an expensive bracelet too? I mean I've been subjected to nice things now, I know the value of something just by staring at it and

those items on his left wrist could buy me a Ferrari. I decided not to question it. Me: "Please text me when you're home." Khaya: "okay. Undibulisele apho." we got out the car, he jogged to his Uber I went into the house. Lakhe was standing by the door with his hands on his hips. Lakhe: "Who's that?" Me: "My dad. He insisted on bringing me. He says hi." Lakhe: "Why do you look like that? Upset? I can get ice cream." I shook my head. Me: "Just bed." Lakhe: "kwenzekke nton kokwenu Spho?" Me: "Nothing baby. I got there and they were chilling with their friend Tyrone." Sands: "Your parents have a friend?" Rob: "I thought I was their friend." Me: "Me too. And, this guy looks like a supermodel. Anyway, he eventually left. I left shortly after him." Sandile chuckled. Sands: "I mean I was shocked they had a friend, but now you're saying supermodel and I'm kind of confused. Tyrone is a boy's name, correct?" Me: "Yes, he's a man." Sands: "Then I'm no longer interested." Stella: "I am. Is he single? Was there a ring on his finger?" Me: "I didn't really check ma." I chuckled after seeing Rob's facial expression. Stella: "If you didn't see it, it wasn't there." Rob: "First of all-" Stella: "Ha.a Robert please. Yuh." she held her head. Rob: "Andik'thumanga." Lakhe: "Let's get you to bed my love." he held my arm to the bedroom. Lakhe: "foot rub?" Me: "No, just want sleep." I undressed and got into bed yawning. Lakhe: "I'll do it while you're sleeping." Oko wayeyaleziwe ngu doctor nge back and foot rub, he'll never stop. I was actually grateful because I don't want to take advantage of him. Even though I should. Lakhe: "So, this friend of your parents...Where's he been?" he massaged my feet. Me: "That's the weird thing. Tata said they met in Cuba and he was acting weird. Like ufihla something." Lakhe: "Like what?" Me: "I don't know. Maybe Tyrone isn't a friend. Maybe they didn't meet in Cuba. Something was off. They didn't even want me to leave alone. And get this," he laughed. Lakhe: "I know when you say 'get this' its about to be really spicy." Me: "It is baby, I saw on my dad's hand new jewelry. Not just your normal Sterns and American Swiss kind, oh no, this some serious hard core custom made pieces. Millions of worth. He says they decided to spoil themselves." Lakhe: "and you don't believe it?" Me: "I don't know what to believe. If anything, that jewelry would have matched Tyrone. He looks exotically beautiful, just like those pieces." Lakhe: "Sounds like you have a crush on him." Me: "I might." he smiled. Lakhe: "Maybe he bought the jewelry for them. Its no big deal." Me: "Oh but it is. Why so expensive?" Lakhe: "Maybe he's rich." Me: "Have you bought Dumi a present?" Lakhe: "Why? Is it his birthday?" a flash of panic swept his face. Me: "That's my point. You don't buy someone an expensive present just because." Lakhe: "But back to Dumi, when is his birthday? I don't even know." Me: "its in April. Relax." Lakhe: "Oh good. So let me get this straight. You're suspicious of Tyrone, your parents have suspicious expensive gifts and you're worried because?" I thought for a

second. Me: "yeah I don't know why I'm worried. Its probably nothing. Let me sleep honey." he kissed my lips. Lakhe: "Good night." he went to the bathroom. I got comfortable in my spot, curled up like a ball holding my big belly then finally fell asleep. I felt like I was sinking. I tried to grab a hold of anything but I was in a pit of darkness and then it stopped. I heard breathing. Grunting. Hard. The lights switched on and they were all around. Creatures. Disgusting filthy demonic looking creatures. I hugged my stomach protectively. God, what fresh hell is this! They charged toward me all at once but hit right back to where they started. Something kept bouncing them back. A protective wall. They didn't give up. Didn't stop. As much as this invisible protective wall was around me, I wasn't sure if it would last. The look in their eyes, staring at my belly, saliva dripping from their mouths. I started praying. Something touched my arm skin and I screamed my lungs out. Hitting it with all my might. Lakhe: "SPHO!!!!!!!" he cried. I woke up sweating. Looking around me. My breathing was still labored. My hands in balls of fist. Lakhe: "what the hell?" I could not stop shaking. I jumped when I heard a knock on the door. They were here. Me: "Please. Go..." I cried. Lakhe: "What?" Me: "Don't let them take me. Please. Don't open!! They want to take me." I sobbed. "Masilakhe open this door!!! Before I break it down!!" Lakhe got out of bed. I grabbed his arm. Me: "Please!!" Lakhe: "baby, ngutata lo." Me: "No, they want to take me away. They want the baby." Rob: "M A S I L A K H E !! !!!" Lakhe: "Baby I have to open uyamazi utata will freak out. Nobody is taking you anywhere." he went to open the door. I cringed further up the bed. Far away from them. Rob: "What happened! I heard a scream." Lakhe: "I don't know. She had a nightmare." Sands: "That sounded more like Sibulele's scream." everyone kept quiet. Lakhe: "What the hell did he do to her!" he pushed them out the way. Rob held him still. Rob: "Yima nyana. You can't just barge into Sibulele's room rattling him to a scare. Something more serious is happening." Lakhe: "its that damned house! Its cursed!! Miriam has something in that house that does this!!!" Sands: "What if she's the one in the house?" Lakhe: "she's dead!!" Sands: "I believe that's the point I'm trying to make." Rob: "Let's ask Spho." Lakhe: "Tata look at her. She almost beat me to death. Whatever it is that she saw....." he looked at her shaking uncontrollably on the bed. Sands: "Fuck Fuckety Fuck Fuck Fuck. They were in contact with a demon." Lakhe: "What!!!" Sands: "Only now I realize it. I think I've read about it somewhere. It infests itself in a place, everyone who comes near it, it latches on them. Sibulele was in contact with it, he hugged Spho, it attached to her, she sleeps next to you, it latches onto you and I'm going to be at the Radisson Blu hotel if you need me. No way on gang I'm letting that thing near me." Rob: "Sandile is just stupid, there's no such thing. People have nightmares, its life." Sands: "No its not. I don't wake up beating people and screaming from my

nightmares." Rob: "the thing is, you ARE the nightmare. Lakhe, talk to Spho ask her what happened." Lakhe stared at him. Lakhe: "Sandile is the expert in this topic." Sands: "she's your wife." Rob: "Go to her Lakhe." he nudged him forward. Lakhe: "Don't push me." Sands: "Chicken." Lakhe: "mxim" he sat on the edge of the bed. Lakhe: "sweetheart, I'm going to come near you okay? I'm not going to hurt you, its me, your husband." he inched closer. Lakhe: "is it okay if I touch you?" I nodded. He sat next to me and hugged me. Lakhe: "what did you see?" Me: "They're outside. They want to take me." Lakhe: "Where do they want to take you?" Me: "Home. They want to take me home."
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A phone rang, a few minutes later. Sands: "I'll take it." Sandile took Lakhe's phone and answered. Sands: "Hello?" "its me. Please Lakhe, you have to come fetch me. Please." Sandile stared at Lakhe. Sands: "Babaloo? Is that you?" B: "Yes. They.. They're everywhere. Please come now! I'm going to die." he cried. Sands: "I'm coming. Stay put." he hung up. Lakhe: "What is it?" Sands: "We need to get him out of there. He's crying. He says he's going to die." Rob: "How the hell.... Masambe Sandile." they walked out. Sandile drove as fast as possible to the hospital, they went straight up to the psych ward which was locked. Rob: "We can't get in." Sands: "We have to tuta. He can't be in there alone." he looked around for a minute, thinking. Sands: "Wait in the car. I have a plan." he rushed off to a call and slipped in while the nurses were crunched down at their notes and files. He looked around and found a pair of scrubs, he quickly put on. He put on a surgical cap and mask. Only his eyes and ears were visible. Two doctors came in. Neither paying attention to their so called colleague. Sandile slipped back out walking casually to the psych ward. Nurse: "doc?" Sands: "I have a restless patient in there, I need to have a word with him before I knock off." Nurse: "Which doctor are you?" Sands: "Dr Kusile, Obviously. Are you drinking?" Nurse: "No Doctor." she opened for him. Sandile looked thoroughly through the ward. One bed was in a tangled mess. Sands: "Babaloo? Its Sandile. Where are you?" he looked under the bed and found him there. Shaking. Sands: "Shit. Come here. We're leaving." he whispered. Babaloo: "How. They won't let me out." Sands: "Where are your clothes? Get dressed. We'll see how we get out." Babaloo got dressed quickly and they went for the door. "What about me doc?" they looked behind them. Babaloo: "next time, I won't forget. I promise." Sandile looked at him. Babaloo: "That's Lunatic Luke. Don't mind him." they slipped out and took a walk down the passage. Sands: "we'll be back in a minute." he addressed the nurse. She didn't pay much attention to him. Out in the parking lot Robert was waiting anxiously. The time was 1:08am. Sands and Babaloo walked out the

door and they got in the car. Sands: "let's go." he sped off instantly back to the house. The drive was quiet and fast. Once they arrived, the lights inside were on. Sands: "Looks like we gonn have one of our legendary slumber parties again. Now that the whole house is awake." they went inside the house. Spho, Lakhe, Dumi, Sibú and Hlumi were in the lounge. Stella, Vicky and Nosi probably still sleeping. Hlumi went up to hug her husband. Hlumi: "What happened." they sat down. Lakhe: "Before we get to that, Why is Sandile dressed like a surgeon?" Sands: "Let me be bhuti. It was the only way to get him out." Babalo: "Thank you Sandile. I don't know how I can thank you. What I would've done without your help and fast response." Sands: "Was it Lunatic Luke that spooked you?" Babalo: "No, he actually helped me. He stole a phone and made me call whoever I trusted to come get me. He said he saw what happened, if I didn't get out of there I wouldn't have made it till morning." Lakhe: "and what did happen Babalo?" Babalo: "Someone or something strangled me in my sleep." Lakhe: "And how sure are we that it wasn't Lunatic Luke?" Babalo: "I woke up, during the struggle for my life. And I couldn't see anything. It wasn't dark, I was supposed to have seen hands, a face, anything. Instead, I was being strangled by air." Lakhe looked at Sandile, Sands back at him. Sands: "Then what happened?" Babalo: "I tried to scream but I couldn't, my throat was in a tight grip. Luke come over and looked at me holding his Bible. He prayed, swaying it in my face. The grip started to loosen then eventually let go. The weird thing is, nobody woke up. If He hadn't seen me and came to pray.... I could've died and nobody would have known."

I had a headache by morning. None of us slept a wink after Babalo came back. Instead, we just watched TV till dawn. I was tucked in Lakhe's arms. Hlumi holding onto Babalo's who cuddled his wife. Dumi was on the couch and Sandile in the wheelchair rolling around laughing, having the time of his life. Sandile is such a child yazi. Rob also sitting watching TV. Sibú entertaining his stupid friend, hitching a hike on the back of the wheelchair. Dumi's phone rang. He looked at it then answered. Dumi: "Hello?" "Hi Dumi, ndim umama ka Zingisa. Zingi needs your help as the father of these children! She just gave birth two hours ago, the baby is early and I can't take care of the children because I have to look after her too. Find a way to fetch the kids. They have school on Monday." Dumi: "Ma, why didn't you tell me she was in labor?" She: "Zingi told me not to stress you because you're already in a difficult position. Kodwa kengoku, I'm in charge of her now, until she's out of hospital. Come fetch your kids." Dumi: "Have you named the baby?" She: "Mfana. Andinaxesha lodlala nawe mna!!! Come fetch these kids!!" she hung up.

Dumi: "Sandile, Can you drive me to the hospital and for goodness sake give me back my wheelchair!" Me: "Zingi gave birth." Dumi: "Yes, and she didn't tell me. She's in the hospital, I have to go fetch the kids too." Lakhe: "You don't want me to go get them?" Dumi: "We can go but I want to see my baby." Lakhe: "Let me take you. I'll get dressed." Sandile brought the wheelchair and helped Dumi on it. Sands: "Congratulations daddy." Dumi: "Thank you Sands. Uhm, Spho... I know this is too much to ask but, is it okay if the kids are here for a while? I'm going to need help with them and they're used to you." Me: "Definitely. Yes of course. Send Zingi my regards please. I'll come visit her later." Dumi: "Okay." he wheeled to his room. Lakhe went to his to get dressed. Vicky and Stella woke up coming to the lounge. Stella: "This is such an early bunch. You all wake up this early every morning?" Rob: "Yep." Stella: "please Robert. Not anyone was talking to you." Rob: "You slept in my bed and that's the attitude you want to bring?" Stella: "no wonder my body feels like stone. I need the spa. Spho honey, are there any good ones around?" I gave her the name and number of my favorite one. Stella: "thank you Sweetie." Me: "Anyone for breakfast?" Sands: "I'll help." we went to the kitchen and started our breakfast, first with Dumi's and Lakhe since they were heading out. Then we continued with the rest. Sands: "Spho, last night. When you were dreaming, what did you see?" dreaming? I looked at him. Me: "I didn't dream." Sands: "you don't remember waking up scared? Screaming? Hitting Lakhe?" I looked at him in the eyes. Me: "I am sure, that did not happen. Why do you ask?" he backed away slowly. Sands: "No reason." he walked out the kitchen. Huh. Isn't he just an odd ball?

#98

It was almost 1 in the afternoon when Lakhe came back with Dumi and his children. It had been a long while since I'd seen the kids and I was super excited. Zimi was taking a nap on her father's lap Lulo was holding a rugby ball under his arm with a backpack secured on his back. He came straight to me and gave me a hug. Me: "hi Lulo. Unjani?" Lulo: "I'm fine thank you and yourself?" Private school kids and their English, Lord do help us. Me: "I'm great sweetie." he shrugged off his bag and went straight out the back to play. Me: "How is Zingi doing?" Dumi: "She was sleeping. She's stable. The birth was difficult. They had to perform an operation instead of natural. But she's going to be okay." He really did care about her. I could see it in his eyes he was really worried. I can only imagine what he was going through. Zingi was the mother of his kids, her well-being was important to him. Especially now that he couldn't walk. Me: "And the baby?" Dumi: "Still in the ICU." Me: "is

everything okay?" Dumisani: "Yes, she's just a little early. I wanted to name her Zingisani, but Zingi's mother was against it. Since we've broken up and I haven't discussed the name with Zingi yet. So I opted for Yonelisa. She's so beautiful and tiny. Like a cotton ball. Just like my little Zimi." he stared at his sleeping daughter on his lap. Dumisani: "I love them so much. I cannot believe I was so stupid. How do I leave a house with such love and happiness like that?" Me: "Everyone makes mistakes Dumisani, the important thing is that we learn from them and don't repeat. Also making right what we did wrong. Everything is going to work out. Give it time." Dumisani: "I hear you." Me: "Should I take her to bed?" Dumisani: "No I just want to stare at her for a while." Me: "Okay." he went to the lounge. Lakhe was in the bedroom, I walked to him, found him sitting on the bed. Lakhe: "my love." Me: "hey, you look tired." Lakhe: "I am. I'm going to take a nap but I want us to discuss something first." Me: "What?" Lakhe: "our baby's name." Me: "Did you see Yonelisa?" Lakhe: "I did, she's gorgeous and so precious." I sat next to him. Me: "So, what were you thinking?" Lakhe: "I'm not sure. My name is Masilakhe'ikhaya. My brother is Sandile. Which is a very big coincidence. Now that, we've extended as per his name, we had a gift, Nosiphiwo." Me: "That's so beautiful baby." Lakhe: "Against all odds, Silakhile landa ikhaya lethu. Which I want my baby's name to be." Me: "That whole sentence?" Lakhe: "No, just Silakhile. Maybe our second baby can be extension, Landile." Me: "I think the correct form is Lwandile." Lakhe: "Sandile will never forgive me, it has to be either Sandile junior, or Landile once." Me: "Sandile must have his own babies and name them junior." Lakhe: "My brother is a special case baby, I've learnt the hard way to just give him what he wants." Me: "Fine, Silakhile Sobukwe it is. Quite a rare name I must say, I like it." Lakhe: "Baby Sila. Or Baby Khile." Me: "Baby khile if he's a boy. Sila if she's a girl." Lakhe: "I can't wait to have more babies and more discussions like this with you." Me: "We have to get this one out first." Lakhe: "how long should we wait to get pregnant again?" Me: "I haven't even given birth and you're already thinking about knocking me up again?" Lakhe: "I want our kids to have 2 years age difference. All four of them." Me: "FOUR??? You're trying to tell me, for the next eight years I'm going to be pregnant for four of them?" Lakhe: "Is that going to be a problem for you Miss Congeniality?" Me: "Why don't you go and get pregnant then if it's not a problem!" Lakhe: "Baby, I want a big family. A lot of kids running around. Sandile came when I was older, soon I got busy with high school and he got Nosi, then I went to University." Me: "not every two years though. We'll talk about it and see. I also want a big bunch especially because I was an only child and very lonely." Lakhe: "perfect. It's working out." he lay on his back on the bed. Lakhe: "I need some sleep." I cuddled up next to him.

Lakhe woke within the next hour. He went to the lounge where Babalo and Sandile were sitting. Lakhe: "Uphi uSibulele?" Sands: "Taking the world's longest nap in history. He went to bed same time you did." Lakhe: "I hope Hlumi is doing well?" Babalo: "She is. Catching up with her work." Sands: "Also dad is awake. He's working again." he rolled his eyes. Lakhe: "Okay." he sat down. Lakhe: "Don't you find it weird that Spho and Sibulele fell asleep around the same time and both are still sleeping?" Sands: "And they had similar nightmares that they both don't remember." Babalo: "What does that mean?" Lakhe: "I don't know what it means. It could be that its because they're blood-related." Sands: "Or blood related." Lakhe: "That's what I said." Sands: "No, you mean they're family, I mean they've got something only the two of them have." They kept quiet for a while. Stella came home from the spa with Vicky and Nosi. Sands: "Are you okay sis Vicky? Why you walking like Donald Duck?" Stella: "Her first mani-pedi darling. She will be fine. Can you make us some tea sweetie we'll be in my room." Nosi: "Okay mama." Stella and Vicky went to her room. Nosi was in the kitchen making them tea and took it to them. Babalo: "You said Spho had a nightmare?" Lakhe: "Yes. Its a pity she doesn't even know." Babalo: "What time?" Lakhe: "around midnight I guess. Few minutes before you called she'd just woken up." Babalo: "do you know for how long she was dreaming?" Lakhe: "for quite a while she was restless before she hit me. About 30 minutes I guess." Babalo: "Where did she hit you? Show me." Lakhe took off his t shirt and looked at the greenish mark on his shoulder. Lakhe: "that wasn't there before." his chest had a similar mark and his arms. Sands: "Boouuuyy, you better call Lunatic Luke. I had said before and I'm saying again, There's by no way on GANG I'm letting that demon near me!! Call Luke!!" Babalo: "Luke can't leave the hospital. He's a permanent resident there." Lakhe: "Where is his family?" he put his shirt back on. Babalo: "They died in a house fire that people say he started. So I don't know." Sands: "I think I'll take my chances with an arsonist than a demon. Thank you very much." Lakhe: "then how do we get him out?" Sands: "Leave that to me." he stood up and walked out the house. Lakhe: "have you eaten?" Babalo: "I can't get anything in. My throat still hurts from the strangle." Lakhe: "You have to find a way to eat though, and sleep." Babalo: "I'm scared of sleeping. What if it comes back to kill me?" Lakhe: "How would it have found you here? Don't worry about anything I'm going to be here, awake. I'll even get a guard to watch you sleep. If you so much as twitch, I'll be there in a second. Nothing will hurt you here, this is MY house. No demon was helping me when I bought it, so there sure as hell won't be one residing here." Babalo: "Thanks Lakhe. I don't want to take advantage of you. I don't even have real friends out

there. Not even one of them can check up on me but you're offering to watch me sleep? I don't know how I can ever repay you." Lakhe: "You don't have to. This is what friends do. Just don't tell Sandile, he's going to think it applies to him as well." Babalo laughed. Lakhe: "I'm going to get you something that will help you sleep and some food. While you eat I'll be talking to the guard." Babalo: "Do you think Sandile can get Lunatic Luke out of there?" Lakhe: "If There's anything you need to know about my brother is that he can do anything he sets his mind to and he usually does. He will get him out." he went to the medical cabinet in the kitchen, taking out a pill. Making food and bringing it to the lounge. Dumi was awake as well with Zimi bouncing on his lap. Zimi: "Bhubhu!! Bhubhu!! Bhubhu!!" Lakhe: "hi my angel." he gave Babalo his tray then went to fetch Zimi. Lakhe: "Where's your big brother? He needs to eat." Dumi: "Probably in that game room. I'll fetch him." he went down the passage. Lakhe: "Ayisente princess. Look at the fairy hair." Zimi: "fery." Lakhe: "you have fairy hair." she shook her head. Zimi: "ZimZim." she corrected. Lakhe: "Princess Zimzim." she giggled. Lakhe: "Let's get you food." Dumi: "nanku omnye." he handed over Lulonke. Dumi: "Is Spho still sleeping?" Lakhe: "Yeah, do you need something?" Dumi: "No just asking. She doesn't really sleep during the day. She's probably tired." Lakhe: "Yeah. She is." he disappeared into the kitchen. 2 hours later, Sandile walked into the house. Sands: "Come in. You can't stand there forever." a frail old man stepped in the house. He was in abnormally large clothes. His cheeks caved in and eyes in dark circles. His thin gray hair barely visible. Luke was really old. Sands: "Here he is. I need some juice." he strolled to the kitchen. I woke up from my bed and wore my slippers. My nose was itching like I was about to have a cold. I needed something to block it from even starting. I walked to the kitchen, passing the living room with a strange man sitting on my couch. Don't know how many times I must tell Lakhe I don't want strangers in my house, but does he listen? Nooo, niggas just love to do their thing. Its like he enjoys seeing me shout, worse ke lo aze naye, he's just trying to kill us all. I wonder if he knows who he is, I'm going to disappoint him today and be quiet. Sibul walked in the kitchen. Sibul: "hey." he poured a glass of water and a pinch of cayenne pepper in it. Me: "hi." he gave it to me and took the pills. Sibul: "these won't work." Me: "is this safe for the baby?" Sibul: "Yes. Its fine." I drank the water. Sibul: "who's that?" Me: "Another homeless guy Lakhe has adopted. I need to get ready. I'm going to see Zingi in the hospital." Sibul: "cool." I walked out the kitchen passing the lounge again. Lakhe: "Spho, honey. This is Luke." Me: "You mean Lunatic Luke?" Sandile choked on his juice. Lakhe: "How did you know?" Me: "Who doesn't know?" Lakhe: "uhm...me." Me: "So you're trying to tell me you brought a stranger to our house? Again." Lakhe: "No." Me: "Lakhe, this guy was on the news a few years ago for setting his family house

alight. They all died in there while he watched from across the street. He was taken and evaluated, found that he was mentally unstable and put under strict care in some psych ward. That's why he's called Lunatic Luke. The story was all over the news." Everyone knows the story of Lunatic Luke. I don't know which rock Lakhe lives under really. Lakhe looked at Luke. Lakhe: "Are you serious?" Luke: "I didn't set them alight. It wasn't me." Me: "Of course it wasn't." I mumbled. I wasn't going to wait till this guy had a box of matches in his hand before I start to panic. Me: "I'm going to the hospital to see Zingi."

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Sunday evening Khaya and Zama got home from a dinner date. They walked into their house and switched on the lights. Zama: "Tonight was a lovely evening. Thank you Khaya. I haven't felt like this in a while." Khaya: "Its a pleasure. Sometimes we have to just let loose and enjoy the moment. We haven't done that in a long time. Have you heard from my brother Phumlani lately? I haven't been able to reach him." Zama: "No, I haven't." Khaya: "I'll have to go check on him tomorrow. I have to call boss and let him know I have a name for him. Excuse me." Zama: "Yeah, after he leaves at least we'll be able to get back to normal routine." Khaya dialed a number and listened. Khaya: "Evening sir, I apologize for disturbing. I have an identity ready for you.....Yes sir." he hung up. Zama: "So can we get to bed now? Its late...." she kissed him. Khaya: "I'd love to, but he's on his way." she sighed. Khaya: "he won't be long, just fetching these things. That's it." he kissed her again. Zama: "Fine." in a few minutes, the door opened and Komander walked in. He stood in one place. The aura of death surrounded him as he stood under the light. His beautiful face in a twisted expression. Anger was an underestimation. Something was wrong. Deadly wrong.....

#99

Khaya and Zama stood still in their spots not knowing what to do. Zama: "Evening sir. Is everything okay?" Komander walked in and around in small circles. They waited quietly until he stopped abruptly and stared back at them. Kom: "Am I a bad person?" Khaya and Zama looked at each other. Khaya: "Why do you ask sir." Kom: "Answer me. Honestly. Am I a bad person?" Khaya: "No." Kom: "Why do you say no?" Khaya: "I don't think you're a bad person." Kom: "What qualifies me to be good then? Because if I'm not bad that means I'm good right?" silence. Kom: "So you're lying to me?" Khaya: "Sir, you're a good person. Deep down. You have many qualities that are good."

Kom: "Like what." Zama: "You give parents happiness, in the form of children. You forgive people. You buy gifts for people you like. You offer a place of safety and security. People look up to you." he looked at her. Khaya: "What happened sir?" Komander breathed silently. Zama: "whatever it is that has aggravated you, tell us, we can deal with it." Kom: "I've already handled what aggravated me. The boy, where is he." Khaya: "Sibulele lives with his sister, Spho." Kom: "I want to see him. Now." Khaya: "Yes sir." he went to the bedroom to make the call. Kom: "I'm no longer leaving the city." Zama: "Why?" Kom: "Something about this place." Zama: "Is this about Spho?" Kom: "No. Her brother." Zama: "What about him." Kom: "Don't you worry about that." Zama: "Sir-" Kom: "Told you not to call me that." Zama: "I'm sorry. Where are Spho's real parents." Kom: "Her father died, he also didn't want kids. Miriam is her mother. She fell off the wagon and let them down. How she could turn a blind eye for all those years baffles me. She had to die." Zama: "How did you...." Kom: "You lied to me for years Zama." Zama: "I didn't lie, I told you-" Kom: "You told me she was abused, you didn't tell me she was raped! I should have killed you for that, nobody has the right to hurt the children in any way!! But I loved you. Now you owe me." Zama: "I thought we sorted my punishment out years ago. I didn't lie to you." Kom: "Why did you keep quiet for that long then? What are you hiding?" Zama: "Nothing. I swear." Kom: "You know he's already dead. So, what are you still holding onto?" Zama: "I'm not holding onto anything." Kom: "I have a way of getting the truth out of you and very quickly at that. And I know Spho would make a great guest in my house. She's so sweet. Full of life. Zama, I am warning you." Khaya: "he's on his way." he walked back to them. Komander was glaring down at Zama, she was looking at the floor. Kom: "Have it your way then." Zama: "Please! She didn't do anything wrong!!" Kom: "What are you holding onto that I do not know Zama." she looked at her husband with tears in her eyes. Khaya folded his arms and stood aside. Seconds, minutes went by with silence. Kom: "You forced my hand." Zama: "I....brought him to...Miriam. I didn't know." Kom: "Brought who." Zama: "Masixole. I'd met him before Khaya, I introduced him to Miriam. I didn't know what he would d-" two strong gripping hands surrounded her neck choking the life out of her. He pinned her to the wall, growling in her face. Black lace began covering her eyes, her feet barely touching the floor. The grip got tighter. Air no longer available and she finally went limp. Komander dropped her to the floor. Kom: "Do you have chamomile tea? I need to sort out my head before this boy arrives." Khaya: "Yes sir."

Sunday evening, the two kids were fed and Dumi put them to bed in his room. Lakhe and Sandile washed the dishes. Stella and Vicky playing cards against Rob and Nosi. Sibulele in his room. So they thought. Everyone was too preoccupied to notice. Lakhe: "I think we should put Lunatic Luke on your side of the house." Sands: "Oh? So its my side that gets tossed into satan's front yard?" Lakhe: "he's not going to set anything alight." Sands: "I googled him. Spho was right, he was all over the news!!" Lakhe: "either way, we need his help. I have a feeling he can figure out what's going on or get rid of it. I can't welcome a baby in this environment." Sands: "You're right. Uphi uBabalo noHlumi?" Lakhe: "They're sleeping." he put down the dish cloth. Lakhe: "Spho can't know Luke is still here. We have to hide him." Sands: "This is not a good idea. You gonna have to deal with it because I can't lie to her, she sees right through me." Lakhe: "Just take him. She'll be back any minute." Sandile took Lunatic Luke to his side. Lakhe tidied the living room. I walked in, the house looking nice and clean. I was impressed. Me: "hi sweetheart." I kissed his lips. Lakhe: "Hey. How's Zingi?" Me: "In pain but she'll be fine. The baby is sooo beautiful. Where's the kids?" Lakhe: "Dumi tucked them in. We should get to bed too, its late." Me: "Where's everyone?" Lakhe: "Stella, Vicky, Nosi and dad are playing cards in the game room. Sandile is in his room, Sibulele too, Dumi and the kids have gone to bed. Boogile is sleeping, its just me and you." Me: "Where's Lunatic Luke?" Lakhe: "I don't know. I told him to leave." Me: "Are you sure?" I itched my nose. Lakhe: "Yes." everytime I came into the house, I had a sniffle or an itch. Must be the climate. Me: "Okay, I'm going to Sibulele for a second. I'm coming." I went to Sibulele's room. Lakhe went to his bedroom and ran a bath for his wife, adding bath salts and bubbles. He lit candles on the side. She would love this. Me: "Baby?" I came in the bathroom. Me: "Wow. This looks so enticing. But Where's my brother?" Lakhe: "I told you in his room, come bath with me." Me: "he's not there. I checked. Twice. Sandile doesn't know. Nobody does. Where is he?" Lakhe: "maybe he took a walk?" Me: "At this time of night after what happened to him?" Lakhe: "then I don't know." He could have damn well threw knives at me the way I got so angry. How could he not know!!!! I left him here! How would he just disappear!!! Lakhe: "Spho?" I yanked open the door and stormed out. Lakhe: "babe!!" he followed after me. Lakhe: "You can't go out in this dark!!" Me: "Watch me." I grabbed a club and walked to the door. Sibulele stood there and looked at me. Sibulele: "Looking for me?" Me: "Yes." I hugged him. Sibulele stared at Lakhe. Lakhe looked back at him suspiciously. Lakhe: "Where have you been?" Sibulele: "Where is Lunatic Luke?" Lakhe: "He's gone." Sibulele: "No, he's inside the house." Lakhe: "I told him to leave." he widened his eyes to signal the lie. Sibulele: "No you didn't." Lakhe: "First of all, You've been awol for a while. I told him to go." I let go of Sibulele. Me: "You smell nice. Have you eaten?" Sibulele: "Yes and thank you. I'm

going to bed. I have an early day tomorrow at work." Sands: "I'm coming with you. My room is a mess." Sibú: "Goodnight Masilakhe." he kissed my forehead and walked down the passage. Lakhe just stared at him perplexed. Lakhe: "Did he just call me by my Christian name?" Me: "I'll talk to him." Lakhe: "No, don't baby. I'll be the one to talk to him. Leave him." Me: "Are you sure? He can't take a chance, you're the head of the house. It must have slipped out his mouth but he needs to know it's wrong." Lakhe: "Don't worry, I'll handle it. You and I have a bath date. Go and get ready, I'll join you in a minute." I kissed his lips and hurried to our room. Lakhe walked to Sibú's room and barged in. Lakhe: "What the fuck is wrong with you." Sibú: "With what?" Lakhe: "Firstly where do you get off challenging me? Especially in front of my wife?" Sibú: "I wasn't challenging you at all. I just don't understand why you're lying about Luke when we both know he's still here." Lakhe: "How the fuck would you know that!!!" he pushed him. Sibú: "heee, you're going to hit me because you can't tell the truth?" Lakhe: "Ndiqale nini ubangu Masilakhe kuwe kwedin? Do I need to remind you of your place?" Sibú: "No....you don't, Bhuti. My head is in a buzz" he smiled shaking his head a little. Sibú: "I apologize." he looked straight in his eye. Sibú: "Is that all, bhuti? Like I said, I have a busy day at work tomorrow." Lakhe: "You better watch your place Sibulele. Watch it very carefully." he walked out. Sandile looked at Sibú. Sands: "what's up with the two of you?" Sibú: "You should ask your brother. He's the one acting like a messiah. I really need to sleep." Sands: "where were you?" Sibú: "I went to see a friend of mine." Sands: "what friend?" Sibú: "just a friend." Sands: "a girl?" Sibú smiled. Sibú: "goodnight Sandile." Sands: "Oh my, it's a girl. Who is it?" Sibú got into bed. Sibú: "if you going to be sleeping in my room, you better be quiet." Sands: "fine." he put on the play station and played quietly. He had to watch his best friend sleep. Something very odd was happening and he had to see it.

I woke up on Monday morning, feeling extremely exhausted but I had work to do. I went to shower and came back to sit for a second. Lakhe: "where you off to so early?" Me: "Work." Lakhe: "You don't have to baby, you look tired." Me: "my team is expecting me." I got up and looked for a dress. Lakhe: "I can handle your team. Sleep some more." Me: "Go away Lakhe. I am going to work." I found a soft pink cotton bodycon dress off the shoulder with long sleeves and the length just over my knees. Lakhe: "Don't tell me you're wearing high hee-" I stared at him in warning. Lakhe: "You look stunning." I wore my white strap block heels, filled my white clutch with my essentials and wore my gown to do make up and hair. Once I was done, I took my laptop bag and clutch. Me: "Goodbye. I'll see you at the office." Lakhe: "I'm not

coming in today. Can you please reschedule my meetings?" Me: "Me?" Lakhe: "Yes." Me: "That is your PA's job." Lakhe: "Why do I need a PA when I have a wife?" Oh? Wow. I walked out the door. Lakhe constantly undermined me at work. If its not taking over my meetings and presentations, he's saying such things. I'm not a PA. I worked very hard, very long to get to my position. At this point I don't have time for admin things such as these. I got in the car and drove off. My Range Rover would be arriving soon. I just could not wait. Arriving at the office, I got Sive to order me breakfast. I had a meeting with my team at 9:30 I needed to be sharp for. Our first meeting of the year. I wanted new innovative ideas. I wanted passion. Something. While I went through my sea of emails I ate the food. Sive came into my office at 8:45 panicking. Sive: "Maam, There's a Gerard Ku'che waiting in Boardroom 1 and Mr Sobz isn't here yet. They have a meeting." Me: "Tell my team to give me an hour before they start. I'll hopefully be done by then." I took my things and headed for the boardroom. I am not a PA. I am an MD. Me: "Mr Ku'che." he raised an eyebrow. Me: "Sphosenkosi Ngudla. MD, Our CEO is unavailable at the moment and I can be of assistance." he stared at my belly. Why can't men just swallow their prides and work? Do you really have to judge me for carrying a life? This was annoying. Gerard: "I was really expecting Lakhe, if he's unavailable I'll postpone." Me: "He won't be available for a while. I am in charge now I understand you're having trouble boosting your company image in a positive manner? That is my department. I may have a few ideas that might spark your interest." he listened intently as I went on with my daily bread. 30 minutes later he had a smile on his face. Gerard: "I love it. All of it. When do we start?" Me: "as soon as possible. You send me the contract, our lawyers meet, and we begin." Gerard: "You'll be hearing from me by the end of the day. Thank you Spho." we parted ways. I had my team waiting, as soon as I got in, they started. This took 3 draining hours of my life. I couldn't even finish, I had another meeting with Keyani Co then the Demol brothers. By 2pm, I was dangerously tired. I took a breather in my office and calmed down. I was satisfied with the work I had done. All 3 of Lakhe's meetings I'd done. He would be so proud. My team was done and ready for production. I started on the Gerard Ku'che project. It was exciting doing something like this, my actual job. Not really but what I originally qualified in. I believed in hard work and keeping the client happy and by the looks of things, Gerard is a man you want to be kept super happy not only was he a millionaire but he is a board member of quite a number of other companies that could bring us money. I also wanted to have an advertising department within our company. I can already imagine their workgrounds. Walls bursting with different colors. Maybe change it every season? Spring will be orange and pink, Autumn, brown and red. Winter obviously blue, silver and white. Summer

would be gold, yellow and lime. Then we can see which colors boost production, or better yet which season. This is going to be awesome. I also needed something to motivate my team, their ideas depressed me. Maybe if I dangled a carrot? By 3:45 I got ready to leave the office with my things. When I looked up, Sibú was standing by the door. Me: "Hey." Sibú: "Hi, I came to drive you home." Me: "You read my mind. I'm so tired." he carried my bag. Sibú: "Why did you come to work? You married the boss, you get to relax, especially because you're carrying his baby." Me: "I needed to get out of that house. Its been almost a month. I can't deal. How was work?" Sibú: "Hectic, its the end of our financial year next month. I've got so much work everyday from now. I'm on reserve kungoku." Me: "That's why I didn't choose Accounting as a career." Sibú: "It kind of chose me." we laughed as we got into the car. He drove us home. When we arrived, I'd dozed off a bit. Sibú: "Spho, we're home." I opened my eyes and got out the car. In the house everyone was in the lounge. Vicky probably the one cooking dinner which I was grateful for. I just wanted bed. Me: "Molweni." everyone greeted. I went to my room. Lakhe was there by himself on the bed. He had a look on his face. Me: "hello." he just stared at me. Me: "What now." Lakhe: "What now? Really?" Me: "I'm coming from work, I'm tired and you're angry for no reason-" Lakhe: "No reason!!!! After you sabotaged my meetings!!!!" he roared. Me: "Sabotage?" Lakhe: "you went after MY clients! Without even consulting me!!! I told you to reschedule but nooo!!!" Me: "can-" Lakhe: "You made me look like an idiot to my clients!!! Like I had some midlife crisis and couldn't see them or I'm on holiday or some shit!!! Well You've got what you wanted Sphosenkosi!!!! They're yours!!!!" Me: "Are you done?" Lakhe: "Don't even dare try to justify yourself after what you did. You were wrong! It was not your place, yet you swooped in like a python. You don't ever listen to anything I say because unguzwilakhe wena!" he took the packed bag I didn't even notice when I came in. Me: "Where are you going?" Lakhe: "I can't stand the sight of you right now." Me: "Because of some clients? I didn't sabotage you Lakhe I helped-" he walked out the door without another word. And then? What the hell was that about?

#100

It had been hours after Lakhe left and it was not after dinner. Everyone was oddly quiet. Stella: "He's a child." she finally concluded. We all looked at her. What was she on about? Stella: "Lakhe. I mean really, why over react over profit? You're making him money and he's mad? Childish." Where did she even hear this? Sands: "Well...." I looked at him. Sands: "You're right ma. Super

childish. So I'm going to my side of the house while this tension dies down."
Me: "You're spending a lot more time there lately." Sands: "I'm renovating it."
Me: "Must be nice." I took my plate to the kitchen and washed it. After the dishes I went to my room to call Masilakhe. He kept rejecting my calls. I needed to accept that he has left and I was going to have to do life alone. I took my laptop and started my research for motivating my team. It took hours before I realized it was getting late. I got out of bed, wearing my slippers and trotted to Sandile's side. Maybe he would know where Lakhe was and maybe how I could apologize or bring him back. I walked in the dimly lit passage way and crossed over the hall then knocked a bit on the door. "Come in." a voice coughed. I entered and to my surprise, it wasn't Sandile inside. It was Lunatic Luke. WOW. So this is where they are hiding him and lying to my face? I walked back out without a word to my bedroom, I took a shower and got into bed carrying on with my work. None if it, involving Lakhe's clients since I was a python now. I did my advertising department project. Which made me happier than normal. After a few hours I dosed off waking up in the morning. I went to get ready for work, made my bed and left for the office.

Sibulele walked into his bedroom after taking his shower. Sibulele: "What is your real issue Sandile?" Sands: "With what?" Sibulele: "You're sleeping in my bedroom, I know you were standing at the bathroom door while I was showering, why are you monitoring me?" Sands: "I'm not monitoring you." Sibulele: "even when you try to be subtle, you will never fool me. I'm your best friend. So tell me what's the problem?" Sands: "You're imagining things." Sibulele: "Is it because of the kidnapping? This is when your strange behavior started. Sandile I'm okay, nobody is going to take me again. You don't need to be afraid." Sands: "Afraid? When have I ever been afraid?" Sibulele: "Well you're acting strange. I feel I need to let you know, I'll be fine." Sands: "Sibulele I don't care about that." Sibulele: "I know you do. Anyway, what are you up to today?" Sands: "I have a meeting at the hotel. I need your help with the books as well." Sibulele: "remember to bring them home tonight. Have you seen Spho?" Sands: "She left already." Sibulele: "its not even 7. Did she eat?" Sands: "No she didn't. I think she's mad." Sibulele: "Why?" Sands: "I don't know. She pretended she didn't see me when I was standing by the lounge. And she didn't take the car. She left with Uber." Sibulele exhaled and finished getting dressed. Sibulele: "I have to go." Sands: "Okay. What time will you be back?" Sibulele: "We can't possibly go through this everyday. You know what time I knock off work. I have to go." he took his bag and dashed out. Sandile waited until the car was out of the driveway then started searching the room. Nothing was out of order.

Everything perfectly in its place. Maybe a little too perfect. He walked out and found his father in the lounge. Rob: "Where is your brother?" Sands: "In his hotel room." Rob: "and what the hell is he doing there!" Sands: "His words were 'I need space'. He said he'll be there for a few days." Rob: "You tell that brother of yours to get his behind back in this house before the end of business today!!!!!" Sands: "Why am I being yelled at? What did I do?" Rob: "I am yelling because I am angry!!! He is a married man! All troubles and problems are dealt with inside the premises of his house!! I never raised him like this!!! Tell him to get back here or else!!!" Stella: "ROBERT!!!!!" she screamed. Stella: "U Y A N G X O L A!!!!!" Sands: "You know when mom speaks Xhosa, she's really serious. You are making a noise. You woke Boogie." Rob: "I don't care!!!" he grabbed his keys and walked out. Dumi appeared with his children fully dressed for school. Dumi: "I heard yelling and then felt tension." Sands: "Then you're in the right house. I feel like the only one still sane here. What do you need?" Dumi: "The kids need to get to school, me to work." Sands "aboard the Sandsmobile. Joking, we taking Spho's car because its bigger." they had breakfast and got into the car, leaving for the kids' school. Hlumi and Babalo came to the lounge already dressed. Hlumi: "Did we miss breakfast?" Babalo: "No I don't think so. Here's a note." he read it: 'Early morning. Eat Breakfast.' He showed his wife and sat down helping himself to breakfast. Babalo: "Baby, what are we going to do? We can't live off Lakhe and his family forever. We can't go back to our house either and I can't sell it because of the lunatic orchestrating horrible scenes in there. I don't think I can buy another house at this stage." Hlumi: "I know baby, and nam I don't like living off other people. How about I buy a house for us?" Babalo: "I can't let you do that." Hlumi: "I want to. You've done a lot for me already Babalo. We're married, we're partners. I'm sure I can afford a house." Babalo: "I'm not going to let you do that. I'm your husband, I'm supposed to take care of you and provide for you. Your salary is to buy yourself whatever you want and help out your parents and take yourself out with the girls. I'm not going to let you sacrifice this. I'll handle this. I just need a few days to think. We should book a hotel." Hlumi: "Is that necessary?" Babalo: "I'm not going to take advantage of Lakhe's kindness. He's been the nicest friend I've ever had and I don't want to ruin it." Hlumi: "Okay, but let him know what you've decided before we leave." Babalo: "Okay." Luke: "hello?" they looked at the second passage where Lunatic Luke appeared. Hlumi: "who's this?" she whispered. Babalo: "This is Luke baby. Hey, how are you man?" Luke: "I'm fine." he stood in the same spot. Babalo: "Are you going to join us for breakfast?" Luke: "okay." he came to sit. Luke: "I'm living on the other side now." Babalo: "Oh? That must be exciting." Luke: "No, its kind of lonely." Babalo: "sorry about that." he looked at his wife. Babalo: "How about we rent that side from Lakhe? He

isn't using it anyway." Hlumi: "except that side belongs to Sandile and he'd rather let a homeless man live there before you." Babalo: "You're right." Luke: "What's wrong with your house?" Babalo: "its a murder scene." Luke: "who died there?" Babalo: "I don't know. We just arrived one day to our room in a bloody scene. Then when we came back, a note and box were waiting for us. A threat. If we sold the house, something would happen. I can't risk that." Luke: "So what are you going to do? Let someone dictate your life?" he dug in the breakfast. Babalo: "I don't even know who it is." Luke: "Then go back to your house." Babalo: "Did you not hear about the part of the murder scene?" Luke: "Its still your house. Why let something you don't know, throw you out." Babalo: "I'm not going to put my wife in danger. I am not willing." Luke: "All you have to do is believe in God Babalo. Let Him take control. If you're going to live in fear of evil you may just as well join it." Babalo: "How will God help me with this!! Not even the biggest detectives can understand what happened or why or who for that matter." Luke: "You seem to forget that God is no ordinary man. He is capable of doing things His own way. The supernatural way. If you can so easily believe in evil, why can't you believe in God and what he can do? We're talking about a God that can let a baby in a basket travel safely down the Nile river famous of crocodiles and dangerous reptiles. A God that can part a sea to let all those who believe in Him over to the other side. I could go on but you went to Sunday school, you know this. Its real life. If you want a miracle, first believe it will happen, Pray to God handing your problem over to Him and like a seed planted in soil let it be. God will take control." Babalo: "sounds like a hard gamble Luke." Luke: "you just have to have faith Babalo. You just have to have faith."

During the day I started getting extremely hungry. Sibu had brought me breakfast in the morning and I hadn't eaten since. Now it was 1pm and my appointment with the doctor was at 2. I tried Lakhe again. No response. I took my bag and requested an Uber to Greenacres. I needed a burger from Mugg n Bean then I'd go to the doctor. After that I was supposed to fetch my new Range Rover. After eating, I went to the doctor's office and waited in line for my 2 o'clock appointment. When my name was called I tried Lakhe one more time and this time I just flipped. This wasn't even about me now it was about the baby. Why would he do such a thing? I walked in the office and stared at Siyanda. This is not what I needed. Not today. Me: "Where's Paul? He's supposed to be back from vacation. I booked an appointment to see him, not you." Siya: "Wow. Hello to you to." I folded my arms still standing by the door. Siya: "Paul is only coming back next week. I only leave then." I just wanted to see my baby. I felt tears stinging at the corner of my eyes. Siya:

"What's going on Spho?" Me: "Nothing! Just help me on the bed." he stood still and stared at me. Me: "am I supposed to beg you?" Siya: "You're over reacting. You're pregnant and allowed to feel anything you want. I know its uncomfortable and you're tired and upset. But I need you to let me know what's wrong." I went to the bed attempting to climb on it. He helped me up. Siya: "Spho." he stood in front of me. His left hand touching my face. Siya: "I hate seeing you like this. Please tell me what I can do." Me: "I just want to see my baby." I burst into tears right then. I don't know why but I was so eager to see and hear my child's heartbeat. He wiped my tears. Siya: "That I can do. Lie down for me." I lay on my back and he started. Siya: "So where's Lakhe?" Me: "Not here." Siya: "Oh." I was staring at the screen waiting. Siya: "how are you?" Me: "Please let me be Siyanda. You're nice but I really want to be alone right now. Please." Siya: "Got you." my baby appeared on the screen. Siya: "There's the little butterfly kick." I was gonna cry again. The heartbeat. Oh Lord. Siya: "Want to know the gender yet?" I shook my head. Me: "I just want a video and a picture." he nodded. Siya: "everything is developing perfectly. 26 weeks done, you have 14 more to go. Are you excited?" Me: "Yeah. Can you also give me something for heartburn?" Siya: "Sure." he wiped my tummy. I sat up and got off the bed. Siya: "Spho I'm here for you. At all times. Day or night." Me: "Thank you Siyanda but I have a husband for that." Siya: "Well where is he now?" Me: "My husband's whereabouts are none of your concern. You are either my doctor or my friend. Don't step over the mark." Siya: "I am your friend, and I care!" Me: "I'm going to be late for a meeting." Siya: "Spho, I know its the hormones and I don't blame you but I can see its more than that. I've backed off but I do care." he wrote down in my file then handed it to me. Me: "Thank you. And I'm sorry for acting like a crazy lady." Siya: "You're not crazy. Stop saying that. Hell, I'd be pulling my hair out if I had to carry a human being in my belly for months. Someone who kicks me and fights me for water and food supply? You have two brains inside you and sometimes they won't be in sync. That does not mean you're crazy." then why did Lakhe leave me? Me: "Thanks Siya." I walked to fetch my meds and requested Uber for the car dealership. I arrived in 30 minutes. They were waiting for me. My blue baby was waiting for me. After signing and handing over I just stared at my beaut lovingly. Range Rover Sport. I was given my keys and I got inside it. The salesman walked me through the functions when we got done, I was dying to get home and into bed with ice cream. I drove out the dealership and straight home. I would have loved to go see my friends but I was legit too tired. This reserved energy was enough to get me home only. When I parked in the driveway, Sandile came out the front door. He tilted his head to the side. I got out the car with my bag. Sands: "Oh my God, its you!!!" Me: "Surprise, surprise." Sands: "Its beautiful!!! I love it. I mean the color is too much,

but its beautiful." its too much because its not black? Me: "Thank you Sandile." I went inside and straight to the fridge for my ice cream. When I passed the lounge I greeted the family. Lakhe was also seemingly back. I got to my room, took my shower and got into bed with ice cream and work. Back in the lounge, Robert stared at Lakhe icily. Lakhe: "What?" Rob: "I ought to slap your head, boy. Yintoni ngxaki yakho!!!" Lakhe: "Tata, just because you're living in my house doesn't mean you can meddle in my marriage. You never see the wrong Spho does. Its always my fault." Rob: "I'm not taking anyone's side now!! Why would you leave the house and sleep outside in a hotel?" Lakhe: "I needed space." Rob: "In a house with over 15 bedrooms Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "Tata, let me be please." Rob: "let you be? Let you destroy your marriage? This tough guy act will not solve anything, in fact it will ruin you. You'll be left with nothing kuba kaloku wena you're Mr Man that can do everything himself." Lakhe: "Of course. By all means insult me." Rob: "I'm done talking to you Masilakhe. One of these days you will wake up without Spho or your child and you will be left with that stupid attitude. Go ahead and play with it." he got up and left the house...

#101

Lakhe watched the TV quietly without so much as a twitch. Sands: "So what's for dinner?" Lakhe: "Why don't you ask your beloved best friend." he said flatly. Sands: "heee." he got up. Sands: "I'm going to fetch Dumi and the kids." Lakhe: "with what? A two seater?" Sands: "No I'm using the ML since it has no owner now. Spho bought a Range Rover-" Lakhe: "What!!!" Sands: "I feel like you're mad but I'm not sure why so I'm going to walk out now." he went out the house. Stella: "Why are you so mad Lakhe? Is it because Spho took your clients? So what? She's making you money." Lakhe: "Who told you that?" Stella: "Your father of course. Who else?" Lakhe: "Mama, my marriage is not going to be discussed." Stella: "but sweetie, when you're not around Spho is the-" Lakhe: "I said, this is not up for discussion!!!" he got up and went to the kitchen. Stella: "Fine. But your dad is right. Attitude will only make it worse." she yelled after him. Sibü arrived home from work. He stared darkly at Lakhe in the kitchen, taking a bottle of water and walking back out to his sister's room. Sibü: "Spho?" he knocked. Me: "Come in." Sibü stepped in and walked over to the bed. Sibü: "hey." he threw himself on the bed. Me: "hi. Rough day?" Sibü: "it keeps getting worse." Me: "Life." I put aside my laptop. I needed to nap. Sibü: "I found a PI this morning and I told him about our story. He's willing to help." Me: "okay, when does he start?" Sibü: "I was waiting for your go ahead." I nodded. Me: "well go ahead." he sent a text on his phone. Sibü: "Who's

Range is that outside?" Me: "Mine." Sibü: "its gorgeous." Me: "Thank you." Sibü: "You don't seem happy." the door opened and in walked in Lakhe, he went straight to his closet. Me: "I'm okay. Just went to the doctor for a check up." Sibü: "Everything going well I hope." Me: "Yes. Siya calls it a perfect development. Butterfly kicks is the baby's new name." Sibü: "That's cute. I like it. Have you thought of a name?" Me: "Well, thought, yes. Decided, not really. I'm thinking of just a normal name without any strings to us. I don't want my baby to feel the need to live up to a difficult name." Sibü: "hmm....that's nice. I can get a baby naming book for you to go through." Me: "I'd love that." I put down the ice cream container. Sibü: "how was work today." Me: "Amazing. Yesterday I felt my team wasn't really motivated and I needed to refresh them so I stayed up half the night researching a strategy to get them to perform better. Plus, I have a new project swimming around my mind and it excites me so much." Sibü: "tell me." Me: "I can't, its top secret. Although, I'll have to sell it because I don't have a company in my name." Sibü: "Isn't GoldenCell half your company?" Me: "No. That isn't mine unfortunately." Sibü: "You can sell me your idea then. I'm sure my boss will love it." Me: "Do you have 2 million?" Sibü: "2 million blood cells, yes." I laughed out loud. Me: "you're crazy. I don't need your blood cells." I put my head on my pillow. Me: "I'm going to take a nap." Sibü: "okay. I'll make dinner so long. How does Spaghetti and mince sound?" Me: "I'm already hungry. It sounds good." Sibü: "Done." he kissed my cheek and left the room. My phone rang, disturbing me. I had half a mind of not picking up at all but I did. Me: "Yeah." Khaya: "Hi honey." Me: "hello tata Unjani?" suddenly Lakhe appeared again, opening a drawer. Khaya: "I'm fine my child. How are you?" Me: "I'm fine tata. Uphi umama?" Khaya: "uhh...she went to a church meeting." Me: "Oh." Khaya: "I just missed you, I thought I'd call and see how you're doing. Its lovely hearing your voice." Me: "Thank you tata, I miss you too. I'm back at work full time too." Khaya: "Why?" Me: "I can't sit and do nothing. I have a job tata." Khaya: "I know my angel but you're pregnant." I exhaled out the energy I was going to use to respond. Me: "I can handle it tata. Its not really that much work." Khaya: "hmmm.... How is Lakhe?" Me: "Fine." Khaya: "Is he around? Can I talk to him?" Me: "I don't know where he is actually." Khaya: "okay. Tell him I called." Me: "I will. Kiss mom for me. I love you guys." Khaya: "We love you too." I hung up. Lakhe was standing around the room. Maybe he wanted to say something. So I waited, instead he just walked out. I went back to my nap.

Sibü came to wake me up for dinner about an hour later. Sibü: "Its time to eat." I sat up. Me: "I don't really feel like eating." he sat next to me. Sibü: "Why

not?" Me: "Well, I want to eat just not with the family. I feel like everyone is judging me for what I did to Lakhe and I can't take it. I mean I made a mistake. I wasn't aware that it would hurt him, if anything I thought he would be proud of me. I was going to tell him about how I handled everything and which direction to take Gerard's company. Instead I ruined it. Now he's not talking to me and the house is tense. Its just best I stay here." Sibü: "What exactly did you do?" Me: "Lakhe had said I must reschedule his meetings, I decided since I'm already in the office why don't I stand in for him. This wasn't a sabotage at all. I don't want his clients. I also didn't want them to be mad at him if he just rescheduled meetings on the last minute, to them it will feel like he has no respect for them and their time. I was just trying to avoid that. He was the one that introduced me to his associates saying when he wasn't around I was in charge. I don't know anymore." Sibü: "I hear you. I'll bring your dinner here then so we can eat together." Me: "No Sibü, you can go eat with the family. I'll be in the movie theater. I need to get my mind off this." Sibü: "Did you try talking to him?" Me: "I tried to explain and he just left. I tried calling, he rejected my calls. I don't know Sibü. I'm just really tired now. I'll leave him to his company. I'll just do my work and let everything else be because even the projects that I had in mind to grow this company will irritate him clearly. I'll just scrap them and carry on like an employee as per my contract. I thought I was trying to help." Sibü: "One thing you must understand about Lakhe, and I love him don't get me wrong, but he can't stand to see someone doing something better than him. I'll get the food." Is that what this is about? His ego? If I wasn't disappointed before I surely was now. I must step around on egg shells to make sure he is happy at work? This is upsetting. Who knew that working for your husband would be this difficult? I sat up and just as I was going to the toilet I got a phone call. Gerard Ku'che the Truecaller app stated. Where did he get my number? Me: "Hello?" Gerard: "Hi Spho, how are you?" Married, why are you calling me after office hours? I wanted to say but Me: "I'm fine thank you and yourself Mr Ku'che?" Gerard: "Dr Ku'che. I'm a PhD." OH? Lmao. Me: "I apologize. What can I do for you Dr Ku'che." Gerard: "Now I sound like braggy pants. Just call me Gerard." I was getting more and more uncomfortable with this call. Me: "Alright then, Gerard." Gerard: "Spho, I'm really impressed with your work. I spent the entire day going through projects you've directed in the past and I am impressed. I was telling my brother just now, he wants to meet with you of course. Is there by any chance you can squeeze us in tomorrow morning?" Oh crap. Me: "I'm sure Mr Lakhe Sobukwe would be available for you sir." Gerard: "I'm not asking for Lakhe, I'm asking you. Will you be able to see us?" Me: "I'll check my diary, and get back to you in two minutes Gerard. Is that okay?" Gerard: "I'll be waiting." I hung up. Me: "ahhh crap..." Sibü came in

carrying a tray. Sibulele: "what now?" Me: "One of Lakhe's clients wants to meet me, bringing his brother. Do you know that family is holding a multi-million Rand empire in their name? The father is a billionaire in Saudi Arabia. I'm getting shook Sibulele." Sibulele: "Relax. This could only mean you're going to be making more money and your husband is going to hate you forever." he laughed. Sibulele: "I'm joking. Talk to him Spho. I'm sure he'd love this. It means more money for the company, more exposure." Me: "Okay. Where is he?" Sibulele: "he went for a drive." Me: "I have to call Gerard in a minute." Sibulele: "Call Gerard, let Lakhe know when he's here. Also let him know you're not challenging him, but you're supporting him. Its important." I nodded and called Gerard back. After my conversation with him I ate my food. Sibulele: "So I found a lawyer to help me with mom's house. Should we really sell it?" Me: "Yeah. If we don't, people will know nobody lives there and start doing things inside it and let's be honest, we don't even know anyone there. I don't want it to be turned into one of this drug-smoking houses." Sibulele: "you're right. But how about we rent it?" Me: "for who? Its not like we need the money." Sibulele: "its where our mom lived. Our home. I don't want us to just throw it away." Me: "we're not throwing it away if we're holding onto non-existent memories. We never lived there. We know nothing about the house. Miriam lived here, and we'll always remember her." Sibulele: "you know what? You're right. I hope we can at least find our father." Me: "me too." after our little dinner, he took the plates when Lakhe walked in. Me: "baby-" Lakhe: "I just came to fetch my laptop." Me: "Aren't you coming back to your room? Your wife? I'm sorry about Monday, I wasn't sabotaging you." he kept quiet and took his gadgets. Me: "You didn't even come to our baby appointment." Lakhe: "Did you tell me about a baby appointment or did you go see your friend." Me: "I called you Lakhe. Monday night and Tuesday morning right until I went into the doctor's room." he walked out the room. I was going to lose my mind if I dwelled on this much longer. Easier to just let him be. I opened my laptop and looked at a picture of me. This wasn't my laptop. I have a wallpaper of flowers. So Lakhe took my laptop?" I got out of bed and went after him. The car pulled out the driveway and sped off. Why the hell would he do this!!! I could feel my anger brewing from my very core being. It worked its way up like bile. I didn't even realize I had tears in my eyes. All of a sudden I just wanted to fold myself in my father's arms and cry. I had a lump in my throat no hot chocolate 'I'm sorry' could fix. I missed my father but I was a married woman and had to stick it up. I turned around sadly and walked to my bedroom. Sands: "I'm going to fucking kill him!!!" Rob: "Myeke Sandile, just check on Spho. Where is her brother?" Sands: "he's taking his evening shower. Tata uLakhe umlilisa njani uSpho emithi? Why the hell would he do that!" Rob: "Make sure Spho stops crying before he is done. I don't think any of us need

to see Sibulele angry yet." Sands: "What's the point? They see each other before they sleep every night." Rob: "Then make sure she's asleep Sandile. I'll sort out Lakhe." Sandile went to the master bedroom. Sands: "Spho?" he knocked and pushed the door open. Sands: "hey you." Me: "Hi. I need to sleep, I have a long day tomorrow." Sands: "okay, do you need anything?" Me: "No." Sands: "Is the baby doing fine?" Me: "the baby is fine. Can I sleep Sandile? I know you mean well but I just want to be alone." Sandile clenched his teeth suppressing his anger toward his brother. Sands: "just shout if you need anything. Goodnight." Me: "Night." he walked out and closed the door behind him.

Wednesday morning I woke up with pain in my lower back body. I got out of bed and tried some prenatal yoga on the floor, made the bed and went to shower. When I was done, I stood in the closet looking at the pure white bodycon dress with a turtle neck and long sleeves. It would do. I got dressed and wore my maroon red block heels. Took my maroon clutch bag and loaded my necessities into it. After fixing my hair and make up, I left for the office. Stella: "I have to say I like that girl now that I know her." Nosi who had been woken up by her dad to go to college was sitting in a chair miserably. Nosi: "and why is that mom?" Stella: "I mean being married to my son isn't a joke. Lakhe is as crazy as his dad if not worse. Yet, she can still wake up and walk out looking like that. Amazing." Nosi: "Where is bhuti anyway?" Stella: "I don't know. Eat up, you're going to be late." Nosi: "aren't you driving me?" Stella: "No, your dad is. I have a hair appointment at 10." Nosi: "its not even 9." Stella: "my point exactly, I need another nap. Good luck my angel. I love you." Nosi: "Why do I have to go to school? I can be like you and marry a rich guy." her mother smiled. Stella: "I already had a degree when I married your father. And I will be damned if I let you follow a trophy wife path without having an education to fall back on. Buck up miss, and get to school. We'll have this conversation again when you've graduated." Nosi: "Fine." Stella took her tea to the bedroom. Rob appeared. Rob: "Ready?" Nosi: "yeah. Dad, does mom have a degree?" Rob: "What degree now?" Nosi: "an academic degree. What other degree would there be?" Rob: "I've never seen or heard your mother talking about any degree. She doesn't have one." Stella came out the passage holding a piece of laminated paper. Bachelor of Science. Robert was taken aback. Rob: "Where has that been all these years?" Stella: "I take pride in supporting your ego Robert, but get one thing straight, I'm not stupid." Robert swallowed and walked out. Nosi followed him to the car. Nosi: "You got served." she teased. Rob: "Just get in the car, child."

When I got to the office building, I went straight to the bathroom. I was feeling a little queasy. After getting my head back in place I went to my own office. Sibü arrived soon after, holding my breakfast. Sibü: "I hate it when you don't eat breakfast." he gave me the plastic. Me: "Thank you Sibü but I can't get out of that house fast enough." I took out the Mugg n Bean take away and I ate. Sibü: "everything okay? You were already asleep last night when I was done." Me: "Yeah, I was tired still." Sibü: "Okay, I have to get to work. Enjoy your day." Me: "you too bhuti." he walked out. After I finished my food, I looked in the mirror and made sure I looked fine. Gerard Ku'che would be arriving any minute now. I tidied my desk and soon Sive came to call me for the meeting. I went to the boardroom bumping into Lakhe at its door. He walked in, I followed after him. Me: "Good morning Dr Ku'che. This must be your brother." they looked so alike, it was scary. Gerard: "Yes. This is my brother Gerald." Me: "So Gerard and Gerald?" This was going to be more confusing than a policewoman prostitute. Gerard: "Yes, but no PhD for him." he mocked his brother. Gerald stared at him. Gerard: "Nice to see you Lakhe. All is well I hope." Lakhe: "Oh yes. Great to see you too Gerard. What can we help you with today?" WE? Gerard: "Oh, I just came to introduce my brother to Spho. CEO of Ku'che Designs. He is in love with her work." Lakhe: "Careful there buddy, that's my wife." he chuckled. Gerald: "Amazing stuff. And my wife is at her tea appointment." Gerard: "rather a tea appointment, mine is getting her intravenous injections of Glutathione. Why? I don't know. What that is? I don't know. All I know is, its juicing my money." they laughed. Wow, so this is fun. Mocking women, with a woman present. Me: "I'll leave you guys to it then." Gerard: "no, no. We came to speak to you about something. Gerald wants to make a proposal." Me: "About?" Gerald: "Well, I own a design company. I was thinking about how it would be if some of my employees teamed up with you for various projects?" Me: "You want some of your employees, to be working with me?" Gerald: "I want you to mentor them. You have great experience and a great portfolio. When I saw your work, I almost blew my brains off. What do I do to get someone like you in my company?" Lakhe: "Are you trying to steal my most valuable asset Gerald? In front of me? You're more unstable than I thought. Spho has her hands full with our company, and well, she's pregnant. As the father of this baby, her husband and her boss, I kindly decline the offer. We enjoy doing business with you both, but we know our limits." Bile brewing again. Gerald: "Spho?" Me: "I think its a wonderful idea Gerald, but my husband is right, for now its not much of a good idea." Gerald: "Alright then. I hear you. Just know, whenever you change your mind, the offer stands." Me: "Thank you. It is a pleasure

meeting you sir. If you'll excuse me, I have an urgent meeting." Gerald: "Very well Mrs Sobz." we shook hands and I walked out. I took my car keys and bag, going straight to my car. I needed to breath away from him because I was too angry. So much advice on how a wife should respect her husband and always keep him happy. Keep him safe and always be obedient. No advice to men on how they should treat their wives. We aren't allowed to cry about our situations or tell friends let alone your parents. You must just be quiet and eat a sour grape alone. Sleep alone while he gallivants to God knows where two nights in a row. If I had done that, the world would stop and every single thing pointing a fire arrow at me. I drove out the parking lot into the freeway and joined the N2.

#102

I drove as carefully as possible until I reached East London. I didn't even realize where I was going until I saw the board. I stopped at Engen garage to fill up my tank. I didn't want to think. I don't know what I was doing here, but I didn't want to think about anything. I needed peace and quiet. Some alone time with my baby. I went to Hemmingways to buy changing clothes and comfortable shoes plus toiletries and other essentials. Then I bought food. I was stuck between going to a hotel or to Dubs Nomfundo's house. She would be delighted to have me and I would be happy, laughing and probably at peace. Rather than stuck in a hotel room using a bath millions of others have used, probably had sex in it too and I was already turned off by the hotel. It would be filthy. I called Dubs and asked for directions and I drove to Mdantsane. When I arrived, she was standing at her gate with her hands on her hips holding a dish cloth in one, her eyes squinting and mouth pouting. Typical black mother stance, waiting on her child. I parked in front of the gate and got out the car. Dubs: "Tshini Spho!! Nguwe kanti lo !! Hayi mfazi." she smiled. I went to hug her. Me: "hello dubs Unjani?" Dubs: "ndiphilile mntanam. Nankuya Vuyi esiza. Kukho lamakhwenkwana kaloku, its a trouble." I chuckled waiting with her. A few women came out next door. "Molweni Nomfundo." they waved. Dubs: "hehake." she whispered and looked at me. Dubs: "Hello." she said weakly. They trotted toward us. Dubs: "Kubonwa lemoto ke nawe ume apha, Spho. Abayiqhelanga eyobulisa. Uthethe la English yakho yase America mntanam." I almost laughed. They reached us and started chatting. "Akasemhle bethuna, ngubani lo Nomfundo." Dubs: "yi-first born yam." Me: "I'm taking my bags inside ma, can I get the key for the car gate?" Dubs: "in the kitchen." she smiled. I went to fetch the key same time as Vuyi came in. After I'd parked my car inside and

brought my bags and the food I bought in. We sat together in the lounge. Dubs joined us. Dubs: "Ninjani Spho?" Me: "Ndiphilile Dubs Unjani Wena?" Dubs: "Siphilile mntanam. Sinqabelene qha. Niyitye njani Christmas ne New year?" Me: "bendisekhaya mna, uLakhe ebese Japan yena esebenza, wabuya ke kodwa sahlala kunye nge New Year. Bekumandi. Kuni?" Dubs: "Oh hayi wethu, beku right. Usiswakho ebeye kwi party." I laughed. Vuyi: "hehake mama. Usekulonto?" Dubs: "Ndibalisela uSpho nje." Me: "uqala nini internship yakho?" Vuyi: "ngo February sisi." Me: "and u-excited kengoku?" Vuyi: "ewe wethu sisi. At least ndizoba busy." Me: "and uzobane experience. Uthi make sure ke usebenza kakuhle and be efficient umamele boss zakho, bazokuthanda babenokuqesha." Vuyi: "Nyani sisi?" Me: "Ewe, even if ubayi junior staff xa uqeshiwe wena uzo-register eUNISA ufunde ecaleni, uziphangelele. Gqiba kwakho ufunda ufumane diploma or degree, you'll have lots of experience and a qualification, even if abafuni ukunyunyusela any other company would find you very employable." Dubs: "And uyayazi ke uSpho Lento kuba uyi boss kweyakhe business." my heart sank. I wasn't the boss actually, just another employee who was too ambitious and needed to know her place. Me: "awubaweli ndinikhuphe dabawo. Noba siye mall, sibukeleni movies, siyotya kwi restaurant for dinner. Go shopping." Dubs: "Masiye ngomso mntanam. Okwangoku khahambe no-Dade lo. Mna ndizopheka umngqusho." she dug in her bra and gave Vuyi R100. Dubs: "nibhatale DSTV singahlali kwisthukthezi." Me: "hayi Dubs, ndizoybhatala DS its fine. Sukuzihlupha kakhulu." we gave her back her cash. I went to change into a pink loose maternity dress and white sneakers. Vuyi and I left for the mall.

Lakhe walked in his house from work. Everyone sat in the lounge staring at him. Lakhe: "No dinner tonight?" nobody responded. Lakhe: "What's going on?" Rob: "Where is Spho?" Lakhe: "How would I know? She left the office in the morning saying she had an urgent meeting." Rob: "and its almost 6, she isn't back." Lakhe: "Maybe she went to visit her parents?" Rob: "Did you call her parents and ask?" Lakhe: "Why don't you just get to the point tata?" Stella: "The point is Spho comes into this house at 15:30. She didn't today, so obviously something is wrong." Lakhe: "where is she?" Rob: "You mean you don't know where your wife is Masilakhe?" Sands: "I'm having dinner at Fez's place." he got up. Sibuyi: "I'll join you." they walked out together. Vicky: "ndisayolanda ukutya kwabantwana." Dumi: "sokulinda in the small room." they left the lounge. Rob: "I've got a dinner meeting." Stella: "Do you need company?" Rob: "you mean with your science degree that you never told me about?" Stella: "Why would I tell you about that?" Rob: "I don't know.

Maybe because we were married for over 30 years and we have a family." Stella: "What does my education have to do with raising my family?" Rob: "you had a dormant qualification all these years where you could have been working." Stella: "So this is about spending your money Robert? You're mad because I stayed at home to raise our kids?" Rob: "Its not about money!" Stella: "Then why does it bother you that I have a degree I don't use?" Nosi: "and studying for your Masters." Rob: "What?" Stella: "Nosiphiwo nobody was talking to you." Rob: "So you stayed in our marriage without contributing a thing now you're studying for a Master's degree on top of the one you've been sitting on top of? What are you planning to do with all these papers?" Stella: "Fine Robert. I see that I've inconvenienced you. I'll pay you back each and every cent I got from the divorce settlement. I'll give you back your house and cars. Since they mean more to you anyway." Rob: "I didn't say that-" Stella: "Its what you meant. You might not say it with your words, but you said it with your heart." she pressed her phone. Rob: "You can't start texting while we're talking." she put the phone to her ear. Stella: "Hi Corey. I need you to transfer the money into Robert's account. All of it.....yes my ex husband.....I know.....Just do it please.....thank you." she hung up. Rob: "You're being dramatic. You know that?" Stella: "Am I?" she put the phone back to her ear. Stella: "Benny can you change the name of the estate to Robert's? Yes I am aware he is my ex, I was the one who got divorced.....Yes.." Nosi: "Wow. Dad are you not going to do anything?" Rob: "Your mother is over reacting. There is no reason for all this admin work." Stella: "Thank you Benjamin." she hung up. Stella: "Now if you'll excuse me I'm going to change the names of your cars back to you." Rob: "I'm not taking anything back-" his phone vibrated. He checked the screen and looked back at Stella. Rob: "You're insane. This is your entire settlement!!" Stella: "since I eat your money Robert, you can have it back. All of it." Rob: "I don't want it!" Stella: "Then uzobona ba mawuyithini Robert." Rob: "Can you listen to me please?" Stella: "So you can mock me?" she got up. Rob: "I've never mocked you. I was shocked. I don't mind that you have my money, I never have. You never forced me to marry you or spend a cent on you....now that I think about it. I was the one forcing things. I'm sorry. I mispoke." Stella: "Its fine-" Rob: "What upsets me is that all this time I thought I had a wife who just wanted pampering but you're smart. You're a scientist. I could have bragged about this in my dinners." Stella: "Mxim." she went to her bedroom. Rob followed her. Rob: "Stella...." Stella: "Undiyeke!!" he closed the door behind him. Rob: "I can't accept this money because it belongs to you." Stella: "I don't want your money Robert. I gave up my life, to take care of you and your family. I have never once been unfaithful to you but you managed to fall in love with someone else and impregnate her. I stayed with you. I built with you. I left my

family for you. My father never approved of you, he disowned me because of you. I had a good life before you and I left it. Today, I was after your money? I mean I can take your insults, I've lived through 3 decades with you but this specific one. I'm sorry but I can't." she took out her suitcase and started packing. Rob: "Where are you going without anything to your name?" Stella: "Right where I started. Without you." Rob: "Hayi Nokwakha, ndicela uxolo. Yhini." she continued packing. Rob: "I can't let you leave. Not like this. I made a mistake. Ufuna ndithini?" Stella: "Nothing. I want nothing to do with you." Rob: "Then let's go to the dinner together." Stella: "Is there a theme?" Rob: "its just dinner. There's no theme." Stella: "Fine then." she unpacked her suitcase again. Rob: "So you want something to do with me now?" he hid a smile. Stella: "It would be rude to turn down dinner Robert. You know that. I need to get dressed so you need to leave." Rob: "Do I have to?" Stella: "Just go Robert." Rob: "I'll help you pick a dress." Stella: "You have an ulterior motive and I don't have time for it." she looked through her clothes while he sat down on the chair smiling.

Luke sat on the couch in the lounge and stared at Lakhe. Lakhe: "Have you eaten?" Luke: "Not yet, no." Lakhe: "I'm not in the mood to cook so I'll order you a pizza." Luke: "No its okay. I just want a sandwich." Lakhe: "Well you know where the kitchen is." Luke: "Your whole family left you." Lakhe: "If you're going to tell me that I messed up, please just spare me." Luke: "I would however they've all already condemned you so its pointless. You want to talk about it?" Lakhe: "What's there to talk about?" Luke: "Just tell me your side." Lakhe: "There's nothing to tell Luke. I don't need to talk." Luke: "You may not want to but you have to. Why are you pushing people away Lakhe?" Lakhe: "I'm not talking to you." Luke: "Is it possible that you had a tough upbringing and you're feeling insecure?" Lakhe kept quiet. Luke: "Your family loves you. They would never do anything to hurt you. Your wife wants to support you, at work and at home. She had the option of throwing me out yet she didn't." Lakhe: "She had no right to take my meetings." Luke: "So you have never taken any meetings from her in the past?" Lakhe: "its different. I'm CEO." Luke: "That's the problem right there, you're not just CEO. You're husband. Your wife follows your lead. She thought it was okay because you did this before. Now she got upset and left you like you left her a few days ago. You are her reflection, so before you throw stones, make sure your house isn't made of glass." Lakhe: "I've already ruined it. My problem is that everyone takes her side no matter what." Luke: "She's pregnant and very emotional. She needs to be kept happy. I mean its not fair but its the least we as men can do to support that uncomfortable phase." Lakhe: "I do support her, but how about she supports

me for a change?" Luke: "How? When you can storm out whenever you like. Lakhe, I understand it is frustrating. For the longest time, You've been in control of your own life. You never asked for permission for anything, you did as you pleased. When you got married, you had to leave that life behind. You have a family now, your wife is your equal. What you don't like, you talk to her about. Its hard I know but that's why you're the head of the house." Lakhe: "I don't even know why I'm mad. I looked at her work. Its incredible. It took me so long to be able to get used to the clients and even longer to convince them of anything. I'm not really a social person. She just swoops in and makes them bow down to her. Her ideas are original and amazing. She just" he sighed. Lakhe: "Much better at this CEO thing than me. I've been thinking maybe I should step down and let her take the reigns." Luke: "Absolutely not. That's the last thing you're going to do. That's the last thing she wants. She's not going to take your job from you. Your problem is trust issues. You have this idea that everyone you love is out to get you. That's not the case with your wife. You need to learn how to put aside your anger and talk to her. Tell her how you feel." Lakhe: "I don't go around sharing feelings Luke. I'm a man." Luke: "a lonely man I see. Look around you. This may be temporary but the more you push, you'll be left like this permanently. Why did you marry Spho? What attracted you to her?" Lakhe: "Obviously she is beautiful. She is driven. She has a wonderful heart. I wanted her to be with me so I can have a normal shot of a happy family. The way I grew up. A little more involvement though. I fell in love with her heart. I was inspired by her strength. I can look at her and just crumble. I've never felt like that in my life. The craziest thing that keeps knocking me out is that she's carrying my child. Me. Inside her womb. That's me. Something I helped create. I have to raise this child to be a better human than me and I don't know if I can. I can't be better, how can I make someone else be?" Luke: "you can't be better. You won't be. What you lack, your partner makes up for. That's why you chose her. You need to believe in that decision. She isn't trying to outdo you. Each of you have special roles to play. You need to let loose, stop panicking and let life be. You cannot possibly be a bad parent for trying your best. You're going to be fine. Find your wife, sit her down, let her know your feelings and concerns. I certainly miss doing that with mine. Don't gamble with it." Lakhe: "Thank you Luke for listening and not being judgmental." Luke: "its not my place to judge anyone for anything after what I did." Lakhe: "What did you do?" Luke: "What they accused me of." Lakhe stared at him. Lakhe: "Oh. Uhm. I don't know what to say." Luke: "I'm a murderer, I deserve to die and rot in hell, I'm sick. There's a lot you could say." Lakhe: "Why did you do it?" Luke: "Maybe right now wouldn't be the right time to talk about it. I'm going to bed."

#103 : Part 1

Lakhe and Nosi were watching TV in the lounge. Lakhe: "and who's this?" Nosi: "That's Kylie Jenner." Lakhe: "what's she famous for?" Nosi: "She has a make up empire and clothing line. Plus she's the youngest in the Kardashian/Jenner family." Lakhe: "what is a make up empire." Nosi: "Ha.a bhuti, if you're not going to watch and be quiet please go." Lakhe: "but who's that." Nosi sighed. Nosi: "Kim Kardashian West." Lakhe: "She looks like Kylie." Nosi: "That's because she's her sister." Lakhe: "she's pretty." Nosi: "Who?" Lakhe: "Kim Kardashian West." Nosi: "She is Kanye West's wife." Lakhe: "Cool. And who's that?" Nosi: "I'm done watching with you. I hate to shame you but Sandile is much better at this than you." Lakhe: "That's because Sandile is always watching television, I'm always at work. How am I supposed to know?" Stella and Rob walked in. Stella: "evening kids." Lakhe: "Now that you're coming in and I finally know this show, you look like Kris Jenner." he looked at his sister. Lakhe: "Kris is the mother right?" Nosi: "Nailed it." she high fived him. Rob: "What are you watching?" Nosi: "Keeping up with the Kardashians. How was dinner?" Rob: "It was great. We bumped into Spho's parents at the restaurant." Stella: "Her mother seemed very withdrawn. Did you talk to Spho? She must have told her mom." Lakhe: "she isn't taking my calls." Nosi: "Send a message." Lakhe took out his phone and sent a message. Rob: "Sandile is still not back?" Lakhe: "No." he looked at his phone. Rob: "At this time?" he dialed for his son. Sands: "hm?" he answered. Rob: "Uphi Sandile?" Sands: "I said I was going to Fez's place for dinner. And I'm still here." Rob: "and when are you coming back? Its late." Sands: "I'm not a teenager tata. What do you want?" Rob: "I want you both back in this house Sandile. We're not taking any risks! I'm not going to have to deal with another kidnapping. Get here!!!!" he hung up. Rob: "this child wants to give me grey hair." Stella: "Lakhe? Why are you staring at your phone like that?" Lakhe: "She isn't responding to my messages." Stella: "Give her some time. She will." Lakhe: "What time mama? Where could she be!" Stella: "you're one to talk, didn't you ignore her and miss the baby appointment?" Lakhe: "How the hell does everyone in this house know everything about my life?" Stella: "I'm going to wash my face. Goodnight everyone." she went to her bathroom, looking through the cupboard's. Rob: "What are you looking for?" Stella: "My vanishing cream." Rob: "It probably vanished." Stella: "Why are you in my bathroom Robert?" Rob: "this isn't your bathroom. Three rooms in this house use this bathroom. Two of those rooms are yours and mine, the other one is free. We have to share the bathroom." Stella: "I'm not sharing anything with you." Rob: "I just took you to an expensive restaurant for dinner." Stella: "And?" Rob: "Stella, I need to use the toilet."

Stella: "And I need to wash my face." Robert unbuckled his belt. Stella: "Robert what are you doing!" Rob: "I need the toilet." he unbuttoned his pants, zipping them down. Stella: "Stop it!!! Robert!!!!" Rob: "then get out." Stella: "I have the right to be here!" Rob: "but so do I!" Stella: "Robert you are disgusting!!! Put your pants back on." Rob: "Go." Stella: "No!" Rob: "then you leave me no choice." he pulled down his pants. She screamed. Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "what the hell is going on? Dad!!!" he looked away. Rob: "I need the toilet. I told her to get out." Stella: "I was in here first!" Lakhe: "Good grief, mama you lived with dad for over 30 years. You've seen him naked!" Stella: "he doesn't belong to me anymore." Lakhe: "Fine, you can use my bathroom just for tonight." Stella: "I don't want to use your bathroom. Rob should use it." Rob: "I'm not going anywhere." he sat down on the toilet. Lakhe: "Oh Dad." Rob: "Was I supposed to hold it in?" Stella: "You're a ghoul!!!" she spat walking out. Lakhe followed her out. Lakhe: "Ma, just go to my bathroom." Stella: "I can't use Spho's bathroom without her here. Besides, I can't find my vanishing cream and don't you dare say it." Lakhe giggled. Lakhe: "but mama, why do you always freak out on dad?" Stella: "He's always trying to annoy me. Its in his system to make my life uncomfortable. I wouldn't be surprised if he was the one who stole my vanishing cream." Nosi: "Why do you use a vanishing cream?" she walked into the bedroom they were in. Stella: "my skin deserves to feel healthy just like I am. How was college?" Nosi: "Boring. The girls there are so superficial, I felt like killing myself." Lakhe: "you're not there for the girls, you're there to study." Stella: "What are you studying anyway? Did you decide?" Nosi: "Yes, Marketing." Lakhe: "Are you sure?" Nosi: "Its the only thing remotely interesting to me. Its fine." Stella: "What about your art people?" Nosi: "They're doing well. They have their supplies and food." Lakhe: "Do you check on them? Because they're known to use drugs and I don't want you caught up in that scandal." Nosi: "I do check up on them bhuti and I've hired a house manager to look after them." Lakhe and Stella looked at each other. Stella: "I have to say mntanam, I'm quite impressed with what you're doing for other people. Lakhe what charities do you have?" Lakhe: "I don't keep track of that, the company sorts it out." Stella: "I'm talking about personal charities. You need to give your time to others-" Lakhe: "I give all my time to this family. Now I have to give it to another family?" Stella: "its called giving back to the community." Lakhe: "if Sandile gives back, I will." Stella: "You're my baby boy and I know you'll do the right thing." Lakhe: "If that's your emotional blackmail, its really bad. You use that line on Sandile too often and he caves. I don't know what's so special being called baby boy but it doesn't affect me in the slightest." Nosi: "I'll call you with your child's name." Lakhe: "You don't even know my child's name." Nosi: "Yet." Sandile walked in. Sands: "Been looking all over for you guys. Hi ma." he sat on the bed. Lakhe: "ask him about his

charities." Sands: "what's that?" Lakhe: "I rest my case." Stella: "Uphi uSibulele?" Sands: "taking his evening shower." Lakhe: "What is an evening shower, why does Sibulele do this? Since when?" Sands: "I don't know. He says it helps him sleep better." Lakhe: "You need to get him a girlfriend." Sands: "I tried. He doesn't want one. Zintle was practically offering herself and he all but laughed in her face. It was sad." Lakhe: "you sure he's not gay?" Sands: "Don't say that, I've slept next to him. I don't need that picture in my head. Where's my dad?" Lakhe: "I'm glad you say he's Your dad because after the sight I saw I'm not sure what he is anymore." Sands: "He's the one who summoned me home. What did he do?" Lakhe: "he took off his pants in front of ma and me." Sandile laughed out loud. Sands: "How did I miss this." Lakhe: "it was terrifying." Stella: "How would it be terrifying for You!" Lakhe: "I'm an old man ma, I don't need to see another man's dingaling." Sands: "You see my dingaling all the time." Nosi: "uhm, can we not have this conversation while I'm here. Thanks." Sands: "So you saw dad's dingaling too?" he laughed. Nosi: "God forbid, No." Sands: "is he high? Where is he?" he got up looking for his father. Lakhe: "so are you thinking of getting back with him?" Stella: "Absolutely not. Your father is impossible." Nosi: "but you two went to dinner." Stella: "Where did you kids grow up? Don't you know its rude to turn down dinner?" Lakhe: "even from your ex?" Stella: "Dinner has nothing to do with the company. Its about the food and looking amazing." Nosi: "So You'd eat with a hobo?" Stella: "If he can afford a R800 meal then yes." Lakhe: "So no." Robert came in the room. Stella: "did you spritz the bathroom and light the scented candles?" Rob: "No." Stella: "Why Not?" Rob: "we're not married anymore so I don't have to." Stella: "So you're just going to shit stink the entire house Robert, nobody told you to order hors d'oeuvres!!!!!" Sandile clutched his stomach laughing. Rob: "Why does it bother you so much Stella?" Stella: "You are basically impossible and I cannot stand living with you." she pegged her nose. Rob: "You know the only reason you want to come into the bathroom after me." Stella: "I'm done talking to you. And I want my money back." Rob: "You said you don't want m-" Stella: "Give it back!" Rob: "Andifuni." Stella glared at him. Stella: "I hate you." Rob: "Same. Did you tell the kids how Ryan choked on his fish and his wife's boob side slid out her blouse?" they laughed. Stella: "I told she had implants. She looks like she's smuggling cabbages." everyone laughed. Lakhe got up. Lakhe: "I'll see you guys tomorrow." Rob: "What's wrong now?" Lakhe: "Nothing. I'm tired. I have to work in the morning." Rob: "okay." Lakhe walked to his bedroom and closed the door behind him. He sat down on the bed looking at his phone. After some courage he dialed her number and listened to the ringing sound then it stopped. "hello?" his heart leaped. Lakhe: "baby?" Spho: "Is everything okay?" Lakhe: "uhm, yeah. I just miss you. I'm sorry Spho. For everything. I'm a fool. I mean, an actual idiot. I'll

do anything, just tell me where you are. Please." Spho: "I don't want you where I am. I'm safe and at peace. What you did really hurt me Masilakhe, you could have said you don't like that I took your meetings. I would've apologized and made up for it. Instead you packed a bag and left our house, further not taking my calls letting me sleep worried and stressed. Then you miss our baby appointment, because I did tell you last week when you asked, you missed it on purpose trying to punish me. That was really low of you." Lakhe: "I'm sorry Spho, can I at least come over so we can talk about this?" Me: "No you can't." Lakhe: "Baby, I can't sleep here alone." Me: "you left me there alone though. So you weren't sleeping alone those nights?" Lakhe: "I was alone and miserable and angry. I couldn't sleep. Spho, I need you. Please don't do this to me right now." Spho: "you did this to yourself. Had I been there you wouldn't be talking to me. You're only lonely because you can't see me." Lakhe: "then tell me what to do to make it right." Spho: "I'm not going to breastfeed you into righting your wrongs. You'll do what you feel is appropriate." Lakhe: "How am I supposed to make things right with you when you won't tell me where you are or let me come to you. Are you coming home?" Spho: "No I'm not. I'll be staying here for a while." Lakhe: "you're punishing me?" Spho: "No I'm not, I just need to be in a peaceful environment. Non-stressful and happy. I've been in agony for weeks, I don't want to lose my baby because of stress." Lakhe: "Me too. I'm sorry I stress you." Spho: "Okay." Lakhe: "I'm going to find you though." Spho: "Lakhe please respect this. If I need you I'll call you." Lakhe: "I just want to make sure you're safe." Spho: "but I'm telling you I'm safe." Lakhe: "maybe You've been kidnapped and forced to say you're safe." Spho: "What a generous and polite kidnapper to let me be on the phone this long then. Clearly I'm in good hands." Lakhe: "Okay. I miss you. When will you be back." Spho: "boy bye." Lakhe: "Okay fine then. I love you." Spho: "I love you too." Lakhe: "I'll call you in the morning." Spho: "maybe after 10 am. I'm on holiday so I need to sleep in." Lakhe: "You never sleep in when you're with me." Spho: "because you're loud." Lakhe: "am not." Spho: "are too. You should be sleeping." Lakhe: "andithi you don't want to come home." Spho: "Poor baby. Let me sleep then." Lakhe: "Okay. I love you." Spho: "Love you too. Goodnight." Lakhe: "Goodnight." they hung up.

Thursday early morning, Khaya came into the house. Zama was cleaning. Khaya: "hey." she carried on quietly. Khaya: "For how long are you planning to ignore me? You know the last straw was at dinner last night. Why did you even come if you were going to sit there and say nothing?" she didn't respond. Khaya: "If you're mad at me for what Kom did to you then you're

being crazy. You were the one keeping secrets from him knowing fully well what he's capable of. I can't just step into your conflicts with him. You know he'd kill anyone in front of his face when he's angry, why are you always making me the bad guy?" she got up and went to the bathroom. Khaya: "Zama..." after she finished washing her hands she went back to the kitchen. Khaya: "Look, I'm sorry. I don't know what you wanted me to do when I didn't even know anything. You have to learn to talk and be honest." she made the tea. Khaya: "Let me make it. Sit." she didn't move, just mechanically continued. Khaya: "Zama, we are going to have to talk either way. I am sorry, I really am but I'm never going to go against Komander for anything but my child. I need you to know that." he went to his bedroom. Zama put aside her tea and made soft porridge, making sure its runny and smooth enough to slide down her painful throat. When she was done she poured a small amount in a bowl and added milk plus sugar. A familiar smell hit her hard as a force. Her eyes almost danced with the beautiful scent. She turned around and bowed her head. Komander stared at her and walked to the lounge. Khaya appeared from the bedroom. Khaya: "Sir." Kom: "Did you see the news?" Khaya: "No sir. I just came from a shift." Kom: "They say, a psychotic killer has escaped the loony bin. The crazy piece about it is that nobody saw him leave. You know anything about that?" Khaya: "No sir." Kom: "huh." Khaya: "Is there anything important about this guy sir?" Kom: "No, there isn't. Just that he burnt a house with his wife and children in it." Khaya: "That's bad." Kom: "Of course it is. He killed children! Anyway, people are going to start ending up missing and they will think its him. He's going to cause a whole spectacle for me. I need you to find him, and take him back to that place or..." Khaya: "Yes sir?" Kom: "Let me think." he rubbed his chin. Kom: "No he's too dramatic. He can't be anywhere near me." Khaya: "Wouldn't it be better sir if they thought it was him?" Kom: "And how would that be better putting an entire city in panic? Right now, things are fine. If people go missing, its random acts of crime. If they have a name behind these crimes, a whole bucket load of snakes is going to spill. He needs to go." Khaya: "Done." Kom: "How is your daughter?" Khaya: "She's fine sir." Kom: "Good. So why is her mother acting up?" Khaya: "I'm not sure I understand sir." Kom: "She's been standing in that kitchen ever since I got here." Khaya: "she just hasn't been feeling well." Kom: "Komary come here." she walked to him. Zama: "Yes sir." her voice completely burnt and inaudible. Kom: "I don't like hurting you. You know that but if you keep lying to me. I'm going to do something about it." Zama: "Yes sir." Kom: "you may want to see a doctor for that throat." Zama: "I will sir." Kom: "Good. Let me hit the road. Let me know when you're done with this dodo guy. I won't be in the city for a while. I need to get rid of something." Khaya: "Yes sir." Komander walked out.....

#103 : Part 2

Sandile knocked on Lakhe's door. No response from inside. He kept knocking. Lakhe: "What!!!" Sands: "Wow. So early?" he opened the door and walked in closing it behind him. Sands: "We have a meeting with the team in 10 minutes. Why are you still in bed?" Lakhe: "I have to be at work." Sands: "then get dressed. I'll drop you off when we're done man." Lakhe: "I can't." Sandile looked around the room. Sands: "Why not?" Lakhe: "I'm going to prison Sandile. For probably 25 years or more. I won't get to raise my child." Sands: "No. We're not having this pity party today. You can't be thinking about this right now." Lakhe: "When am I going to think about it? When I'm jail? My child is going to hate me. Spho will obviously leave me and marry some good guy. I'm going to lose my company. Its over." Sands: "Spho loves you, she won't just leave you. You need to get your mind off this, come." Lakhe got up and went to get dressed. Sands: "Did you shower? I'm not going anywhere with a man who hasn't showered." Lakhe: "Why would I get dressed if I didn't shower?" he wore his shoes. Sands: "So when is Spho coming back?" Lakhe: "I don't know. Let's move." he took his keys and they left for the warehouse. Sandile in the driver seat, Lakhe next to him. Lakhe: "uphangele Sibulele?" Sands: "I think so, I didn't see him today. He must have left early." Lakhe: "call and check." Sands: "I'm driving." Lakhe: "because I've never seen you driving 160 km per hour while texting?" Sands: "your funeral." he put the phone against his ear after dialing. Sands: "voicemail." he hung up. Lakhe: "Nx. You need to put your friend in order Sandile. This behavior isn't sliding anymore. I fucking hate it." Sands: "I hear you." they finally arrived at their warehouse and parked. Lakhe got out walking to the door. They climbed down the stairs and went into the basement. Everyone was waiting for them. Lakhe: "Is everyone here?" Sergio: "Yes G. Except Black." Black: "I'm here." he walked in carrying a body on his shoulder like a sack of potatoes. Lakhe: "What the fuck is that?" Black: "Oh its a present. For you." he dropped the person on the floor. Lakhe signaled to Sergio who removed the bag on the face. Frank stared back at them, his eyes widening. Lakhe: "Hello." Frank tried to open his mouth. Lakhe: "Black, where did you get him and why did you bring him here?" Black: "I was following him. Don't worry, nobody knows where he is. I'm supposed to be delivering a stack so they won't suspect me." Sands: "a stack of money?" Black: "No, a stack of bodies. Why would I be driving around with a stack of money?" Sands: "Why would you be driving around with a stack of bodies!!!" Black: "I just told you, I'm supposed to be delivering them." Sands: "where!!!" Black: "I can't tell you that." Lakhe: "Sandile? Would you want to take this one?" Sands: "with pleasure, but I want some time first. Black, can you deliver

him somewhere for me." Black: "You're wild now. I have work to do." Sergio: "just out of curiosity, are these dead bodies or live bodies?" Black: "they're alive. Just heavily drugged. Like this one. He can't talk. Can't move, just paralyzed for about 8 hours. He can feel everything though." Sands: "Where are you taking them?" Black: "I told you I can't tell you. Now I have to leave. I have an hour to inject them again before I drop them off." Sands: "take this one with, I'll tell you where to drop him." Black: "I'll come back for him later. He's going to be numb for few more hours." he walked out. Sands: "What kind of job does he have delivering bodies?" Kyle: "My biggest guess is he's in the trafficking department." Bull: "human trafficking?" Kyle: "of course. All those people have mysteriously gone missing and are on their way to the harbor. Transported all over the world, never to be seen again." Sergio: "That's sick." Sands: "That's Komander for you. Sick." Sergio: "and kids too?" Kyle: "Komander sells everything that breathes. Probably the wealthiest criminal alive or ever to live. The sad thing is having to disguise himself because everything about him is illegal. He doesn't have a normal life like you and me." Lakhe: "How do you know so much about him?" Kyle: "My brother in Columbia works for him." Sergio: "Which department is he?" Kyle: "The butchery." Sands: "a human butchery I assume." Kyle: "Yep. They butcher humans and sell the vital organs in the black market. I heard they wanted to open one up here in Africa but they haven't chosen the country yet." Lakhe: "Okay, enough about Komander and his activities. We're here to work. Sergio, tie Frank in that corner." Sergio did as he was told. Bull rolled out the A3 paper on the table. Bull: "Our merch is arriving tomorrow with this ship, here's a layout of the harbor and how we get to it." Lakhe: "Perfect. You and Kyle will be standing here. This is going to be Sandile and me. Sibulele's right behind us here. Sergio I want you by the cars. We'll-" his phone rang. He looked at the screen and ignored it. Lakhe: "We'll be coming from this side, the security have been let known. We have only 10 minutes here for immediate cover. After that we're on our own. So we sweep as swift as possible- what the fuck is that sound!" Sands: "Its Frank. He can't talk so he's making sounds with his mouth." Lakhe: "shut him the fuck up. I can't hear myself think!!!" Sandile took duct tape and put it on Frank's mouth. Lakhe: "After we sweep this container out, we come out this way not the same route. Where you will be waiting Serg. We pack up and drive out. Please let everyone who is concerned about you know you won't be home for the rest of that evening. We can't risk driving around during the night. Once we get here, we lock up and sort out till morning. I'm going to go over this with you again-" his phone rang again. He answered. Lakhe: "I'm working!" Rob: "I don't care. Come back to this house immediately!" Lakhe: "I cant-" Rob: "You damn well can and you will!!!" he hung up. Lakhe: "I have to go. I'll be in contact Sergio. Sands, take care of

that thing by the end of today. Your father is freaking out again." he walked out to the car and drove himself home. Upon arrival, his parents and his lawyers were waiting in the lounge for him. Lakhe: "What is it?" Rob: "Sit." Lakhe sat down. Lakhe: "What's going on?" Rob: "I'm going to need you to calm d-" Lakhe: "Tata, tata, don't you dare start with me. What's going on!" Rob: "Ryan just met up with the prosecutor for your murder case." Lakhe: "and what happened?" Rob: "A confession happened. Someone came forward to confess." Lakhe: "wait...what?" Rob: "You didn't kill Dez." Lakhe: "That's what I kept telling you!! Who is it!" Ryan: "They didn't let us know. They're still verifying everything in his confession. Seems as though he knows the details of the scene though." Lakhe: "So what happens now?" Ryan: "Well, when the judge has confirmed the confession the state will drop the charges against you." Quincy: "the state knows you have a lot of money, so the important thing is they don't find anything that links you to this guy, otherwise they'll say you paid him to take the rap for you." Lakhe: "I don't even know who the hell it is! Why would he just confess?" Ryan: "Quincy? Would you know something?" Quincy: "How would I know?" Ryan: "Your wife is the prosecutor man." Quincy: "We never talk about work. Or discuss the cases. We're oppositions. It would cause a lot of fights." Lakhe: "then steal her notes and photocopy." Quincy stared at him flabbergasted. Ryan: "yeah Lakhe, just because you do it doesn't mean its okay." Quincy: "or legal. I'm not trying to get a divorce either." Rob: "but aren't we supposed to be making sure that this person has no real ties to Lakhe? What if they know each other?" Ryan looked at his partner. Quincy: "I'm not stealing her notes." Ryan: "just look at them then." Quincy: "No. I'm an honest lawyer. This is below anything I've worked for all these years." Ryan: "You were ready to defend a murderer. Get off the ethical giraffe and do it!" Lakhe: "I thought we've confirmed I didn't kill Dez." Quincy: "I didn't get this far by being dishonest." Ryan: "Quincy, I'm going to threaten you until you do it." Quincy: "You promised!" Ryan: "Just do it!" Quincy: "Fine! Fine!" Ryan: "good. Now all we do is pray."

I woke up a little after 10 in the morning. I brushed my teeth and went out to the kitchen door. Dabawo was carrying a broom. Dubs: "futsek!! Hamba!! Tshin undiqhel amasimba bonanje." she was chasing a dog all around the yard. I burst out laughing. The dog squeezed himself out the gate running away. Dubs: "Tshin yazi inesibindi sozokaka apha endlinam! F'nek soloko nditshayela ub'thuv benja ndingafuyanga. Akhonto indidika indiphambanise njengo hleli nje ndikhamisile ngentseni kuba kaloku kukho imisila ehleli ijonge phezulu kwam." I couldn't stop laughing. She swept her yard. Dubs: "Hee uvukile mntanam. Vuyi usayothenga isonka." She went to stand by the gate

while I boiled the water for tea then joined her. Dubs: "heee, khajonge. Hleli erhorhozelwa jonga la njana ingathi licingo eligobileyo. Ndingayazi uVuyiseka ubona ntoni kwez'nto zimdaka ebabona oobhuti bakhe banjani. YUH, mandoyiswe. Uleli njani Spho?" Me: "kamandi kakhulu dubs." Dubs: "ewe kaloku kuyathandazwa kule indlu. Akho kwamoya uzisondezayo." Me: "Yuh dabawo, ingaske ndihlale oko. Inintsi tension kulandlu." Dubs: "asoze ingabikho tension niba nintsi Spho ningathandazi. Wonke umntu uzoza neyakhe ihibili. Ubuthethile noMasilakhe?" Me: "ewe besithethile izolo before ndilale." Dubs: "kengoku umxolele?" Me: "Andiyazi wethu dabawo." Dubs: "hayi ke sisi. Nguwe wedwa umfazi ka Masilakhe. Akhomntu uzok'xelela ba uthini. Funekile ufunde uxola emtshatweni. Mthandazele umnyeni wakho ayeke ubayi 2 cents ye sylon. Awunokwenza Lento ayenzayo. Xa Uthi irongo xa eyenza kutheni izoba right isenziwa nguwe? Funeke ubeyi example pha kuye. Akuthwa suqumba, awuzongabinamsindo. Kodwa ibanomsindo phambi kwakhe umane ngomtshisa ngento eshushu ayazi irongo into ayenzileyo." I giggled. Me: "ndimtshise Dabawo?" Dubs: "umbone ba uyow'phinda na. Awuyazi amadoda ndlela abangabantwana ngayo. Mjonge ngoku ungekho uzokufekethela ingathi ngumntana oncancayo. Nanku maVuyi. Hewethu mfazi yinton le lektrik pole ubuhamba nayo." I chuckled walking to the house. Vuyi: "hehake mama. Ngu Simbu lowa ndandifunda naye." Dubs: "Yuh hayi kodwa akho ne muscles pha." Vuyi: "Khayeke torho mama." Dubs: "ungade uqumbe sana. Yi ow yakho?" Vuyi: "ayo ow yam uSimbu." Dubs: "yi mango crush yakho?" Vuyi: "mama andina crush ku Simbu." Dubs: "Ndik'bon umuncu apha ku face kaloku. Andinoyazi." Vuyi "Andiqumbanga. Ndilambile qha." they walked in the house. I made the tea for all of us. Vuyi was looking a bit upset or angry? I wasn't sure. Dubs: "ukhutyekiswe yila ow yakhe iyi giraffe." as difficult as it was, I refrained from laughing out loud. After tea, I started making breakfast. Dubs: "khanimeni ndiyovasa lomzuzu mna." she went to the bathroom. Halfway through making the food I looked over at Vuyi. Hayi man what's wrong? Me: "What's the problem Vuyiseka?" Vuyi: "Nothing sisi." her voice trembled. Me: "Vuyi. Talk to me." tears streamed down her cheeks. I don't remember how but I instantly got angry. Whoever that boy is was gonna get it. I was eyeing the broom Dubs used to hit that dog. Vuyi: "I decided to check on the guy I've been seeing before I bought bread. When I got to his room, some girl opened the door esithi uyi girlfriend yakhe. Waphakama yena wathi mandifokofe kwakhe." Dubs: "Uthi kutheni!!!" oh shit. Vuyi: "mama please." Dubs: "hayi hayi Vuyiseka!!! Ngula Simbu lo?!" Vuyi: "hayi mama, Simbu yitshom yakhe ndidibene naye endleleni. Just let it go." Dabawo already had a sjambok in her hand marching out the door. I followed after her stomping to the corner shop. Vuyi: "mama!!!" Dubs: "ukuba awundisi kulendlu. Ndiyoyifuna

ndiyifumana. Hee mfana!!!!" Simbu froze looking at her approaching him. Dubs: "ihlalaphi la tshomakho." he was obviously smart because he calculated very quickly and pointed straight at a blue house without asking which friend. We marched to the blue house. Dubs knocked on the back door. A tall brown skinned slender girl opened the door. "And then?" Vuuuccu! The sjambok stung her thigh. Dubs: "uyotsho 'and then' kunyoko. Andizanga kuwe. Phume caleni ndingekak'vuni." the girl jumped aside. Dubs: "uphume wena k'lo room. Ndik'funa apha e'stage'in." she waited. The boy stayed still. Dubs: "iyow'ba yi box ye matshisi Le pozi yakho mntanam. Zincede uphume." by a flash he dashed out and I grabbed his arms before he ran. Dabawo smacked him with the sjambok. Dubs: "kowam umntana? Unye stoepin mntanam. Unesibindi som'awtisa umhlale xakuthande wena? Unganya." "Heeeey!!!!" a woman stepped out of the main house. We let go of the boy. Dubs: "Yeke. Uyintangam undilingene." Woman: "Hayi Nomfundo Uthetha ngantoni ngoku?" Dubs told her the story. Woman: "hayi kaloku umbethelani umntanam-" Dubs: "Ayinguwe wawugxotha uVuyiseka ngentseni apha uphethe umtshayelo umthuka? Ndithe uyintangam." Woman: "Ndandingayazi mos nguVuyi mna lowo-" Dubs: "Oh uyamazi namhlanje? Kudala ndahlala ndiginye kukrakra kule ndawo. Nindenzele izigigaba. Ninyile ke ngomntanam. Ndiphinde ndimbone net lo nyinyoba wakho esondele kowam, uyowmalanda emortuary. Masambe Spho." we walked out the house. Woman: "kodwa uyandifaka ezintweni Msimelelo. Yinton lento uyenzayo kwam! Yuhh!" back at our house Vuyiseka was standing in the kitchen. Dubs: "Ndiphinde net ndive ubuye kulamzi. Ndiyow'ngena kuwe." she went to her bathroom. Vuyi: "what happened?" I giggled. She laughed. Vuyi: "hayi Spho." Me: "Khahlale phantsi utye wethu." after breakfast, we bathed and got ready. When we were all done, we took our bags and left for the mall.....

#104

Late Thursday evening. The sun was setting. A red hue lining the far horizon. The sky dimly lit preparing for the dark of night. Sandile sat on the edge of a well dug deep 12 foot grave. He dangled his legs inside the hole playing with the flashlight in his hands. Switching it on and off. "help...." a weak voice tried to scream, failing dismally. The injection had worn off. Sandile looked into the grave at him. Sands: "You tried to kill me Frank." then continued playing with his flash. Frank: "I didn't....I swear I didn't. It was never my plan to get you shot." he coughed. Sands: "Yet I got shot." Frank: "Sandile, don't do this. Please... I have a child!" Lakhe walked toward the scene and stood above the grave.

Lakhe: "I told you to wrap this up before the end of the day." Sandile looked up at him. Lakhe: "We don't want anyone finding us or him." Sands: "I don't care." he threw a stone at the grave, hitting Frank on the head. Frank: "G, please? I promis-" another stone hit his nose. Sandile chuckled. Sands: "Good shot." His whole being had changed. He didn't feel anymore. The familiar feeling of numbness taking control. He stared into the dark hole. His victim kept trying to scream, Lakhe was talking, shouting. He had blocked out all sound. Looking at the victim in the bottom of the hole, crying, shaking fed his spirit. Becoming more powerful over him. The longer he kept crying, the higher the fire in him burnt. He was at peace. Lakhe shook him. Lakhe: "Sandile!! Kill him and let's go!" Sands: "I'm not going to kill him." he stood up took the shovel. Sands: "he's just going to kill himself." he started filling the hole with soil again. Frank screamed. Lakhe: "you're going to bury him alive?" Sandile threw in another load of dirt. Frank: "Helpp!!!!" he screamed, panicking into a psychotic rage. Sandile smiled throwing in another load. Lakhe: "This is insane, I'll wait in the car." he walked away. Frank: "somebody plleeeassee help me!!!!" Sands: "you want some water?" Frank: "Sandile I swear I'll never do this again. Please, I'll leave and never come back here! Please Sandile. Think of my daughter." he pleaded. Frank: "I'll show you Komander. I promise. I know where he is." Sandile stopped and looked at him. Frank: "He's different from what you've ever seen. He will be worth sparing my life I swear." Sandile looked at the soil then back at the grave. Sands: "Why are you lying?" Frank: "I promise I'm not! I work for him! He is here." Sands: "You think I'm stupid?" Frank: "No." Sands: "Good. Now Sit still because I'm not done. We have the whole night together."

Lakhe walked into his house. Rob: "Where is your brother? I've been calling him and he's on voicemail!" Lakhe: "He's with his friend. I said I'll fetch him later. What's for dinner?" Rob: "I don't know Lakhe, where is your wife." Lakhe: "She's with your sister tata. I'm hungry, did you cook?" Rob: "did you even try getting her home? You can't just sit here and relax!" Lakhe: "Why not? She said she needed some space to breath because she's stressed and mad at me. She isn't lost." he went to the kitchen. Lakhe: "Akuphekwanga?" Rob: "Your mother went shopping with Vicky." Lakhe: "So nobody is going to cook?" Rob: "I'm sure they'll bring something." Lakhe: "Ndilambe ngoku nje tata." Rob: "Then make a sandwich Masilakhe! Goodness!" Lakhe went to his bedroom and dialed his wife's number. Spho: "Hello?" Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi ubuya nini?" Spho: "I'm fine thanks and yourself?" Lakhe: "akhomntu uphekileyo ke apha and mna I'm hungry!" Spho: "then make something to eat." Lakhe: "I'm tired!" Spho: "Are you serious?" Lakhe: "I have a wife who cooks for me. I don't need

this type of stress Spho." Spho: "Your wife is on vacation. I'm at the beach right now." Lakhe: "Please come back." Spho: "No. Unless its a natural emergency, which includes someone dying. I'm not coming back for a few more days." Lakhe: "Are you serious? Spho I said I'm sorry. What do you want me to do?" Spho: "Nothing. This is a holiday for me. Nawe enjoy your space and go on a boys night out." Lakhe: "Fine. Will you be back Monday?" Spho: "No. Not Monday, look my battery is on 10%. We'll talk later." Lakhe: "My patience with you is on 10%." Spho: "Goodbye grandpa." Lakhe: "Fine." Spho: "I love you." Lakhe: "No you don't." Spho: "I do, I have to go." Lakhe: "Fine. Love you too." he hung up. Lakhe: "Natural emergency huh." he got up and walked out. Lakhe: "where are the kids?" Rob: "They went to the hospital with their dad to see Zingi and the baby. She's being discharged today." Lakhe: "Great." Rob: "You look sneaky. What are you thinking?" Lakhe: "Nothing. I'm stepping out for a min-" Rob: "Masilakhe!" Lakhe: "I'm just going to visit Babalo, maybe his wife cooked something I can eat." Rob: "Babalalo lives at Hlumi's parents' house and I know how much you hate socializing. So try again." Lakhe: "I'm going for a drive, maybe drop by the hospital for a gift for the baby." Rob: "I know you're about to do something shady." he went back to his newspaper. Lakhe drove out the yard and went to the McDonald's drive-thru. He ordered two McFeast medium meals and paid it cash then drove to the beach. He parked at the lot and stared disgustingly at the food. Lakhe: "I hope this counts as a natural emergency." he took a bite and swallowed. After finishing all the food, he threw all evidence in the nearby bin and drove back home. Stella and Vicky were finally home. Rob: "uLakhe uthe ulambile ke." Stella: "Oh my sweetie. I'll whip something up." Rob: "You can't cook." Stella: "Says who?" Rob: "Me, You've never cooked anything." Stella: "I can!" Rob: "Its okay, you're a scientist. You don't need to know everything." Stella: "Robert. I'm going to prove you wrong. I know my way around a lab, I'll know my way around the kitchen." Rob: "Nosi, please look for the number of Poison control." Nosi laughed. Stella went to the kitchen. Lakhe sat in the lounge staring at the TV. Three hours later. Stella brought dinner to the table. Rob: "I think I have an app on my phone that let's me review my will." Stella: "Funny. I cooked for my child. Lakhe?" she walked over to him. Stella: "Masilakhe!" Rob: "What's wrong with him?" Lakhe: "bucket." Rob: "What about a bucket?" Nosi went to fetch a bucket just in time for her brother to vomit in it. Rob: "Come on!!!!" Stella: "Relax! Its just vomit." she held Lakhe's head. Stella: "What did you eat baby?" Lakhe: "Nothing." She wiped the corners of his mouth. Stella: "maybe we should call a doctor. Open your mouth." he opened his mouth. Stella: "Oh My God!" Rob: "What!" Stella: "His throat looks swollen. Phone the hospital Robert!!!" Sibuh walked in. Sibuh: "What's going on?" Rob: "No time for an ambulance. Sibuh drive us to hospital. Help me carry him." Lakhe: "I

can.....walk." Rob: "You can barely speak." he pulled his son up carrying him to the bigger car. Rob: "Call his wife Stella." they drove to the hospital. Rob looked for Khaya when they got there. Khaya: "Robert, hi. What are you doing here?" Rob: "Lakhe. His throat is swollen. He was throwing up. Can you help him?" Khaya: "Bring him this side." they followed him to a room, letting Lakhe lay on the hospital bed. Khaya examined him. Khaya: "What were you eating? Where is Spho?" Rob: "I'm not sure. Is he going to be okay?" Khaya: "This looks like he had something he's severely allergic to. Wait here." he walked out. Rob: "You're stupid. You know that?" he dialed a number and put the phone against his ear. Rob: "Spho? Hi angel. Lakhe is in the hospital. It doesn't look good..... Yes, you can drive up in the morning. Its too late now. Okay mntanam." he hung up. Rob: "That's exactly what you wanted, wasn't it?" Lakhe stuck his tongue out. Rob: "You're a damn psychopath." he sat down on the chair. Khaya came back in. Khaya: "Can you talk?" Lakhe shook his head. Khaya: "I see. Look, we need to pump out your stomach, because the more it stays in your stomach, the worse your condition becomes. The next few hours will be painful. Try and calm down. We're moving you in two minutes." he spoke to another doctor outside. Khaya: "Great, let's go. Robert you stay here and fill out his forms. We'll be back soon." he wheeled the bed out.

By 6am on Friday morning I was driving out of East London. I had barely slept properly. How does someone just land in hospital when he was fine a few hours ago? I arrived in PE just after 9 in the morning. I parked in the hospital visitors lot and went in. I met with my father at the entrance and he walked me to his room. Khaya: "Where were you?" Me: "I was in East London tata. On holiday." Khaya: "Seems as though Lakhe didn't know that." Me: "How is he?" Khaya: "You can tell me if There's something wrong." Me: "Nothing is wrong tata. I just needed to breath. He knows." we went into the hospital room. Lakhe was asleep in his bed. Khaya: "he is not allowed to talk for the next 48 hours. His throat was swollen from inside and it needs to go down first. It could have damaged his voice box." I sat down on the chair holding his hand. Me: "What happened?" Khaya: "Severe allergy. He must have swallowed something. Its a pity he can't remember what." I felt so guilty. Why did I leave? He would have never gotten sick if I'd just stayed put. Khaya: "I'll give you a minute." he walked out. Me: "Pumpkin?" I kissed his hand. He slowly opened his eyes. Me: "hey you." he smiled. Me: "My dad says you're not allowed to talk for two days." he nodded. Me: "he put you on some heavy drugs ne?" he nodded again. Me: "I'm sorry my angel. I'm not leaving you again okay?" I hugged him. His parents walked in. Stella: "Hi Spho." Me:

"Molweni ma." I'd never in my life felt more like shit. Rob: "What did the doctor say?" Me: "he's not allowed to talk for two days. What did he eat?" Stella: "Nothing. I last saw him at breakfast. Robert what did you feed the child?" Rob: "Why on earth would I poison my son?" Lakhe touched my tummy and looked up at me. Me: "She's glad to know you're still alive. We must find out what you ate so that we know to avoid it. I'm beginning to think you're allergic to everything now." he shook his head trying to open his mouth. Me: "No. Close that mouth. Here's a notepad and pen." I dug through my bag and gave him paper and a pen. He wrote down: 'I missed you.' Me: "I missed you too my perfect angel." I kissed his hand. He looked at his dad smiling. Rob: "Wow." Stella: "I'm getting something to drink. Would you like anything Spho?" I hadn't eaten since yesterday. Me: "Yes. Let me come with you. I'll be back just now okay?" Lakhe nodded. Stella and I walked out the room to the cafe. Rob: "You would rather die than be patient? You're more unstable than Sandile Masilakhe." Lakhe wrote down : 'Leave me alone.' Rob: "Leave you al- You almost went into a coma!! We couldn't sleep! Your mother was worried sick! Why would you do that!" Lakhe scribbled again. Lakhe: 'I had my reasons.' Rob: "You could have just drove to East London then!" Lakhe: 'Spho would get mad.' He wrote. Rob: "I'm telling her. She's already blaming herself for this." Lakhe: 'Don't you dare!' Rob: "I will tell her." Lakhe: 'I'll tell mom your secret too.' Rob: "You can't even talk." Lakhe: 'I can write.' Rob: "I'll break your hands Masilakhe." Lakhe: 'Then leave me alone and let me be loved by my wife please.' Rob: "Mxim." Lakhe wrote on his paper again: 'Call Sandile for me, tell him to come here. I want to talk to him.' Rob: "How are you going to talk to him?" Lakhe glared at him. Robert went to call Sandile. Stella and I came back from the cafe carrying my sandwich and juice. Me: "Sthandwasam. Do you want anything?" he shook his head then wrote down. Lakhe: 'just you in my arms.' Me: "awww. I'm never letting you out of my sight again my little baby." I hugged him. Robert stared daggers at him. Lakhe squinted his eyes back at him. Me: "My dad says you have to stay here. They want to monitor you overnight." he shook his head. Rob: "Maybe he should stay a week, just to be safe." Lakhe scribbled down quickly: 'Can't stay here alone baby, please. Take me home.' Me: "I'll see what I can do sweetie pie ." Lakhe: 'promise?' Me: "I promise. Let me go find your father in law." I walked out the room. Rob: "I never raised you as a conniving liar." Stella: "Robert!!" Rob: "You don't even know what he did." Stella: "What did he do?" Lakhe pressed the panic button. Robert stared at him. Rob: "You really think that scares me?" The nurse walked in. Lakhe wrote down: 'I don't want him here.' The nurse looked at Robert. Rob: "the truth will come out Masilakhe. I'll be waiting for you at home." he walked out. Stella: "What's going on between your father and you?" Lakhe shrugged. Sandile and Sibuh walked in. Sands:

"heyoo." Stella: "he's not allowed to talk for two days. Don't make him speak! I'm going to look for Spho." she walked out. Sands: "wassup." he opened his packet of Lays. Sibü: "You're not allowed to eat that here." Sands: "I don't care. I'm hungry." Lakhe scribbled on his paper. Lakhe: 'We still on tonight. Our merch arrives at 11pm. We must be there 15 minutes earlier to go over our plan. So from, 11 to 11:09pm we'll be covered. We should be in our cars by 11:10pm and disappear. Sandile, you'll be giving out orders on my behalf. Do you remember the plan I laid out yesterday?' Sands: "Yes." Lakhe: 'Perfect. We leave the house at 10 tonight. Remember we only come back in the morning. Remind the boys.' Sands: "Will do. So why can't you talk anyway?" Lakhe: 'Fuck You. And take this paper, burn it somewhere outside.' He tore out the paper and gave it to him. Sandile shoved it in his pocket. Sibü: "Your file here says allergies." he read the board. Sands: "Oh my God, you didn't." Lakhe showed him the middle finger. Sands: "I don't know where Spho found you but really she could have done so much better. You're a piece of shit." Lakhe: 'I am not. I'm a delight and I plan to prove it.' He wrote Sands: "You just tried to kill yourself for attention." Lakhe: 'I didn't. I was hungry. What was I supposed to do? Anyway, I want to surprise Spho.' Sibü: "What if she finds out you lied?" Lakhe: 'She better fucking not Sibulele.' He tore off the paper giving it to him. Sibü: "I won't say anything. You need to trust me. Although I have something else to discuss with her." Sands: "One of your private conversations again." Sibü: "Not really private. We don't have private conversations." Sands: "So what is the discussion about." Sibü: "Well. When we went to our mother's house to pack her things, we found a note that stated that someone else is our father, not the guy who raised Spho. This other guy was scared of raising kids, he said we made him weak and we would destroy his life. So he left her with us. Now we want to find out who he is. Spho and I decided to get a PI, and the guy has a bit of information." Sands: "Are you sure you want to find the guy who didn't want you?" Sibü: "we're grown now. How could we possibly ruin his life?" Sands: "Man, in my opinion Robert is my dad. The guy and woman who made me don't exist and I'd never even try to look for them because they abandoned me. I grew up in an orphanage for the first 5 years of my life. If Robert hadn't come fetch me and make me his, I would've suffered. So I don't want to know those ugly people." Lakhe showed Sibü what he wrote down. 'Good Luck. Hope it goes welll.' Sibü: "Thank you bhuti." Sands: "I think its a terrible idea. What if he's a bum who wants to suck you dry?" Sibü: "I've never had an active father in my life Sandile, Can I just take my chances?" Sands: "Fine, I'm being a Lakhe. I give you my blessings." he looked at his brother. Sands: "I've renamed the word ass with your name." Lakhe stuck his tongue out. I came back to the room with his discharge papers. Me: "I managed to twist dad's arm to let you go but I have to keep a

very close eye on you. And we have to come back here in the morning for a check up. Hi guys." Sands: "Hey you. You look fabulous." Me: "Thank you Sands." Sands: "I really like your jersey." Me: "its a maternity poncho." Sands: "I think it would attract a more suitable husband." Lakhe kicked him. Me: "That's sweet of you Sandile." I filled in the form. Sands: "What made you marry my brother?" What was up with this one today? Sibü: "Sandile." Sands: "Just curious." Me: "I fell in love with him Sandile. Why do you ask?" Sands: "I thought it was for the baby." I read what Lakhe was writing. 'Chase him out.' I chuckled. My father walked in carrying a sleeping child. Khaya: "everything still okay here?" Me: "Who's that?" Khaya: "One of my patients. He was in a car accident. His mother didn't make it." my heart broke. He looked 4 years in age. His arm was broken and in a cast. I stood up. Lakhe held my arm. Me: "What is he going to do?" Khaya: "We are trying to get hold of other relatives. Until then I have to hold him, he is scared of anyone else." Sands: "What about his father?" Khaya: "I don't know any more information but we'll find him. Anyway, once you're done with the form, let me know so I can check him one more time before you leave." Me: "Okay." he left the room. Me: "Why did you stop me." Sands: "he says you get attached to everything you touch." Sibü: "and it drives him crazy." Me: "I do not!" Lakhe picked up the vase. Sands: "its actually nice talking on your behalf." I took the vase from Lakhe's tight grip. I finally finished up with these endless papers after about 10 minutes. Me: "its time to go home. I'm going to find dad so we can leave." Khaya: "here I am. Bamba apha Sibü." he gave him the sleeping toddler. I wanted to hold the child and comfort him. How does it feel not having a mom to hug you anymore? I still have Zama and my dad. This baby had no one. Yet. I stepped closer to him, Lakhe held my hand again. Really? Me: "I just want to hug him." he shook his head in disapproval. Me: "Name 1 thing I've ever been attached to after touching?" Sands: "Boogile, Lakhe, hot chocolate." Khaya: "a hug couldn't do no harm." Lakhe wrote down furiously: 'It will do a lot of harm. Sphe is in her nesting stage, she is going to be attached.' Me: "fine." I sat down folding my arms. My heart was really aching. Sands: "Stay strong." Khaya: "and we're done. I need you here at 8am tomorrow. Come here little fella." he took his foster toddler. He had woken up now, his eyes big and brown. Khaya: "Enjoy your day guys." he walked out. Stella came in holding a cup of coffee. Stella: "we're leaving already?" Me: "Yes ma. Can you get dressed by yourself honey?" he shook his head. Sandile folded his arms huffing. Sibü: "I'll help." Lakhe stared at him sarcastically. Sibü: "Oh. Sorry." I dressed Lakhe in his clothes and we got ready to leave. Sands: "What a lucky man you are Lakhe. I'd certainly fake a sickness for this type of treatment." Sibü: "You're being a Lakhe." Lakhe gave Sandile a piece of paper. Sandile read and laughed. 'No longer allowed in my house.' Sibü took

the bag and walked out to the car with his bestie. After we double checked everything we walked to find my dad. We needed a write up of Lakhe's diet for the next two days. I held his hand walking down the passage. We went up a floor and found my dad in front of the entrance. The man I've seen before in his house standing with him. What was his name again? They both stared at us coming. Me: "Hello. Its nice to see you again." he beamed into a contagious smile. His whiskey brown eyes dancing around. His teeth perfectly aligned and bright as diamonds. Tyrone was his name! Ty: "The pleasure is all mine."

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I just stared at him in awe. How was he even allowed to roam the earth? He looked extra gorgeous today. I wasn't sure if it was the lighting or what but Good God, he looked like an angel. His eyes looked like they were shiny brown gem stones. Khaya: "So uhm, what's wrong Spho? Did you need anything?" Me: "Oh yes dad, What is Lakhe allowed to eat? I have to be prepared when we get home." Khaya: "I'll write you a list mntanam. Uhm, Tyrone this is Masilakhe, Spho's husband." Ty: "Is this the lucky guy? I was beginning to think she was single." Lakhe smiled. I could tell it was not a friendly smile. He was being polite because he couldn't really voice out a smart remark. Me: "This is also my mother in law, Stella." Stella: "Wow. Look at your eyes." she shook his hand. Ty: "Oh...I can't." she laughed. Stella: "I'm Stella." Ty: "Tyrone. Its a pleasure." he kissed her hand. Stella: "Is this the man you told us about Spho?" I shook my head immediately. Stella: "Yes you did. Remember you said he looked like a supermodel?" Tyrone laughed out loud. Open up Earth. Please let me in!!!! Me: "I don't remember those exact words ma. Its time to get Lakhe home. Please text me as soon as you can dad." Khaya: "sure honey." Ty: "Oh now wait, I'm still getting used to the compliments." Khaya: "I thought your flight was in two hours." Ty: "You didn't even take me to dinner and I'm already being chased away? Some friend you are." Khaya: "I have to take care of Christian until his uncle gets here. They're flying in from Nigeria." Ty: "I'll take care of Christian." he took the child into his arms. Little Christian snuggled up in his chest and fisted his shirt. Pullinh at my heart strings. Stella: "Why don't you come to dinner at our house?" Lakhe stared at his mother clearly shocked. Khaya: "He has a flight in two hours." Ty: "Its rude to turn down a dinner Khaya." Stella: "Finally somebody gets it!!" Ty: "However I'll have to postpone ma'am, I hope the offer stands until I come back?" Stella: "Most definitely. I'll have to hold you to your word." Me: "It was lovely meeting you again Tyrone." Ty: "Oh Spho, seeing You makes

my whole day. Thank you." Me: "You're welcome. Bye dad. Let's get moving sweetie." we left the hospital. Sandile and Sibiu were waiting by their car.

Sands: "What took you guys so long?" Stella: "Mntanam, I just met your stepdad. You would love him." Sands: "Wait, what? Lakhe?" Lakhe shrugged.

Sands: "What stepdad?" Stella: "Don't panic my angel. He is a gentleman. See you at home." she got into my backseat. Sands: "We're going to talk about this the minute we get home!" Lakhe was in my passenger. I got in the driver. I drove out and straight home. Sandile followed behind. Lakhe wrote on his notepad. 'Why don't you come to dinner at our house? OUR house? Really mama?' He showed his mother. Stella: "What was I supposed to do? Not invite him?" Lakhe scribbled down furiously. Lakhe: 'YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HIM. And can I add that you're still living with your ex husband? My DAD. How do you even begin to invite a man over for dinner? Without even consulting ME!!!' Stella: "Its not like I asked for his hand in marriage Lakhe, the fact that I invited him to the house means I'm not hiding any agenda. This is Spho's friend obviously." Me: "He's as old as my dad, so no." Stella: "Well I apologize for being polite. The next time someone asks for dinner I'll say no and probably go to hell." Lakhe turned around and stared at her long and hard then he wrote down. Lakhe: 'Do not try and make me feel guilty for anything. He's not homeless and he's not our friend.' We finally arrived at home. Soon after, Sandile pulled up too. We all went inside and I took Lakhe to bed. Me: "We need to get you into a bath my sweetie pie. Here's the list from dad. I'll make you food once we're done okay?" he nodded, smiling sweetly. I ran his bath and he got in. After bathing him, took him to bed and massaged his chest and stomach. He kept flinching. Me: "Still sore?" he nodded. Me: "Sorry baby." he took his cellphone and started writing in the memopad. Lakhe: 'I don't like that guy.' Me: "Which guy?" Lakhe: 'Tyrone. He looks too perfect. His entire face creeps me out. Its as though he was an angel that got kicked out of heaven by God. Do you think its possible?' I laughed really hard. Me: "You cannot be serious." but the look on his face was very serious. Lakhe: 'Spho, I have a bad feeling about him and the minute he held Christian, my heart tore a little, I can't lie.' Me: "I thought I was the one attached to everything." Lakhe: 'Its not about that, There's just something weird about the guy. Nobody looks that good. I hate to admit this but I would be terrified to see him at night. What does he do?' Me: "I never asked actually." Lakhe: 'What day is it?' Me: "Friday. Why?" Lakhe: 'I don't want Christian near him. Nigeria is too far. Call your dad, I'll get a judge to grant temporary foster care for him until his uncle checks out and can take care of him.' Me: "I'm not going to do that. Dad knows what he's doing. We can't interfere." Lakhe: 'This is a child Spho. A small life that can't defend itself.' Me: "He has dad and an uncle on his way. Why are you freaking out?" he got up and got dressed. Me: "Lakhe. You can't

just decide to foster a child. I'm pregnant!" he grabbed his keys and showed me what he typed. Lakhe: 'I love you Spho but I'll never forgive myself if something bad were to happen to an innocent child. Please?' Me: "fine. I'll call him but I can't promise anything." I decided a video call might work better. He might be busy but I wanted to look in his eye. I had to convince him before Lakhe went crazy. Like he hasn't gotten crazy enough. He went from cold, detached and uninterested to warm, loving caregiver in a second. It was not like him at all. The video rang for a while before a face popped up in the screen. Khaya: "Hi baby did you get my message?" Me: "Yes dad. Uhm, are you busy?" Khaya: "kind of. Why?" Me: "then I'll be quick. What would you think if we took care of Chris until his uncle arrived? Lakhe says its okay and we have enough space." Khaya: "Er... Spho this is a child, not a puppy. You can't just keep him. There's systems in place." Me: "Lakhe says he can get a judge to grant temp foster care. Please dad?" Khaya: "I don't know Spho." Me: "Please tata. I can take care of a child. I have done so for Zingi. I'll make sure Chris is okay." Khaya: "Fine. But you'll have to come here to fill all this paperwork and the social worker will have millions of questions." Me: "We'll be there just now." Khaya: "Okay." he hung up. Me: "There." he wore his shoes. I was actually very tired but I didn't want to dampen his spirits. On top of the fact that I haven't slept, I drove all the way here to take care of him. He stood up and looked at me with a questionable look. Me: "I'm okay. Let's go." he gave me his phone and I read. Lakhe: 'I'm driving.' I gave him the keys without hesitation and we walked out. There was still debate in the lounge with Stella, Sandile and Rob. They barely noticed us leaving.

Khaya sat in his office staring at the papers. Kom: "What's the problem?" Khaya: "I don't know why but Spho wants to foster this child until the uncle arrives." Kom: "Why?" Khaya: "I'm not sure. Spho loves kids alot. She hates seeing them hurt." Kom: "Its a good quality for a mother. And Christian doesn't have a mother." Khaya: "I don't want her to stress herself sir. She's six and a half months pregnant." Kom: "She has her husband. And his mother. And her brother." Khaya: "What if she gets attached?" Kom: "Its inevitable. Look at Christian. He's adorable." he looked at the child in his arms. Kom: "Let her take the child. She'll be happy. So will Chris." Khaya: "Her husband didn't want anything to do with the child but now he's even getting a judge? What changed?" Kom: "We already have a judge." Khaya: "Oh yes. I apologize. Its hard to.....never mind." Kom: "Hard to what? Imagine me as a judge? I went to school Khaya." Khaya: "I apologize sir." Kom: "Speak what's on your mind." Khaya: "Its just you're an actual authority figure in law enforcement but..."

Kom: "but I kill people? You can say it." Khaya: "I'm sorry sir. I'm out of line."
Kom: "I'm glad you see that. And be glad Christian is asleep too." he held the child's cheek and ear. He looked at his closed eyes. The long eye lashes sticking out in all directions. His little mouth slightly open showing tiny shark teeth. Kom: "Take him." he ordered, getting up. Khaya took the child.
Komander paced around the room. Lakhe and Spho walked in. I was surprised to see Tyrone still here. Didn't he have a flight to catch? Me: "hi again." Ty: "hello Spho. Does your husband not speak or he's just plain rude?" Me: "Oh no, my apologies. He had allergies and his throat is swollen. He's not allowed to speak for 2 days." Ty: "Oh I'm sorry. Sometimes my mouth just runs like a leaking tap." Khaya: "Its my fault. I'm his doctor, I should've explained." we all sat down and began the process. Dad was right about the social worker, she asked an awful amount of questions. What's more surprising was that Tyrone is a judge. How in the world did he know my father? In what universe are doctors and judges friends? Lakhe was right. Something dodgy was happening here. After almost an hour of what seemed to be impossible. We were half way through. My body was shutting down. My dad had left the office. The judge, two social workers and a police officer were here. Honest to God, I was now regretting my agreement. The entire process left me drained. By the time we were done. Christian was in the corner playing by himself. Ty: "And there you have it. He's yours until Monday." Three full hours worth of investigation, for three nights? Wow. I'd hate to know how long it would take for an adoption. Ty: "Chris?" the boy looked up at him then stood up walking swiftly to his side. Ty: "This is Aunt Spho and Uncle Lakhe. They will take care of you until your uncle gets here okay?" the boy nodded. Ty: "Are you going to be a good boy?" Chris: "yeah." Ty: "Good. Go over and say hi." Chris walked to us and fitted himself in between my legs with his head on my big belly. Ty: "how beautiful." This was scary. This child's comfort levels needed to be questioned. How was he so at ease with strangers? Me: "Hey Chris. How are you?" Chris: "fine." My dad walked back in. Khaya: "Mom and Dad now huh?" Me: "Aunt and Uncle are fine." Khaya: "here is his back pack and this is his medication. Every morning and night. All of them are marked. Here's his food list too." Me: "Thank you so much dad. We'll take good care of him." Khaya: "I know you will sweetheart. Call me if you need anything. Here are his documents. You're good to go." Lakhe picked up Chris. I took his bag. Ty: "Please mind his arm. Its still delicate. And painful." Me: "We will." Time to go home.

Instead of driving straight home, Lakhe went to the mall. I was going to fall asleep standing I swear. At Woolworths, he bought a few items of clothing for

Chris. Didn't even go to a fitting room. He just measured it against his body and was convinced it would fit. Men. We took a pair of sneakers and sandals. Some underwear and pajamas. After the clothes, we went in the food section to buy more food. Once he paid, we left the mall and went home. I don't know how we'll explain this to the family. Only now I realized I would be the one doing the explaining. I got out the car taking Chris with me. Lakhe brought the bags in. Everyone in the lounge stared at us. Sands: "Oh no." Me: "Before you start-" Sands: "Spho stole a baby. We're all going to jail." Me: "Sandile. Calm down. Nobody is going to jail. We got Chris legally. And only for a few days until his uncle arrives. Can everyone please pitch in. Chris is a sweetheart and I don't want him to get hurt, he br-" Chris was hiding behind me. Me: "and he's shy I guess." Lakhe came in with the bags and went straight to the bedroom. I followed him with Chris. Why was his name Christian anyway? Not really traditional for a black kid but okay. Me: "Is he sleeping here?" Lakhe nodded. He sat down and signaled for Chris to go to him. He changed his t shirt to a pajama top and shoes to slippers. My heart melted. They weren't even talking to each other but everything was in sync. They got into bed and looked at me. Oh? He gave me the phone to read. Lakhe: 'You've been fighting sleep for hours mommy. Time for a nap.' I got in bed. Me: "How are you Chris?" Chris: "good." Me: "Yeah? You been sleeping all day." Chris: "I broke my arm so the doctor gave me medicines to make me better." Me: "How do you feel now?" Chris: "better now. Why did you swallow a basket ball?" Lakhe held his mouth trying not to laugh and hurt himself. Me: "This isn't a basketball, I swallowed a seed and drank water. So it grows into a baby." Chris: "Oh. Then you spit the baby out?" Me: "Yes. I spit the baby out and he grows like you." Chris: "Cool. My mom died. The doctor says she went to live with Jesus." my heart stopped. Chris: "I like Jesus. He can take care of her and then you take care of me. Like my mom did before she died." Oh what kind of pain could this be? Me: "Okay sweetie but your uncle will come fetch you soon." Chris: "but I don't have a uncle." Lakhe and I looked at each other. Me: "are you sure Chris?" Chris: "Yeah. Isn't he my uncle?" he pointed at Lakhe. Me: "Don't you have an uncle Christian? Your mommy's brother?" Chris: "Nope. Only me and mommy but she's gone now. I have you." I was stunned to silence actually. Lakhe had a horrified look on his face. Me: "Yes angel face. Did you see the puppy? His name is Boogie." his face beamed into sunshine. Chris: "I love puppies!" he jumped up and ran out. Me: "Are you thinking what I'm thinking?" he typed on his phone. Lakhe: 'Your father lied. This is illegal, Spho. We've just kidnapped a child.'.....

For a good two minutes we were stuck. I didn't know what to do. All of a sudden Chris came busting in carrying Boogie with his one free arm. Chris: "Look aunty." Me: "I see honey." he got into bed with the dog, tickling his tummy. Boogie's left leg shaking with amusement. Lakhe gave me his phone to read. Lakhe: 'What do you think he was going to do to him? Was he just going to give him away to strangers?' Why would my father do such a thing to an innocent child? Me: "No. Don't think like that." Chris: "Like what?" he looked up at me. Me: "I'm talking to Uncle sweetie. Do you know the man who was with the doctor?" Chris nodded. Me: "Who is he?" Chris: "Mr Tyren." Me: "Have you seen him before?" he shook his head. Me: "you were sleeping in his arms." Chris: "Yeah." Me: "What did he say to you when you woke up?" Chris: "Nothing. But when I was sleeping I heard him say he wants to find me a family who can take good care of me. That I must not get hurt. He smells like chocolate." Seemingly Tyrone wanted a safe place for Chris but why did my dad lie saying he was waiting for an uncle from Nigeria? Chris: "You're going to keep me? I like it here." my heart broke. How could it not? Only a monster could say no to this child. He folded himself in my arms. Lakhe was looking through the papers we got from this man. Me: "Lakhe." he nodded looking at him. He gave me his phone. 'Where is this guy's name here? His signature?' I showed him. T. R. Nammok. I didn't know whether he was colored or what. I never heard him speak a word of Xhosa. Tyrone Nammok. He was definitely colored. Me: "What do we do?" he typed on his phone and gave it to me. Lakhe: 'I'll get my lawyer to review this entire process and advise us. For now I need to talk to dad, he's dealt with adoption before. Let's go.' Seems like I wasn't going to sleep anytime soon. We went to the lounge with Chris, who was heavily obsessed with the puppy. Sandile glazed at his every move like a snake in waiting. I pushed his shoulder. Me: "he's only a child. Let him play." I whispered. Sands: "Boogie is my child too." Oh Sandile. Me: "Tata, uLakhe has something he wants to talk to you about." Lakhe gave him his phone to read what he wrote. Rob: "Let's see the papers." he read through them. Rob: "What makes you think its illegal?" Sands: "I'm sorry what?" Stella: "What's illegal?" Dumi: "I heard my anti name?" he rolled in to the lounge. You would think nobody is listening and they're all minding their own business but nope. Rob: "Yeke Dumi, go through this with me. I had papers exactly like this with yours and Sandile's adoption, Lakhe. Nothing illegal about it." Me: "Well...the child doesn't have an 'uncle' like my dad said he did. Judge Tyrone was there ready and willing to sign him over." Rob: "and?" Sands: "Nditshilo mna. I knew it. Too quick and easy to be true. Wasn't there supposed to be a home visit to see where you lived as well? Anyway, I don't think its a good idea to take him back. Neither is keeping him, I'm not going to wait for the black helicopters to get here mna guys, you'll find me at the Radisson." Me: "Sandile, we can't just

keep him." Sands: "Why not? You have documents that an actual lawyer, an actual doctor and supposedly an actual judge confirm are legal. Whether or not it is, you'll draw attention to yourself if you go back there. When are you expected to take him back?" Me: "Monday." Sands: "then you go there on Monday." Rob: "I don't see why you're so worried. The child could have ended up in an orphanage or in the hands of an abusive family. Instead, he's with you." Sands: "I think they're more worried about when he leaves and where he's going." Lakhe gave me his phone. 'Who knows what type of environment he's going to in Nigeria. How they will treat him?' Me: "Where is Sibü?" Sands: "he's taking a nap." he read off Lakhe's phone. Sands: 'There was an unusual vibe about the guy that we met, I don't trust him.' He looked at me. Sands: "which guy is this?" Me: "Tyrone. Lakhe says he looks like an angel that was kicked out of heaven." Sandile laughed hard and long. Stella: "He's right. Now that you mention it, something in his eyes had an eerie feel about them. To think I invited him for dinner." Rob: "In who's house perhaps?" Stella: "Not yours, obviously." Sands: "mama, You felt a weird vibe and still invited him?" Stella: "At the time I didn't feel weird at all. I just kind of panicked when I saw him. I felt stuck, then when I started talking to him everything felt comfortable. Soft. Unpressured like he was assuring me everything is fine." Lakhe clapped once. Sands: "Why would you panic in the first place?" Stella: "he's indescribably beautiful it hurts my breathing." Rob had a bored look on his face when staring at her. Rob: "There's no such thing. You just exaggerate everything." Stella: "Ask Spho, she's the one who said he was a supermodel and Lakhe saw him too, describing him as an angel." Sands: "Lakhe says he was thrown out of heaven." he giggled. Dumi: "You know another angel who was thrown out of heaven?" Me: "I don't want to talk about that right now. This is creepy enough as it is. Where's Chris?" he wasn't in the corner he was playing in. Sibü walked in the lounge carrying him. Sibü: "this one doesn't want me to sleep." Again. This child's comfort levels are very questionable. Luke came from the second passage almost frightening me. I keep forgetting he's still here. Luke: "hello." we all greeted him. Sands: "Oh my goodness, you're still here!!" Me: "Don't even. You knew exactly where he was." Sands: "It was Lakhe's idea." Luke: "I thought Dumi had only two kids?" Sands: "Yes. This one is Lakhe's." Me: "His name is Christian." Luke: "he's cute." he sat down. Luke: "I was reading my Bible when I had a vision of something disturbing. I thought I'd come here and check on all of you." Sands: "What did you see?" Luke: "two things. A man in a black coat. He was standing right there." he pointed to a spot by the door. Luke: "I couldn't see his face but, I could hear his voice. It was smooth, and calm." Rob: "What did he say?" Luke: "He was speaking in another language I've never heard before." Sibü: "What was the second thing you saw?" Luke: "a dead body. Covered in a black body bag." Sands: "Let

me get this in my head. Spho, this is the second time you see this man? The first time you did, you came back home and went to sleep immediately. The night of your nightmare. Sibü on the other hand, had disappeared a week before that and when he also came back, he had a nightmare. Similar screams, both of you not remembering. Could it be possible that it is this man causing these nightmares? Spho, did you look him in the eye that first day?"

Me: "Yes, I fixated on his eyes for quite a minute." Sands: "Lakhe, did you look him in the eye?" Lakhe shook his head. Sands: "mama?" Stella: "Yes. Like Spho said, I was fixated. His eyes looked like jewels." Robert rolled his eyes. Sands: "the only way we can confirm this is if someone between the three of you has a nightmare tonight. Like I said, I'll be at the Radisson if you need me." Sibü: "What exactly are we confirming?" Sands: "If this man is a real person or some demon." Me: "I don't know if this is a good idea Sandile, I'm panicking. Why am I panicking?" Sands: "its the perfect idea." Luke: "No, it isn't. I finally figured it out. We can't wait for nightfall, we need to pray. Now." Sands: "Why?" Luke: "Because, if it is so, that Spho and Sibü had these nightmares, today isn't a coincidence that she bumped into him and I had a vision. A third person, means a death. Yes, there will be a nightmare but whoever has it this time will die in their sleep. And that third person is between You and You." he pointed at Lakhe and Stella. I felt cold shivers down my spine. The sleep I had instantly evaporated. I was wide awake now. We can't afford another death. I am not emotionally capable of handling it especially if its going to be my husband.

Me: "Luke is right we need to pray." Sands: "Seriously? How is prayer going to work? How does someone die from a nightmare. Hayi Luke fondin, uyasishaya ngoku." Me: "I'm not taking any chances." Stella: "Me neither! I can't die yet! Luke, pray if you must. Matter of fact, all of us, gather in a circle and let's start a night vigil. There's by no way I'm sleeping to my death." before anyone could protest or talk, Luke began praying. Luke: "Our heavenly Father, we come before You this day in need of Your protection, guidance and strength. We ask that You rebuke the evil that surrounds us and this home. Cast out any evil and demonic spirit loitering around Your children. Release our spiritual strength to be able to face the forthcoming danger. We ask that you empower us. Cleanse our hearts and souls, forgive our past mistakes and lead us on a righteous path. Your children are standing before You God, seeking help. Bind them with everlasting love and security. Cover them with courage and a mighty spirit to face their problems head on. We hand over this delicate and dangerous situation to You. We trust You God. We bow before Your name. Barricade this family into Your heavenly protection. Let their enemies who bring bad luck to them be disappointed. Let them witness your mighty glory as the night approaches and the morning brings a brighter day. In the name of Jesus Christ, nothing will break or

torment this family. In the name of the Holy Spirit I speak Fire to the demons. They are to burn in the sight of your loyal children!! Burn!!! In the name of our Almighty, no premature death will come anywhere near this family. Deliver them from evil Father because You are our Savior, Our Healer!! We look upon You for strength. We announce Your presence dear God in this house. We announce Your presence in their hearts. Move in between them. Let the Holy Spirit walk with every step they take. Let those guards outside be Your angels sent from heaven to protect and secure this house from all danger. I breath faith into each and every one of you standing before me. Conform to God's word. We are not worthy of His mercy yet He always comes through. Believe in what He can do. This is no ordinary man. This is a supernatural being with powers way beyond the hands of man. Way beyond our trails of thinking. Give Him the respect!!! To God be the glory!! Shake a supernatural force into this house. I put forth a mother and father who has raised Masilakhe, Sandile and Nosiphiwo. Cement them to Your glory God. Open their eyes, and hearts to receive your full strength. I put forth, Masilakhe, a husband and father. Anoint him God with Your holy oil. Cleanse his heart. Let him receive Your full grace ten folds. Bless his wife, carrying their child. Protect her Lord, guide her in the righteous way to bring this family closer to themselves and to You. Bless the soul of Sandile Sobukwe, grant him the deepest desires to unlock the goodness in his heart. Protect your young daughter Nosiphiwo from the walks of life she stumbles upon. Cover her with Your sacred blood, let no evil come close in destroying her future and dreams. Put your hands on each and every member of this family, hold them closer together God. We are acknowledging Your presence. We Welcome you into this home Father Almighty. Hold us together for the remainder of this night As You only knows what happens next. We thank You God. We glorify Your name. We have placed our lives in Your hands. Amen." I finally opened my eyes. Christian was holding on to me quietly. Would it be possible if I kept Luke forever? I felt so much safer.

After the prayer, everyone was quiet and doing their own thing. Sandile was on his usual couch frowning at the TV. Luke: "Why are you so angry?" Sands: "I'm not angry." Luke: "then what's wrong?" Sands: "Luke. I'm going to say this once, I'm not in the mood for a chat right now." Luke: "Are you feeling guilty after everything You've done in the past to have someone pray for you and your well-being." Sands: "The next thing I say will be in the form of a vase in contact with your face Luke." Luke: "I understand. You know where to find me." Dumi and Rob sat on the opposite couch. Stella went to her room with Nosi. Me: "Uphi uSibulele?" everybody didn't know. He had probably gone to

his room. Lakhe gave me his phone. 'What do we do about Chris?' I read. Looking at the boy sitting on the carpet playing with the puppy. I really didn't know. I was scared that on Monday he'll be shipped off to another country which he doesn't know to live with strangers who could be just about anyone. I wrote back on his phone because I didn't want anyone eavesdropping. Me: 'Its a big decision baby. He's just a child. I don't want him exposed to cruelty somewhere. He already feels comfortable here. I don't know.' He read it then typed. 'We'll see during this weekend how we cope.' I kissed his cheek. Lakhe: 'You need to sleep.' He wrote. Me: "After dinner." He shook his head pulling me up. In the bedroom I got into bed. Me: "Can I have some snacks at least?" he went to go fetch chips, biscuits, chocolates and all kinds of sweets. All I wanted was a packet of Lays and he legit cleaned out the snack cabinet. I was not ready for a Sandile meltdown to be honest. At the edge of the bed he sat down and massaged my swollen feet. Christian came in once again but no Boogie this time around, he got into bed and snuggled up next to me. I gave him a ball of Lindt chocolatier. You should've see how his face melted at the chocolate. He licked the corners of his mouth sucking his upper lip and licking his fingers. Chris: "Mr Sandile made me wash my hands. He says Boogie has to sleep now." Yazi unomona uSandile bethuna. Me: "everytime you finish playing with the dog honey, you have to wash your hands okay?" Chris: "Okay." Me: "What do you want to watch?" Chris: "I don't watch TV. But I have a CD for music." he took out the disc from his backpack. 'The Quack quack album.' I almost laughed really. Lakhe took the CD and inserted it in the CD player. Chris immediately jumped up and started singing. Chris: "All my friends, we sing a-long. With all our pets in the farm. They call out loud and sing, Woof woof woof. Dennis the dog. Pom pom pom." he was doing the actions too, jumping around. Lakhe was hiding the biggest smile on his face. Chris: "and right when she comes, its Kitty the cat. Meow meow meow. Shake-a-leg, pow! Pom pom pom." this was one crazy song I swear. Chris: "before we clap its, Nelly the mouse, she goes kroop kroop kroop. Pom pom pom." I laughed. If I hear them pom poms one more time I'm afraid I'll laugh all the way into my next life. The performance was so cute. After the song he came back to bed and dug into his bag again. Chris: "oooh, my favorite. Here aunty." he took out a story book and handed it to me. He took out an action figure as well. Chris: "This is Mr Courage. He kicks monsters' butts." Me: "How nice of Mr Courage to protect little Chris." he looked further in his bag. Chris: "here's another book, for bedtime. Here uncle." he gave it to Lakhe. Chris: "my crayons of course. Can't leave them behind. Look at my coloring book." I paged through it. Me: "This is beautiful Chris. Did you do this?" Chris: "Yep." I showed Lakhe. He acted surprised to see a 4 year old's coloring. Chris: "Oh No." he looked panicked. Me: "What is it?" Chris: "I can't find my cape."

How can I be a super hero without a cape aunty?" Oh Goodness. Me: "We'll get you a cape sweetheart. Don't worry. The world will be okay tonight while you take a one day holiday." Chris: "Are you sure?" Me: "Yes of course. You deserve a vacation." Chris: "Okay. Only for tonight." Me: "definitely." the last thing I remember was him counting his crayons with Lakhe and my sleep finally caught up.

#107

I woke up about an hour later from my nap. Christian and Lakhe were asleep next to me. I got up and went to the bathroom first then after washing my hands trotted down to the kitchen. Only Sandile was sitting watching TV. I looked through the fridge. When last did we do the grocery? Apart from what we bought with Chris. Me: "Sandile." he appeared in the kitchen. Sands: "Yes?" Me: "Do you mind going to the store to get me some meat?" Sands: "Yes." Me: "Please?" Sands: "I'm busy." Me: "Do you want to come with me then?" Sands: "I'll go change my shirt." he walked back out. Typical of Sandile not to want to go to the shops alone. I wanted a leg of lamb to roast and some vegetables. Maybe tomorrow I could make shrimp pasta. Then on Sunday we can all go out for dinner. I went to wear sensible shoes and fetch my handbag and keys. In the bed, Lakhe and the boy were still fast asleep. They looked so cute. I can't believe this was my life now. A year ago I wouldn't have thought that I'd have a whole husband and two kids. I tiptoed out the room. Sandile was waiting by the door. We walked to my car. The drive way was full of cars, it was giving me a headache. It was Rob's car, Stella's car, Masilakhe had two cars, Sandile's car, Sibuh's car and my new Range Rover. Seven whole cars. Me: "Do we really need this many cars?" Sands: "yeah, its a lot but mama and dad aren't staying forever. They'll be leaving soon." Me: "Are you sure?" he laughed. Sands: "They enjoy being here but I know my mom. She wants her space. Dad on the other hand wants to travel the world. I don't know why they seem to be falling more in love lately." Me: "Right? Maybe they might get back together wethu." We got in the car and drove to Checkers. Sands: "I think they shouldn't. They're much happier apart than they were married." Me: "Its up to them. They will have to face the truth themselves without us interfering." Sands: "Something is bothering me." Me: "What is it?" Its been long since someone confided in me. Sands: "Luke. He makes me uncomfortable." Me: "Is it because he prayed for you?" Sands: "I don't need his prayers. I'm not a charity case." Me: "Nobody prays for you because they see you as charity. Sometimes its in your spirit to pray for another person. Maybe they can't do it themselves so God sends one of his

soldiers to do it. Its not meant as an insult or humiliation. Its actually a blessing. When we aren't strong for ourselves, someone else can be strong for us and adjudicate on our behalf. Isn't it good sometimes to have someone fight your battles for you?" Sands: "Well yeah, I guess. I just feel....guilty." Me: "Why do you feel guilty?" Sands: "I've done a lot of bad things Spho. To a lot of people. I'm living this good life while their families suffer. Why would someone pray for my safety instead of my victims'?" Me: "As much as You've sinned, God still created you and loves you. You are His son. There's nothing you can do to make Him turn His back on you no matter what you've done. Here's a typical example, Satan. God doesn't hate Satan. Only God has the power to kill him and he hasn't. As much as He knows Satan won't change, He hasn't given up on him. That's his son. Consider all the things Satan does. Painful things. So long as you truly repent, return home and live your life through God, He will forgive you. Regardless of what you do. You know one time my pastor was preaching about salvation. I was quite young at the time. He said, the more good you do, the more spiritual rewards you get. Now, as humans we are not perfect. We sometimes make mistakes and fall off the wagon. When we sin, God takes away from those rewards. One at a time. You'd think you're having a car accident and think its just bad luck, kanti that's the first shake you get from God to straighten up your act. The next you lose your business, and you start getting depressed. You lose your family, you go bat crazy and stop believing in Him. Those are little shakes that should open your eyes. Instead, we run further away. Sooner or later you'll run out of rewards, God can't take more from you anymore. Why do you think, just out of the blue sometimes, you meet someone who asks you to accompany them to church? Visit their church? Talk to you about God? That's one of the final signs. That person is sent by God to save your life. Abanye abantwana bakhula kamnandi kuba they have grandmothers to pray for them, thina we have only our parents who at times forget or don't even pay attention. So these earthly angels come to us, and being in the state of mind we're in, we tend to get irritated and uncomfortable. We don't want to hear about God. Because mos kakade I'm already broke and poor, nobody cares if I'm a drug addict, God has done nothing for me. That's the mentality we have. Kanti nanku umntu, brought by God Himself. We ignore that person, kuphelile ngathi. The next sniff of cocaine, sends me into a spiral overdose and I die. Not because God hated me but He loves me so much that He couldn't take seeing me in that state and pain. He had to take me. So when someone prays for you Sandile, when someone invites you to church, take it as a sign that God is trying to reach out to you. That you need Him at that moment, you're running low on salvation. He is trying to save you. That uncomfortable feeling is you being outside your comfort zone. And its a good thing. Its no mistake Luke came

here or prayed when he did. Don't feel bad about it, okay?" I parked the car at the mall. Me: "Are you okay?" he nodded looking out the window. Me: "Sands?" he sniffed and opened the door, climbing out. Oh my goodness, did I make him cry? I got out the car and went over to his side. Me: "you can talk to me." his eyes were red. Sands: "I haven't shed a tear in years." Me: "its okay, I won't tell anyone." Sands: "I don't know if I can change Spho. Is it possible? Luke wasn't lying. Deep down I always imagine what it would be like if I was a normal person. If I'd get married and be loved. Most importantly, if I could love that person back. I want to be normal but I don't think I can change." Me: "You can't change overnight. The most important thing is to keep trying over and over. Work on yourself. Love yourself. Respect yourself. Be the best version of yourself and you'll attract someone with the same values." Sands: "You don't have the same values as Lakhe. In fact, he doesn't deserve you. Yet he has you. I have some hope." Me: "The answer is right there, I'm his salvation. God sent me to him for a reason. Are you trying to tell me in the period we have been married, you haven't seen a tiny bit of softness and change in him? Let Luke in, talk to him. He has such a deep insight about God and life. Plus You'd relate more to him." Sands: "because we're both murderers?" Me: "No! Because you're both men. Why would you th.....wait....what?" Sands: "never mind. Thank you Spho. For sharing this with me. You touched my cold heart. Now I realize why you have such a big heart. I wish I could make you proud." Me: "you listening to me, makes me proud. Come here." I hugged him.

After grocery shopping, we went home and I prepared the lamb for a roast. Sandile was sitting on the counter keeping me company chatting his funny stupid stories. Sibu and Nosi came to join us. Robert came in too. Rob: "All my children in one room." Sands: "still two missing." Rob: "Of course. Where is Lakhe anyway?" Me: "he's taking a nap with Christian tata." Rob: "okay, have you decided on keeping him?" Me: "We are not sure yet." Rob: "I think you should. He's a smart and adorable kid. You two would make great parents." Nosi: "I agree." Sands: "hold on....before we start agreeing and nodding heads, our previous conversation about the legitimacy of these papers has been forgotten?" Rob: "The papers are legal Sandile. Stop being a jelly bean." Sands: "a jelly bean? You're spending too much time with the kids." Rob: "Maybe if you gave me grandchildren, so you are in no position to complain now." Me: "Where's ma?" Rob: "She's in her room, praying. She hasn't stopped. I have to give Luke credit. She really thinks she's going to die." Sands: "You're not going to see the kingdom of heaven shame tata." he got off the counter. Rob: "I wasn't the one who scared her." Sands: "You're laughing. That's just as

bad." Rob: "Am I not allowed to laugh?" Sands: "The kingdom will be a pipe dream for you." Rob: "where are you going?" Sands: "To console my mother tata. She's not going to die. Nobody in this house will." he walked out the kitchen. Rob: "What's up with him?" I shrugged. Of course I knew. Sandile was stepping up. A very big step from his childlike personality. I was proud already. After cooking I took the dishes to the dining table then went to wake Lakhe and Chris up. We went to have dinner with the family. Everyone was in their own thoughts. I had a slight feeling they were anxious about tonight and Luke's vision. So after dinner I gathered them up again in the lounge for an evening prayer. Sibulele: "Is this absolutely necessary?" Me: "Do you have a problem?" Sibulele: "No, its just two prayers in one day is a little testy isn't it?" Me: "We aren't testing anything. We are God proofing the house and everyone will participate. When I start the prayer, each and every person will contribute two lines until it comes back to me, we say amen and go about our evenings. Since Lakhe can't talk, I'll speak on his behalf." Sibulele: "two lines of what?" Me: "of prayer Sibulele. We are bringing God closer. Can we please close our eyes and hold each other's hands?" we formed a circle and held hands closing our eyes. Me: "Dear God, I bring our family before you this evening. We have drifted away from Your word and we humble ourselves to You in praise. We announce Your presence Lord. Allow us to glorify You in thanks of the mercy You have on each of our lives." Stella: "We ask for protection against evil. Relieve our hearts of heavy burdens." Rob: "Bring our family closer, please forgive our past mistakes. Thank you for holding us together in good and bad times." Nosi: "I ask You Lord, to help us conquer any demonic entity sent to ruin us. Break down any force that is meant to destroy us." Sands: "Fill our cups with salvation. Strengthen and empower our hearts to do better to and for others." Dumi: "Protect our children at all times. Reach into their hearts so they can follow a righteous path." Vicky: "Usixolele Yehova iizono zethu. Ukhulule intliziyo zethu sibenoxolela abanye." then silence... Sibulele was dead quiet. Me: "Open his heart, Lord. Let Your word do its job. Cleansing him and freeing him off this entity. Break it down and flush it out of him." Sibulele: "Spho." Me: "Hold him close to you God. Bind him with your love and grace. Have mercy on his soul. Soar through his spirit in every way possible. I send the Holy Spirit to surround him, at every turn." Sibulele: "Spho please...stop." Me: "I breath Fire to whatever it is holding him back! Controlling and manipulating him. Free him Father Almighty. Take control God. Grab a hold of his soul. Talk through him. That negative energy has no place in his body. That evil spirit has no corner in his soul. Speak to him Lord. Hold on to Your child God. All in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen." I opened my eyes. Luke had joined us and had his arms around my brother holding him still. Me: "What happened?" Luke: "He wanted to attack you."

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I felt so defeated. All I could do was stare. Sibulele was kneeling on the floor now, shaking. Luke: "There is something inside him. That's why he kept calling your name asking you to stop. He never wanted to hurt you. Something else took over his body and he was fighting it." Lakhe showed him the door, opening it wide and folding his arms. Luke: "he needs this family now more than ever." Sands: "We have children in this house Luke. We cannot afford taking that chance." Luke: "If you let him go now, he would do more damage. You don't want to feed this thing." Me: "then what do we do? I don't want to sleep with one eye open!" Luke: "We need to pray for him Spho. I have a friend of mine who specializes in this. He can drive the demon out." Sands: "Demon? Sibulele has a demon?" Me: "I don't know Luke. This sounds really dangerous." Luke: "It is. We will need a very quiet, unoccupied space. This thing could leave his body and attached itself on someone else here." Rob: "Okay, you know what? Sibulele is part of our family. We will support him. Luke do as you may, I'm going to look for a secluded spot. So what do we do with the demon once its out?" Luke: "Patrick is the master of demons. He'll take it with him." Sands: "Take it where? Can't you just kill it?" Luke: "Tell me, how do you kill a demon Sandile? I for one would love to know." Sands: "I don't know about everyone else but it terrifies me that this guy takes demons out and leaves with them. Who knows what he does. Releasing them out in the open, at the mall for unsuspecting humans." Luke: "I believe he takes it to the morgue and attaches it into a corpse, so that it resides there without being disturbed since its going to be buried underground." Sands: "Is this why ghosts exist? Wow." Rob: "So when do we go? Is tomorrow fine?" Luke: "Tomorrow will be too late. We need to do it tonight and you're not going anywhere." Sandile looked at Lakhe. Rob: "but if you need help-" Luke: "You will get hurt. Its much better this way. I know what to do." Sands: "how long will this take?" Luke: "it doesn't have a time frame. It takes as long as it feels. Can I make a call to Patrick?" Sandile gave him his cellphone. I sat down slowly. I felt so sorry for Sibulele. Where did he get in contact with this thing? Which means, he was the one who killed Miriam? He didn't look like he was in his right mind. My head was spinning. Once Luke was done, he gave the phone back. Luke: "he's on his way." Sands: "can we do anything to help." Luke: "Yeah. You can pray for him. He is on low supply right now. This procedure is dangerous, he looks weak already. Its possible this kills him while leaving his body. I'm going to need you all to pray when we leave. I'll let you know when he's safe." Me: "can he hear me?" Luke: "Yes. He can. You need to reach his soul Spho. He is in a weak state now." I nodded. Me: "Sibulele?" he looked around. Luke: "Don't

come closer." he held his shoulder. Luke: "he could attack any minute it takes him over." Me: "Sibu, bhuti wam, you need to be ready for battle now. You need to fight and win this. I miss you. I don't want you to be stuck like this. You must know that we love you very much and we are behind you." Sibu: "You will never get rid of me." I was taken aback by that deep hoarse voice. My heart hammered in my chest. Everyone seemed to be shocked too. Sibu: "I. Own. Everything. You can never get rid of me." he laughed. Sibu: "Spho..." his normal voice came back. Oh crap. This was things of the movies. Not here in my house. Attacking my brother! Sibu: "Let me go Spho. He will never stop." he cried. Sibu: "Please!" Luke: "He has no place in your body or soul Sibulele. We will not stop until he's gone! Fight!!" Sibu: "Fight? You think you can fight me? Do you even know who I am? Of course you don't. How could you. Little Sibu and your friends cannot touch me. Tell me Lakhe, are you done wrestling with your demons? Sandile? Frank is still calling out for you. None of you are above me." he cackled. Sibu: "Spho, you love me. You've held me in your arms. I've felt your baby. This is how you're thanking me?" Luke started praying holding on to him. Sibu: "You ought to leave me alone if you want to keep your hands." Stella and Robert joined Luke in prayer. Sibu: "You're wasting your time really. Even your God cannot kill me." Luke: "Spho, pray." he grabbed Sibu tighter, Robert helping him. Me: "he is going to kill me-" Luke: "Do it!!!!" Sibu: "Sphosenkosi, don't you dare!" Sandile stood in front of me. Sands: "Pray Spho." Lakhe stood next to him. Me: "Father Almighty, I ask that you announce yourself in our house. Break down every evil spirit and crush them to their knees. I rebuke that demon out of my brother's soul-" Sibu: "Spho!!!!" Me: "Shake this house and set him alight God! We ask for your mercy God. Save Sibulele's soul. Strengthen his spirit as he fights this demonic being. Let no evil manipulate or take over his body! Tear it open and cast it out in the name of Jesus Christ. I command you to LEAVE!!!!" he screamed his lungs out. It sounded like metal scratching metal. Luke: "command him again!" Sibu: "You are not my master!!!!" Me: "I command you to leave my brother's body and go back where you came from. I command you to burn!! The fire of the Holy Spirit is catching on to you!! Burn Satan!!! You have no residence in his body nor this house!! I command you to break and burn!!" I heard a loud thud. I opened my eyes. Sibu was laying on the floor. Luke: "Keep praying." Me: "he's dead?" I sobbed. Luke: "Keep praying. Command it out! Lakhe hold your child. Go Spho!" Me: "I command you out of this house!! I rebuke you demon!!! Holy fire will catch on you and burn you coming anywhere closer to this family!!! El Shaddai, cast out this entity from our house. Set it on fire!!! Burn it!! In the name of Jesus Christ, I COMMAND you to burn!!!! Restore my brother's soul God, reside in his heart, seal his spirit with your love and protection. Raise him up. No evil spirit shall knock him down! No

premature death shall come near us! Protect your children God." I felt a hand on my shoulder. When I turned around I almost jumped out of my skin. A tall man was standing behind me. If it wasn't for the biggest Bible on planet earth in his hand, I would've screamed. Me: "Who are you?" Luke: "Patrick." Sands: "How did you get in?" Patrick: "You left the gate and door open. I see You've done my job." he knelt next to Sibü. Patrick: "Wow. It knocked him out badly. This is probably the strongest entity I've ever dealt with. It looks so familiar. At least he's still alive, but barely." he looked at me. Patrick: "You saved his life." Me: "Is it gone? The thing in him?" Patrick: "No. It is mastering strength. This is why you shouldn't stop praying. It knows you think its dead or gone, and it will strike when you least expect it, much stronger than before. We don't have much time. I need an empty room. With no furniture or anything, its time I take it out. Hold your child close to you, he's very vulnerable." he pointed at Chris. The boy's eyes were wide open like a deer caught in headlights. He looked so frightened. Me: "come here honey." he ran to me. I picked him up. He was shaking all over. Patrick: "You tough guys can help me get this one to the room." Sibü started moving slowly. Patrick: "Quick!!!" they carried him to an empty room. Luke: "Nobody can be quiet now. Everyone, pray. Pray violently against this thing. Fight with your fire!" I heard a loud bang and a scream. Luke ran down the passage. We continued praying in the lounge. Bang after bang after scream. Christian started crying, holding on tight. If he could cover himself with my skin, he probably would've. One last thud then stillness. Luke: "Thank You God." I opened my eyes and looked around. Everyone seemed to be here. Sands: "Is it gone?" Luke: "It will be quite a while till we find out but I trust Patrick. Is Chris okay?" Me: "Yes, just a little shaken." Luke: "He will be fine." Sands: "Does anyone want some juice? I'm thirsty as a lion." Stella: "I'll have some." Lakhe sat next to me and sighed. He took Chris from my arms, wiping his face. After 30 minutes or so, Patrick came out the room. Patrick: "Done." he looked disheveled. Like he was in an actual fight. Patrick: "He will be okay, he's still weak. Luke will take care of him. He knows what to do." Sands: "You want juice?" Patrick: "No, water will be fine thank you." Sandile went to fetch the jug and a glass. Sands: "What was that anyway? Do you know where it came from?" Patrick: "The single most strongest spirit I've ever seen. Something that is used to crushing its victims by just the look of an eye. And it is so rare." Me: "You said it looked familiar." Patrick: "It did. I've handled one like it but it was much smaller. Less aggressive than this one. If I didn't know better I'd say Satan himself came and took over. Whatever it is, will not hurt you again. Trust me. And don't blame Sibü. He didn't do anything wrong. If anything, he tried by all means to save you. To not hurt you. He gave himself up, for you. I cannot begin to imagine fighting something this big alone." Sands: "So where's the demon now? I hope its not

lurking in this house." Patrick: "It can't lurk. It will never survive. Your prayers, brought it to its knees. All of you have a fire that will burn it should it ever come close, so I urge you, everytime that small voice in your head says 'pray', you do it immediately. Stop the car in the freeway if you must. That is your warning sign of danger. It is a spiritual siren. Try as often as possible, to pray. Its time for me to go now. I need to let it loose before it weighs me down." Luke: "Thank you for coming Patrick." Patrick: "No problem. Take care of him, no amount of doctors can raise him now. He needs prayer." Luke: "I will do so." Patrick said his goodbyes and walked out. Sands: "So that just happened, huh. I'm never watching horror movies again. They're childish compared to what just happened." Dummi: "I almost peed my pants, I'm glad my kids are with their grandmother for tonight." Luke: "I'll check on Sibulele." the house felt much cleaner now and a breath of fresh air swirled around. My heart was at peace finally.

Friday evening I was in bed. My back was aching and I was sleepy. I'd fed Chris his medication and he passed out next to me in minutes. Lakhe came to massage me as usual. Once he was done, wrote on his phone. Lakhe: 'You need to rest, I'll be with Sibulele for the night. Just in case.' Me: "Be careful." Lakhe: 'I will be. Promise me to stay in this bed. You've been tired since morning and you need good rest. Stop stressing yourself and sleep.' Me: "I promise. I don't think I can get up anyway, I'm so sleepy." Lakhe: 'Good. I love you.' He kissed my lips. Me: "I love you too." I closed my eyes and immediately drifted to sleep. Lakhe stood up and walked to his closing. Dressing in black attire and beanie that would cover his face when necessary. He tip toed out the room with pajamas and slippers, dropping them in Sandile's room. When he walked out, he bumped into Luke. Luke: "Where are you off to?" Lakhe: 'Just a drive to clear my head. Luke, I need and trust you to take care of my family.' He showed Luke what he wrote. Luke: "I'm asking you one more time. Where are you off to?" Lakhe: 'It doesn't matter, just keep an eye on Sibulele.' Luke: "Lakhe, this journey of yours does not look good. I don't like how I feel." Sandile appeared behind him. Sands: "ready to go?" Luke: "Wait." he touched Lakhe's neck. Luke: "If something does not feel right, you'll feel it in your heart. And you will come straight back home. Whatever this is, can never be worth your life. Do you hear me Sandile, listen to your heart." Sands: "Gotchu mfethu. Let's move." they went to the car and drove out. Sands: "Well, you heard the man. One feeling and we're out." Lakhe rolled his eyes. Sandile raced to the harbor and parked in his revised spot. Sands: "everyone is here. Its 22:44. Time to review." Kyle joined them in their car. Sands: "its almost time for take off. Is everyone ready?" Kyle: "Yes, everyone is in position. Where's

Sibu?" Sands: "He's not well. Let's go over this one more time." they wore their ear pieces. Kyle: "Wait..." he stared ahead. Kyle: "Oh no. No, no, no!" Sands: "What?" Kyle: "that...that guy. Standing over there. And that one, and the other one there on top." Sands: "Ya. And? What about them?" Kyle: "Look closely. That's the K.U.G. Those ninjas of Satan." Sands: "What? How would you know?" Kyle: "Their jacket. Look at the logo. My brother has that exact one." Lakhe showed Sandile his phone. 'Call Black.' Sandile dialed his phone. The call rang. Black: "Yello!" Sands: "Man. Where are you?" Black: "I'm at home. Why?" Sands: "Black, do you know anything about what's happening at the harbor?" Black: "Yes. Its closed down for the night until morning. Komander is moving his stock. Anyone who steps inside the lock down, will be killed. Instantly. Why do you ask?" Sands: "Shit."

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Sandile pulled down his seat and held his head. Sands: "What do we do now." his phone rang again. Sands: "Black." Black: "Did you hang up on me?" Sands: "Yes." Black: "What's going on?" Sands: "You were supposed to tell us what is going on! You knew we were planning to be here!" Black: "No, you didn't tell me anything nor did you ask. I assumed you understood the concept of me delivering the stack meant there was going to be a day they leave." Sands: "That was days ago!" Black: "It would have been super suspicious if they left on the exact same day. Where are you?" Sands: "At the damn harbor and these soldiers with black jackets are walking around here! How the hell are we supposed to get out?" Black: "Crap. Okay look, you're at the same docking section as the last time right?" Sands: "Yes." Black: "Okay, at least you're safe for now. They move every hour though because they use the entire harbor. They start with the bodies, then move on to the gold and then drugs. They were supposed to start at 22:00. It takes about an hour and a half. Which means, by 23:30 they'll be done and move over to gold which is near you. You have about 10 minutes window every hour." Sands: "Black, you're confusing me. 10 minutes to do what?" Black: "to get the fuck out of there." Sands: "they are walking around all over this place! How the hell can I do that!" Black: "Man, you're in some deep shit. Let me come over. You said they're wearing the black jackets right?" Sands: "How many color jackets do you get?" Black: "There's 6. Each for different occasion. I cannot stress enough how important it is to get the dress code correctly. I'll be there in five minutes." he hung up. Kyle: "So what do we about our merch? We just leave it?" Sands: "I don't know if you're deaf dumb or stupid but the minute you step out of this car, you're dead. All of us are. You heard Black." Kyle: "Yes I get that, but-"

Sands: "but nothing. Komander is here to do his shit, we will come back another time to do ours. Because for one, I doubt they will ask first why we're here, they'll just assume we came to rob them. Or we're police." Kyle: "Okay." they waited for a few minutes. Kyle: "Do you think maybe Komander shows himself to his workers?" Sands: "I doubt that. It would be too much of a risk. I think there's just a limited number of people that know who he is. Like those that work directly under him." Kyle: "you mean the Komodity and Komfort and Kompany guys?" Sands: "Yes. There's probably a hierarchy. Him as the boss, the kom's who know him and then under them is another category then after that the Black's of the business." Kyle: "There is a whole lot of them though." Sands: "general workers, yes. But only the Kom guys have seen him I'm sure. You have to prove your loyalty." Kyle: "I wonder how. Maybe you have to kill someone." Sands: "That's too easy, all of them would be promoted. Its probably something heinous. Just the thought of it should make you shake. Do you want to join the KUG?" Kyle: "Absolutely fucking not. I don't have a death wish." Sands: "You have a lot of questions for someone not interested." Kyle: "I'm just curious. What could possibly be going through a person's mind that they'd join something like this?" Sands: "Three people you know joined. Frank, Black and your brother. Frank joined because he was a coward. Black was just plain stupid. So ask your brother." Kyle: "he said he needed the rush. Apparently the K.U.G gives some sense of responsibility and adrenaline rush." Sands: "I would've thought it was for the money." someone knocked on his window. Sandile drew out his gun at the sight of a KUG logo. Black: "Its me!" he whispered. Sands: "I would've shot you dead man! What the hell!" Black slipped in the backseat. Black: "Hi guys. Hello Mr G." Sands: "How are you going to get us out of here?" Black: "Oh yeah. You gonn drive out the same way you came in." Sandile turned around and stared at him. Sands: "And you couldn't tell me that over the phone?" he hissed. Black: "and miss the fun? No. Its much more complicated than that. You guys are in two cars. One car leaving, fine, but two? Sardines. Where's Serge and Bull?" Sands: "down there. Then how do we leave?" Black: "shhh..." he looked out of the window into the dark night. His head tilting slightly to the side. His eyes traveled in a straight line across the parking lot. Black: "Tell Sergio to start the car and not move. Now. Lights off too." Kyle spoke into his mouth piece. Black looked the other direction and scanned again. Then back to his first position. Black: "Drive slowly, 20km/h speed. The car should creep." Kyle recited. Black: "stop." Kyle: "Stop the car Serge." Black: "Pull down the car seats." Kyle repeated over the piece. They waited a few minutes. Black: "Drive." Serge's car moved slowly a few meters. Black: "turn right slowly." the car turned. Black: "stop. Same position as before." Kyle: "Brake and get down Serge." they waited a few more minutes. Sands: "Why do you keep stopping him. Its clear that side."

Black: "If they see something move. It won't be so clear. Drive." Kyle: "Go ahead Sergio." Black: "Almost there..... Stop!" Kyle: "Stop the car." Black: "Shit. That was close. Now we gotta wait." Sands: "for what?" Black: "In 15 minutes, the guards at the gate swap shifts. There's only a two minute window. We should move closer too. If we miss this chance, we have to wait another hour, which will be a shit fest for us. Keep your lights off." Sandile started the car with its lights off. He crawled it over the parking slowly and parked a few meters away from Sergio's car. Black: "10 minutes left. Pull down your seat Mr G." Lakhe pulled down the seats. They waited the full 10 minutes. Black: "Now. Sergio, drive out." the first car pulled out. Black: "No racing yet." Sands: "when do we go?" Black: "hold on..." he looked out the wind-screen. They waited. Black: "Slowly, drive out." Sandile slowly drove the car out and onto the road. A few meters out he looked at the rear mirror. Sands: "I think someone is following us." Black: "I told you two cars was a damn problem. Sergio, Race. Car. Maniac, NOW." Kyle: "You heard that Serg?" he spoke in his mouth piece. Black: "Sandile. You better set this road alight." Sands: "No need to tell me twice." he pressed the accelerator. Sands: "Still no lights?" Black: "they already saw us so There's no point in hiding anymore, we just need to lose them." Sands: "I know a place." he abruptly hit the brakes and turned left. Sands: "Still behind me?" Kyle: "Yes!" Sands: "alright." he turned right, making a U-turn and parked. Kyle: "What the fuck are you doing!! Are you trying to get us all killed!!" Headlights shone in front them. Sands: "Yes. Yes I am." Lakhe looked at his brother and shook his head. He set his rifle and opened the sun roof, standing up in his seat. He rested his elbow on the roof and peaked through the scope aiming at the driver, determined eyes stared back at him. Focused. Dangerous. There was no waiting now. Lakhe pulled the trigger, the bullet crushing into the wind screen and straight into the head of the driver. Then he aimed at the passenger. Kyle: "Sandile!!!!!" the car was coming at them in full speed. Lakhe pulled the trigger, hitting the passenger in between the eyes who was in turn aiming at him, his head bounced back. Sandile reversed, swerving to the right. The other car swooshed past them, missing them by centimeters and heading straight for the street light pole. It crashed into it, the light going off in a bang. Lakhe sat down in his seat. Sandile drove off. Sands: "Didn't know you're such a pussy Kyle." Kyle: "I just saw my life flash before my eyes. How can you still be calm?" Sands: "Your brother joined KUG for the adrenaline rush? Seeing death is my adrenaline rush." he turned left. Sands: "You hungry? We could stop at McDonald's." Kyle: "I'm fine." he snapped. Lakhe: 'Everyone goes straight home. We'll meet Monday.' He showed Sandile. Sands: "Alright. Sergio can you hear me?" Sergio: "Yeah man. Where you guys at?" Sands: "Just drop the car and go straight home. We'll meet up Monday." Sergio: "Sure thing. I'll tell you when I'm home." Sands:

"Cool." he dropped Black off since he lived closer. Then took Kyle home. Sandile drove to Kragga Kamma. Sands: "Its been a while since we done that. Reminds me of Durban. Also scares me to the shits because if Spho ever found out, she'd kill us." Lakhe wrote: 'She would do more than kill me. She can't know about this. This car needs to go.' Sands: "I'll sort it out. You go in there and be lover boy." Lakhe: 'gonn fuckin slap you.' Sands parked in the garage and closed it. They got out the car. Sands: "I'll sort it out in the morning. I think this entire city will be closed down tonight after they discover that car. Lakhe went to change into his pajamas in Sandile's room. Lakhe: 'Night.' He showed his brother. Sands: "Sure." Lakhe walked to his bedroom, opening the door slowly. He stood at the doorway staring at his pregnant wife. The blanket was on her legs. Her white silk nighty glistening over her belly. Christian was spread next to her, snoring. Lakhe closed the door and leaned on it. He made it home...

I woke up Saturday morning at 6. I knew I had somewhere to go to but I'd forgotten where. I looked around me. Lakhe and Chris were sleeping peacefully. I hated to wake him but I needed to know where I was supposed to go. Me: "Masilakhe." he opened his eyes slowly. Me: "Where am I supposed to go? I know I had an appointment today. Yet I don't know where." he just stared at me and went back to sleep. Wow. I got up and went to the bathroom. After the toilet, shower and brushing my teeth. I went back to the closet. I took out a nude bodycon dress and white sneakers, getting dressed. I went to do my make up, a natural look with a shock of red lipstick. Brushing my hair to a low ponytail and wearing shades. I took my beige coat off the rack and hung it on my shoulders. Lakhe came in the closet. He stared at me. Me: "What?" Lakhe: 'Where are you going?' Me: "I don't know. I just need to be ready in case I remember." he wrote down again. 'My appointment is at 8. Its just 6:30. And how are you going there without me?' Me: "Oh yeah! I'll make breakfast so long. Get ready. I'll come bath Christian." he pulled me in his arms. Me: "Good morning." he smiled and kissed my lips. Me: "you're ruining my make up. Let me go eat." he wrote on his phone: 'You look gorgeous. Like a sculptured cake.' Me: "You're a comparing me to A cake? Well better than an animal but still." Lakhe: 'I'll bath Chris. Let Vicky make breakfast. Go relax.' I kissed his cheek and went to the kitchen. Sandile was holding a bowl of cereal staring at it. Me: "Hey you." Sands: "Hi." Me: "bad morning?" Sands: "I haven't been up long enough to comment on the quality of the morning." Wow. That was a lot. I took out my frying pan and olive oil. Preparing to make my egg. I had a lot more other things to think about. Such as visiting Zingi, making sure if she needed anything. I'm sure she was

overwhelmed by the baby and needs all the support possible. Especially this time doing everything by herself because Dumi didn't live with her anymore. I cracked the two eggs on the pan and watched them sizzle. On the side I made some toast. Sands: "I'm talking to you?" Me: "huh?" Sands: "I said, I'm feeling a little cranky I'm sorry." Me: "Oh okay." I took out a plate. He was beginning to annoy me because he had more to say and wasn't saying it. Me: "What is it?" I faced him. Sands: "Nothing." Me: "Why are you staring at me then?" Sands: "I, uhm....nothing." Me: "Sandile, you're gawking and its annoying me. You need to talk it out." Sands: "You look pretty today." Me: "I know and thank you. What can I help you with?" Sands: "Its just....when you get anxious, the first person you think of is who makes you happy. The person who loves you." Me: "Yes." Sands: "So what happens when you don't have that person. What do you think about? How do you deal with the anxiety?" Me: "Happiness can't always be dependent on another human. Primary happiness should come from within. Make it a hobby. A happy place. Something that won't disappear or let you down." Sands: "My hobbies are odd. They don't help my case." Me: "You want a girlfriend?" Sands: "No." Me: "then?" Sands: "I was just asking." Me: "Stay away from Zingi." I whispered. Me: "and don't you dare deny it." Sands: "I know I'm being a jerk-" Me: "I'm gonn stop you right there. You have best friends, a family in this house. I am not letting you ruin it." Sands: "I don't want her in that way. I just feel sorry for her. She has to go through all that alone. The baby is premature, she's got two other kids. Her husband left her and is in a wheelchair. I feel like I was the one who ruined her life." Me: "You both made the choice of sleeping together. Her husband also wronged her and you did not cause the accident. Yes, you contributed but you cannot take full blame for what happened. Everyone played a role. Pass me the sausages." he gave me the sausages. Sands: "Still." Me: "Stay away. You'll do more damage now." after I finished preparing my breakfast I went to sit and eat. Lakhe was in the bedroom dressing Chris after his bath. Chris: "I woke up at night to go pee and you were not here with us. Where did you go?" Lakhe pointed to the kitchen. Chris: "Why can't you talk?" Lakhe made a choking sound and fell on the carpet. Chris laughed. Chris: "you're silly." after dressing up they went to the kitchen for breakfast. I cleared up the dishes when they finished eating. The time was 7:40. Time to go. We went to my car. I put Chris in the back and secured the seat belt on him then got in the passenger. Lakhe drove to the hospital. We were only going there for the throat check up. We decided not to ask my dad anything about Chris yet. Upon arrival, we walked up to his office. After several knocks and no answer. Another doctor walked down the passage. Me: "excuse me. Do you know where Dr Ngudla is?" Doc: "He's on leave. He left yesterday." Me: "What? He told us to be here to check up on my husband's throat. He said

nothing about leaving." Doc: "Well, I'm sorry. All his patients are referred to Dr Osborne. He's down the hall." he walked away. I could not believe it. I took out my phone and punched his number in. "You have reached the voicemail." I hung up. Me: "How could he do this to me?" My heart broke. First smuggles me a child then run off without a word? Lakhe held my hand and walked me to Dr Osborne. Even while I explained everything, my spirit was down. Why would my father do such a thing? Or is he running from me? The doctor examined Lakhe's throat. Doc: "This is looking good. You'll be in talking shape by tomorrow." We left the doctor's office. Me: "Lakhe...." he looked at me. Me: "My father....do you think he's involved in something?" he shook his head. Me: "Then I guess I need to find Tyrone.".....

#110

Lakhe had typed all the way to the car and he gave me the phone to read. He got in with Chris. I read: 'Babe, For once can we not focus on other people. There's nothing but stress coming with this guy and we can't afford that. We're having a baby. We have to take care of Chris as well. Please let this go.' How the hell can I let it go? I gave him his phone and fastened my seat belt, keeping my mouth shut. He just sat and looked at me. I refused to look back. I had a lot of things to get done. I took my phone and texted my friend. 'Hey Zingi, Is it okay if I come over today? Will you be busy?' Send. She replied almost instantly. 'Please come Spho.' I felt so guilty that I didn't offer days ago. She's probably overwhelmed. Lakhe started the car and drove to the house. Me: "I'm going to take Chris with me, I'm going to Zingi's place." I announced. He just looked at me. When he parked the car in the driveway, he held my arm as I tried to get off. Me: "Zingi needs me, Lakhe. And I need this car to drive around in case she needs something." Lakhe: 'please don't be mad.' He wrote. Me: "I'm not." Lakhe: 'Leave Chris behind. We're going to have a boys day. I'm sure he doesn't want to sit and giggle with girls all day. Lol.' After reading this I gave him back his phone and got out the car. I went inside the house where Sandile and Dumi were chilling in their shorts. Sands: "Hi Spho." Me: "Hi." I went to the bedroom. Sands: "What did you do?" Lakhe put Chris down and sighed walking to the room. I changed my outfit because it was getting hot outside. I took out a soft pink dress that was just above my knees and my comfy sandals. I got dressed again. Lakhe stood by the door waiting. I took my bag. He held my arm. Me: "What?" he gave me his phone. Me: "Can I just go? Please? I just want to relax. This is why I'd gone to East London in the first place, to get away from stress and you. Can I just have a few hours with my friend?" he didn't move. I looked at what he wrote:

'Why do you always have to fight me?' Me: "When exactly did I fight you?" Lakhe: 'In the car? And now? What is it that I said that pissed you off?' Me: "You treat me like a child Lakhe. Nothing is ever okay until You do it." Lakhe: "Chasing after Tyrone, a guy we don't know isn't dangerous? What do you want with him? Its not like he would know where your dad is vacationing.' Me: "And I said okay. Can I go now?" Lakhe: 'Baby, what is it?' Me: "I'm suffocated Lakhe. I just want to get away from here." I walked past him and grabbed my keys on the way out the front door. I drove out the yard and headed straight for Zingi's house. Chris: "Why is aunty leaving me behind?" Sands: "Lakhe?" Lakhe sat down and showed him the phone. Lakhe: 'She needs space. Says she feels suffocated. I suggested she leave Chris.' Sands: "Chris, aunty will be back okay? For now, you're chilling with your uncle. Go to him." Chris: "I want aunty." Sands: "She went to the shop. She will be back." Chris: "I don't want to stay here with you." Sands: "and you think I want to stay here with you?" Dumi: "Geez Sandile. He's just 4." Sands: "So? He's rude." Dumi: "He's a child." Chris started sobbing. Sands: "Wow." he increased the volume on the TV. Dumi: "Christian? Come here." Lakhe picked the boy up and took him outside to the ducks. The child screamed at the sight of them, kicking and screaming. They walked back to the house. Dumi: "Just take him to her! Please! I cannot listen to that scream all day." Lakhe typed on his phone, showing Dumi. Lakhe: 'I wanted to spend time with him.' Dumi: "He clearly doesn't have you on his itinerary today. Take him to her." Lakhe went to collect the action figure and coloring books plus the crayons packing them in the bag. He took Chris to his car and they drove to Zingi's house.

When I'd arrived at Zingi's house she was barely holding it together. Zingi: "Thank God you're here Spho. Please hold her. I need to use the toilet." I took the infant in my arms and she ran to her bathroom. I looked down at Baby Lisa, she was so cute. Her big eyes stared back at me. Me: "Hi angel." I sat down on the couch. Zimi came to me. Me: "Hey sweetie pie. Look at you big sister. How are you?" she smiled. Me: "Say hi to Yonelisa. Isn't she cute." Zimi: "No." Wow. Me: "Why no baby?" Zimi: "Zimi cute, baby no." uh huh. Sibling rivalry already. Me: "So Where's Lulo?" she shrugged. Zingi finally came back and flopped on the single couch. Zingi: "I haven't had a proper bowel movement in days. Let alone proper sleep. Or a proper meal for that matter. How are you?" Me: "I'm fine. Zingi why are Zimi and Lulo here? I thought they were with your mom?" Zingi: "they were until last night. She had somewhere to go to." Me: "and you didn't call me why?" Zingi: "I didn't want to bother you Spho." Me: "but I want you to bother me. We love having the kids over. You can't be suffering alone, uDumi uhleli pha doing absolutely nothing watching

television shows with Sandile. They must help you!" Zingi: "My mom is supposed to be back today. Its no big deal." Me: "So you just stay here alone?" Zingi: "Yeah." Me: "Have you asked Dumi to come back?" Zingi: "I don't want him back. We're just not the same anymore." Me: "Zingisa, Dumi is your husband. You need to forgive each other and get back to raising your beautiful children together. He regrets what he did and I know you do too. So why don't you stop tiptoeing around this whole thing?" she sighed. Zingi: "its not him...." Me: "Oh My God." Zingi: "Spho, I want to be with Sandile." Me: "I'm not going to be a part of this Zingi. Sandile is not the person you want to be with. Besides, he's best friends with Dumi now. Do you really think he'll throw away that friendship?" Zingi: "Then what do I do?" Me: "Remember Siyanda? What you told me? STAY AWAY." Yonelisa fell asleep in my arms. Me: "She's so beautiful." Zingi: "Thank you. When are you due?" Me: "In April. I cannot wait. I missed the whole of summer." she chuckled. Zingi: "How is Mr Lakhe?" Me: "Don't even go there. I feel like he deliberately irritates me so that I leave the house. He just says things, mean things." Zingi: "You need to give him a chance." Me: "Zingi, I'm tired. I just need a break." Zingi: "Lakhe can't stay away from you. Trust me. You are taking things personally because of your hormones and the house is full. You don't need a break. You need to tell them to leave." Me: "That's so cruel. They'll leave eventually." Zingi: "No they won't. You know why? Because you're too nice." Me: "and we recently got a foster child. His name is Christian and he's so cute." Zingi: "A foster child? Why?" Me: "His mother died in a car accident. He didn't have anyone so we took him." I heard a car door close. Me: "Are you expecting someone?" Zingi: "No." she went to the door. This baby was so precious. Chris: "Aunty!!" I looked up. Whaaat is going on? Me: "Hi sweetie." Lakhe walked in and sat next to me. Zingi: "So this is Christian?" Me: "Yeah. What are you doing here?" he gave me his phone. Lakhe: 'He was crying for you. He thinks you left him behind, I tried comforting him. He didn't want to hear it so I brought him here.' Me: "He had an allergy that made his throat swell so he can't talk for today." Zingi: "Ohh...I thought he was ignoring me. What in the world is he allergic to?" I looked at Lakhe. He looked at Chris, fixing his t shirt. Me: "What are you allergic to Masilakhe?" he shrugged. I got played. I cannot believe it. He went that far? How could I have forgotten? Oh, he was good. Me: "Should I put her down Zingi?" Zingi: "That won't be a good idea. She'll cry her lungs out." Lakhe had his arms open ready to take the baby. Me: "Isn't Sandile waiting for you at home?" he shook his head. Taking the newborn. Me: "Are you hungry Chris sweetie? Should I make you a sandwich?" Chris: "Yes please." I went to the kitchen to make a sandwich for him and juice. He ate quietly by the table. Lulo came in with his Caucasian friend Bentley, because that's a name now. But I guess its better than 'Hennessy'. What goes through your mind when you

name your kids? Ben: "Hi Mrs Spho." Me: "hey Bentz, how you doing?" Ben: "I'm great. My dad is taking us on holiday in March. We're going to Spain." lol. This kid. I like him because he always has a conversation starter and its always about his dad. Almost as though he's compensating for something. Maybe absence? Me: "That's amazing! Are you excited?" Ben: "I guess." Me: "What did you do this December?" Ben: "My mom and I went to Dubai to visit my aunt." Me: "Your dad didn't go with?" Ben: "He had to work." See? Me: "Well I hope you have fun in Spain. I heard its amazing." Ben: "Really? Do you want to come with us?" Lol, I was being invited on a family vacation by a 6 year old. Me: "Me? That would be so much fun but I have to have a baby in April." Ben: "Oh, that can't be fun." Me: "Apparently not." Ben: "You should name her Dreams, because she just shattered yours. Gotta go." Lakhe held in laughter. Me: "Bye Bentley. Nice seeing you. As usual." Ben: "Is it? People say I'm not nice." Me: "You are. You're a very nice boy." Ben: "Thank you Mrs Spho. I hope your baby is pretty like you too." Me: "Thank you honey." he ran off to Lulo's bedroom. Christian followed him and they closed the door playing in there. Zingi: "I don't like that Bentley child." Me: "I think he's adorable. Akayifumani attention kokwabo. Dad always working and stuff." Zingi: "Yeah and I heard mama got her a boy toy too." she whispered. Me: "You lie!" Zingi: "hmmh girl, you should see him. He is a dream and a half." she took out her phone searching through it. Me: "Where did you get his pic." Zingi: "I stole it on instagram. He was my midnight inspiration." she showed me and I gasped. Me: "Is he real?" Zingi: "Yes! And get this." she inched to the edge of her seat and so did I. Lakhe moved closer. Zingi: "Hubby found out about it and secretly filed for the big D." I gasped. Me: "Oh no! What about the kids?" Zingi: "Paul probably won't want custody because of his traveling so Gina will take them." Me: "This is so sad. And Ben is so excited to go away on a trip, he hasn't seen him in months." Lakhe nudged me. Me: "What?" I looked at his phone. Lakhe: 'Paul Delores?' Me: "Yes." he typed quick. Lakhe: 'Pulled the divorce. Gina found some incriminating evidence about his company and threatened to expose him.' I gasped. Zingi: "What!?" I showed her. She gasped too. Me: "How do you know!" Lakhe: 'Paul is Gerard's business partner. He confided in him and Gerard came to ask me for advice.' I showed Zingi. Me: "So now what is he going to do?" Lakhe: 'His marriage has a divorce clause in it. If she passes a 7 year mark married to him, when they divorce she gets half his estate. This includes properties, cars, company shares. Everything. And its already year 6. If he can't find that evidence and destroy it, he's fucked.' Zingi: "But what if he kills her?" That was a high possibility. Me: "Do you think he would? She's the mother of his kids!" Lakhe: 'Still. She played him. He probably will do whatever it takes.' I was so worried. Me: "Stop him!" Lakhe: 'I don't even know him. He's Gerard's friend.' Me: "A woman is about to be

killed, Masilakhe!" Lakhe: 'He won't kill her. He'd have to take care of the kids and he obviously can't do that.' Zingi: "At least. I thought it would be the Watterson tragedy all over again." Me: "Why does that sound familiar?" Zingi: "Three years ago, James killed his wife and both their children then went AWOL. He lived two streets away from here." Me: "My goodness!!" Zingi: "The police found him in the basement. He had hung himself." Me: "What had gone wrong?" Zingi: "It is alleged that Isabel had cheated on him and the kids weren't his. Apparently the doctor told him he was infertile. That's when he went on a rampage." Me: "But why would he kill the kids? What did they do wrong?" Lakhe gave me another nudge. Lakhe: 'What if he knew the kids' real dad? And he wanted to hurt him too?' Zingi: "Ooooh My God!!!! His brother!!!" Me: "What!!!!" Zingi: "At the funerals he was beyond hysterical. Nobody could calm him down. They had to sedate him. He was so distraught." Me: "So James knew, if he'd killed his brother it wouldn't do anything other than let him rest in peace. So instead, he wanted to torment him for the rest of his lives by murdering his kids? People are sick." Zingi: "If you think rich people don't have problems, count yourself lucky." Me: "Money really cannot buy happiness. Just an illusion. Something other people see as glittery not knowing how difficult it is to clean glitter." Zingi: "True that." I picked Zimi up from the carpet where she'd fallen asleep and took her to her room. I switched on the baby monitor and put it on the top shelf then left her in her bed. Zingi: "Did you hear the news this morning?" Me: "No, what happened?" Zingi: "You know the rumors of that Komander group associates thing. That serial killer guy that nobody knows how he looks?" Me: "Yeah." Zingi: "Well, They found a car in the early hours of this morning crashed into a street pole. The two people inside it shot dead. Unidentified guys, the police believe they're not from SA. Anyway, they had tattoos on their wrists and back, which further confirms the existence of this group. They're not sure what happened or how they ended up there but there's a witness." Me: "Why did they have to say it! This poor guy will be hunted down!" Zingi: "I know right? So I call Nessa, she's a big gossip with big boobs down at the station she says to me; this witness is so rattled they had to get him a doctor to start talking. He says it was as though he was watching a Hollywood movie." Me: "did he say what happened?" Zingi: "Not yet. They have to get him protection and a lawyer. I cannot wait for the story to come out." My phone rang. Mom. In the middle of such fresh hot gossip? Really? Me: "Hello ma." Zama: "Hi SpHo. Unjani mntanam?" Me: "I'm fine thanks ma, how about you?" Zama: "I'm fine sweets. I just wanted to let you know your dad and I are in St Francis for the weekend. He needed time off from stress." Me: "I wish You'd let me know before I went to the hospital at 8 in the morning for Lakhe's check up." she spoke to him in the background. Zama: "He says he forgot my angel. He's sorry." Me: "Okay."

Zama: "Would you like to talk to him?" Are you serious? Me: "I'm kinda busy right now. Maybe later." Zama: "Oh. Okay." Me: "I have to go ma. Goodbye." Zama: "goodbye baby." I hung up. Lakhe was giving the baby to Zingi. She had woken up. He came to kiss my cheek and walked out. Me: "for a second, I thought he'd never leave." Zingi: "I told you he can't stay away from you." she latched the baby onto her breast and fed her. I could hear the little gulps and it was making my heart skip a beat. Me: "Anyway what else is new.." we carried on with our chat.....

Lakhe stormed into the house furiously typing on his phone. Sands: "What now!!!" he took the phone. 'There's a witness from last night. He saw everything.' Sands: "WHAT!!!" Lakhe: 'It was on the damn news! How did you miss it when you're always watching TV!' Sands: "I don't watch the news!" Lakhe: 'If he waddles his mouth off to the cops and identifies me. Its over Sandile. Find Him. Now!!' Sandile jumped up and raced to his car. Dumi: "What's going on?" Lakhe: 'Nothing to worry about. Just taking care of some business. Where's Sibulele? Still weak?' Dumi read. Dumi: "Yes. He's in his room." Lakhe walked to the bedroom and knocked. Luke: "Come in." Lakhe stepped in. Luke: "Hi. Watched the news?" Lakhe: 'Get out.' Luke: "Did I say something wrong?" Lakhe glared at him. Luke: "I'll be in the lounge." he hurried out. Lakhe touched Sibulele's arm and wrote down for him. Lakhe: 'We need your help Sibulele.' Sibulele: "What's going on?" Lakhe: 'Last night went a little more crazier than anticipated.' He proceeded to tell him about what happened. Sibulele: "Well damn then." Lakhe: 'That's why you need to get better and help us.' Sibulele: "Get better from what?" Lakhe: 'Luke said you were still weak.' Sibulele: "I was. I'm fine now. I just enjoy sitting here chatting to him and doing nothing." he got out of bed. Sibulele: "Show me where it happened."

#111

Sibulele and Lakhe got out the car and stood at the end of the street. Police tape was still surrounding the area. Sibulele: "So what happened?" Lakhe wrote down. Lakhe: 'We came from that road, stopped about seven meters in. The other car came through, I came out the sun roof and aimed at driver then passenger. Shot them both and we moved out the way, the car whizzed passed and hit that pole over there. Then we left.' Sibulele: "I can see how that's a problem. You see that light? Right opposite its shining directly to two houses. Lounge windows. Which means, anyone from those two houses could have heard tyres screeching and look out then saw it happen. Your witness is

a resident between those two houses." Lakhe looked at him putting his hand over his shoulder. Sibú: "Now we need to find out who lives there which is easy. Let's go home." he got in the car. Lakhe wrote: 'How will you find that out?' Sibú: "Ohhh, but I never ask you about how you mastermind such large amounts of money for so many years without being caught." Lakhe: 'Guilty.' They drove off. Sandile was waiting for them at the gate at home as soon as they arrived. Sands: "I can't find this guy." Sibú: "I can. Give me a minute." Sands: "Sibulele, trust me when I say this-" Sibú: "I've trusted you more than enough Sandile. You have your skills, I have mine. I can find this person by the end of today. You will then plan how to get him, which is what you're good at." Sands: "Fine." he went inside the house. Sibú: "Why is he so mad." Lakhe: 'Not you. Something else is eating him. He's been in a mood all day.' He walked in the house. Dumí: "Nice to have everyone back considering I was left out of today's activities." Sibú: "To be fair I was unfairly taken out of my comfort zone." he went to his room. Lakhe sat next to Sandile then typed. Lakhe: 'What is it?' Sands: "Will you leave me alone?" Lakhe: 'Sandile, I'm not in the mood to breastfeed you. You clearly need to talk. I know you. Sooner rather than later you will explode into a hot lava mess. I don't want to be here for that, nobody does. Talk to me.' Sandile pushed the phone away and went to his room. Dumí: "What's wrong with him?" Lakhe shrugged and went to find Sibú. After entering the room he typed. Lakhe: 'I think he's feeling a bit useless. Do you mind including him? I can't deal with a Sandile breakdown. Not this week.' Sibú: "Of course. I'll talk to him. He's probably lonely." he went to find Sandile. Finding him in his room. Sibú: "My mans." Sands: "My brother sent you to come speak to me like I'm a zoo animal that needs to be tamed?" Sibú: "Yes. That's exactly what he did, but only because he's worried about you." he climbed on the bed. Sands: "There's nothing wrong, I just want to be alone." Sibú: "There's something wrong because the Sandile I know loves to be around people." Sands: "Sibulele, I'm tired. Please." Sibú: "Fine. I'll just sit here quietly. You can pretend I'm a stone." Sands: "I don't have stones in my bedroom, so you better walk the fuck out or I'll throw you out." Sibú: "A pillow then." Sandile stared at him quietly. Sibú: "I've seen that look million times before and no it doesn't scare me. I know your worst Sandile. I know that today is one of those days but I miss my mans so I'm staying here." Sands: "I'm not gay." Sibú: "Still my mans tho." Sands: "mxim." Sibú: "I sent a signal out for the witness, come look." Sands: "I don't care about that. I just need to sleep." Sibú: "Then sleep." Sands: "Sibulele ufunani kum?" Sibú: "Nothing. Just to hang out. Do I even need a reason?" Sands: "How the hell am I supposed to sleep with you looking at me like that?" Sibú: "You always watch me sleep. Why is it uncomfortable for you now?" Sands: "Man, get out." Sibú: "Fine but I'll be back." Sands: "Just go." Sibú walked out the room. Lakhe was waiting in the

passage. Siby: "Nope. He's definitely in a mood." Lakhe threw his hands in the air and walked away to his own room.

After an amazing afternoon with Zingi and the kids, I got ready to leave. Me: "I'm taking the kids with me Zingi. Umamakho will contact me or come pick them up when she's ready." Zingi: "I can't let you do that." Me: "Yes you can and you will. Their father lives with us, he misses them. This is a great chance to bond with them. Also you can bond with your newborn without worrying about the kids." Zingi: "I guess. Its just very quiet here when they're not around." Me: "I know but you need to rest. The minute your mom arrives, she can look after the baby and you can sleep. Stress free." Zingi: "You're right." I took Zimi's car seat and went to attach it in my car. Zingi packed her kids' bags. Me: "everything set." Zingi: "goodbye guys. Mommy loves you loads okay?" she kissed her kids goodbye. Zimi: "Love you mom." Zingi: "love you too my little angel. Be a good boy Lulo okay?" Lulo: "Okay. Love you too." Zingi: "Bye Chris." Chris: "bye." he waved carrying his bag and little doll man to the car. Well its actually an action figure but they're still Superhero dolls either way. Lol. I started the car after making sure they were all buckled up and I drove out. Straight to McDonald's. I was going to buy supper. I had already texted Vicky not to cook, encouraging her to a night off going to the movies with her bestie, Stella. After buying everyone a meal, I drove home. Lakhe thinks he's super smart. Actually, he is. How could I have been blind to it? It was right there from word 'Allergy' and the symptoms. A little elevated from the last time though. Did he fake his throat too? Or was that just accidental bonus? I didn't trust it. My phone connected to the car Bluetooth rang. It was my dad. Right now was not the time. I don't know when the time would be right but it wasn't now. I answered the call regardless. Me: "Hello tata." Khaya: "Hi angel, how are you?" Me: "I'm fine. How are you?" Khaya: "I'm okay. I'm sorry about the appointment thing. We had this trip scheduled way back and I didn't anticipate Lakhe being sick." Neither did I. Wait, don't all your patients get sick? Isn't that how you make money? Almost makes it sound like an inconvenience. Me: "Its okay. We got Dr Osborne. He was nice." Khaya: "Hopefully by tomorrow morning Lakhe can be talking again. He's taking the medication and eating according to the meal requirements right?" I looked at the McDonald's packs. Me: "Oh yes. He most definitely is." Khaya: "That's good. Its great seeing you take care of him, honey. You're a great wife. He is lucky to have you." Me: "Thank you dad." Khaya: "Alright, we'll talk when I'm back. I love you and goodnight. Say hi to the boys for me." Me: "Will do. I love you too. Night." I hung up finally driving in the yard. Stella's car was gone so they've already left for the movies. Me: "Honeys, please bring the food in for

me." Lulo: "okay makazi." I took Zimi out of her seat and carried her inside the house. Dummi: "my beautiful sweetheart." she jumped on her father's lap. Dummi: "Thank you Spho." Me: "You're welcome. Where's everyone?" Dummi: "In their rooms." Lakhe came out his, wearing socks and shorts. He kissed my cheek. The kids came in with McDonald's food. He stared at them clearly shocked. Me: "Dinner is served. Dummi, please call Sandile, utata, Nosi, Sibuh and Luke." Dummi: "Sure but Nosi left with Mam Stella." he rolled down the passage. Lakhe looked at me. Me: "Would you be a darling and get us plates baby? Your favorite ones, the rectangular shaped." he typed on his phone. Lakhe: "What am I going to eat?" Me: "I got enough for you and the family. I'll set the table." Lakhe: "I don't eat this food. You know that!" Me: "Ohhh baby don't. Its too early for this game." Sandile and Robert came to the table first followed by Luke then Sibuh. Sibuh: "Yum." Lakhe stood still as a building. Rob: "What's wrong son? You need a lawyer?" Sands: "Already? I'm still getting used to Spho's pampering so if you don't mind." Dummi: "What's going on now?" Me: "Sweetheart, we're still waiting for plates. Why are you standing?" Sibuh: "Ohhhh...damn." Sands: "and I'm hungry. So you might wanna snap it up." Lakhe moved closer to me and looked me straight in the eye. Me: "You would rather die than let me have some peace. I had the decency to let you know I'm okay, to save you the trouble of being worried and stressed about my safety the way I was with yours when you left me without a second thought. I humbled myself for you in front of your clients, respected you and did as you ordered while you and your client friends belittled women, talking about what YOU think should be on my to-do list everyday, tea appointments and skin treatments. You think I am too weak to be a business mogul. A leader. Someone who can actually shape your company for the better. Nothing I ever do in that office will be good enough for you, all you will see it as, is an attack. So after you did what you did, I needed time to destress and calm down, I took a holiday, to be in a peaceful surrounding. A calm atmosphere. Change of scenery. Just overall happiness which is good for me and this baby. Instead of apologizing and letting me have a minute of joy, you created a ridiculous chain of events that led you to the position of not being able to talk, cutting my vacation short to take care of you. Why do you do this to me? What have I ever done to you Masilakhe? You know what? Don't even answer that. I can't keep doing this to myself, and my child. So I quit, effective immediately. You'll have my resignation letter within the hour." I walked to my room. Sands: "I don't have any more space in my room for you to sleep." Rob: "You really messed up this time Masilakhe. My room is full too by the way." Luke: "I have plenty of space. And an extra fluffy pillow if you need one." Dummi: "Wow you guys. Really? Like a whole pack of vultures waiting to peck someone apart. Are you okay man?" Sands: "Firstly, Vultures

don't peck, let's start there. Actually before we even start, a whole pack? Really? Where did you go to school? Its a committee of vultures, or a colony of vultures. If they're circling, which is what I hope you mean, its a kettle of vultures." Dumisani: "Thank you for the English lesson Sandile, maybe when you're done you can register for a PhD." Sands: "I wouldn't give you the satisfaction." Rob: "You will need a miracle to fix this. Not to mention your company will take one hell of a knock losing a whole MD like this. Man, do I feel bad for you." Sands: "I mean I could take getting dumped, but my company getting dumped too? That should hurt. I'd take a couple of nights on the sofa any day than that. You really made God angry shame. He would've defended you but you let Him down." Sibisi: "Weren't you sulking an hour ago?" Sands: "I was not sulking but I have to admit, seeing this conversation has made my day. I'm glad I'm single. Imagine my company getting dumped because of me. So many people would cry because of me. I understand I'm a piece of shit but hell, what did the company do." Rob: "Okay, enough now. Masiyakhe it seems as thou-" Lakhe walked out the door. Rob: "And you wonder why his company got dumped." a car drove out the drive way. Dumisani: "I think he's upset, Sandile you should go after him." Sands: "for what? I didn't do anything wrong." Dumisani: "I would go if could but I can't. Yeah, he acted like a jerk but you can't kick a dog while he's down. You need to check on him." Sibisi: "I'll do it. I think I have an idea where he went." he walked out. Sands: "So you guys are trying to guilt trip me for something I didn't even do? Wow, if you thought Satan only resided in hell." he got up walking after Sibisi.

After carefully drafting the letter, I emailed it to him and to Head of HR. My phone rang in two minutes. "What do you mean you're quitting? We just landed the Telkom deal a few months ago and you're in charge of it. How in the world can you quit?" Me: "Sarah, my husband will take care of Telkom and all other deals. Everything will be okay." Sarah: "Spho, rather take maternity leave. Come back after the baby is born. I understand you're stressed right now, I'm a mom myself." Me: "I don't want to take leave Sarah." Sarah: "Is it the salary? We can increase it. I'll speak to Finance. I'm sure Mr Sobzi won't mind." Me: "Sarah, I've made my decision, unfortunately its not about money or the pregnancy. I enjoyed working with you guys and I'll miss you. I just can't stay." Sarah: "Are you sure there's nothing we can do?" Me: "100 percent sure." Sarah: "Alright then. I guess I'll have to process this. I can't say I'm pleased though. But its your decision and I respect you." How good it felt to hear that coming from someone's mouth. 'I respect you.' Me: "Thank you Sarah." we hung up. Chris came into the room. He climbed on the bed and looked at me. Chris: "Are you angry with uncle?" Me: "No sweetie, why

do you think that?" Chris: "You looked angry when you talked to him and he left." Me: "I wasn't angry Chris. I was just having a serious conversation with him. That's all." Chris: "Well, it looked very serious." Me: "It was. I'm sorry okay. I didn't mean to startle you. Uncle will be back and everything will be fine." Chris: "What if he doesn't come back?" Me: "Trust me, he will." Chris: "My dad left and he never came back." Me: "I'm sorry about that, but uncle won't leave you and not come back. Okay?" Chris: "Okay." we cuddled in bed. Me: "Do you want to tell me what you remember about your dad?" Chris: "I don't remember him but my mom used to tell me about him." Me: "What did she say." Chris: "That I look like him. I have his smile and that he loves me." Me: "That's so sweet. You must be happy you have a handsome dad then." Chris: "but why didn't he come back to me?" Me: "Maybe he got busy honey. Life can sometimes get in the way. I'm sorry." Chris: "Maybe one day he'll come visit me." Me: "Yes. He might and he'll be so happy to see you." Chris: "You think?" Me: "Of course." Chris: "I'll be happy to see him too." Lakhe walked in the bedroom. I expected him to act macho and go grab his things and walk back out as usual when he is guilty. Me: "What do you think you'll say to him when he arrives?" Chris: "I don't know. Maybe Hello and give him a hug." Me: "hmm...and show him your toy perhaps?" Chris: "Well, it'll take more than one visit for him to meet Mr Courage." Me: "Of course, I agree." Lakhe hopped into bed and cuddled by the other side of Christian. Chris: "hello." Lakhe tickled his chin. Chris: "I said hello not make me laugh." he giggled. Lakhe held him and tickled his ribs. Chris: "Mama!!!!" he laughed hysterically in bubbles of joy. Me: "Baleka baby, iza ngapha." I hid him behind me, only to face Lakhe. Side by side, we stared at each other. I wasn't mad at all. Even the sad moment I felt when my heart broke wasn't there any more. I was just glad, he was here. Silently glad. Lakhe: "I'm sorry." no sound came out his mouth, I could only read his lips. He held my left hand and kissed it. Lakhe: "Please, forgive me?" Me: "You lied to me. Made a fool out of me. You had me run around stressing and caring for you when you knew deep down you did this deliberately." he took his phone and typed. Lakhe: 'Baby I know what I did was horrible. I'm sorry. I just wanted you with me. I wasn't thinking straight. When I was alone, it was scary, I hated how I felt so naked without you in my arms. I couldn't take that feeling. We haven't spent time together in a long while. I was desperate but you were never a fool. I guess I was being selfish. Sphe, its been so crazy here, I miss you. What I did was wrong, and I understand if you want to leave me." Me: "Why would I leave you? For what?" Lakhe: 'I just assumed that, when you said you're resigning. You wanted to leave." Me: "I'm resigning from the job yes, but not this marriage. I'm sorry, I have a part also in not spending time together. I accommodate everyone and end up tired before I get to you. I know I've been snappy and annoyed

too, which is wrong. Its not your fault." Lakhe: 'Maybe we should go out. Take a drive, come back Monday. You, me and Chris.' Me: "Right now?" Lakhe: 'Yes. This one will be asleep by the time we get to the car anyway.' Me: "I think he's already asleep." he looked behind me and nodded. Lol. I don't think there's anyone that sleeps more than Chris. Its impossible. This child values his naps like nobody's business. Me: "Then I guess we have ourselves a road trip. Let me pack. Change him." I got out of bed and he changed Christian to warm clothes and boots. After I packed two bags. One for me and the other for them both, we were ready to go.

#112

I woke up on Sunday morning to the smell of breakfast. My mouth began watering immediately. I opened my eyes and saw Lakhe setting the table. Yesterday, we had left the house and took a drive for real. It was disappointing to me because we didn't even leave the city. Me: "Hi." Lakhe: "Good morning my love." his voice a little hoarse. Me: "You couldn't wait could you?" Lakhe: "Not being able to talk was slowly driving me crazy." Me: "You were already crazy before you stopped talking." he climbed on the bed. Me: "Where's Chris?" Lakhe: "He said he's getting you a flower." Me: "I thought you said we were taking a road trip. We didn't even leave Port Elizabeth." Lakhe: "I got this place a few weeks ago when we started living in a circus. I thought this could be our little hide out for some time." Me: "Is this where you bring all your girlfriends?" Lakhe: "Only the ones I like, yes." Me: "I thought we agreed this wasn't serious. It seems you are going a little too fast Mr Sobz." Lakhe: "I remember our agreement. Just tired of hiding out in hotels all the time. My wife is already suspicious." Me: "And you think a private townhouse in your name isn't suspicious." Lakhe: "Would be if it was in my name, but my wife doesn't know yours." he kissed my lips. I kissed him back. Chris: "Euw." he stood by the door. Lakhe: "forgot he's even here." he whispered. Me: "Hey you. How did you sleep?" Chris: "Great. I love my room." he walked in carrying two flowers. Chris: "Here you go. Morning sunshine." Me: "awww this is so sweet. Thank you so much Chris. Morning my angel." Lakhe: "breakfast is served." Chris: "You can talk?" Lakhe: "Yes. My throat is fine now. You're a smart little fella, aren't you." Chris: "I guess. Can I watch TV while I eat?" Lakhe: "Mama?" he looked at me. Me: "Yes, as long as you finish your food." Chris: "thank you." he took his plate and went to the lounge. Lakhe: "We have a few minutes by ourselves." Me: "Erh no. The last thing we need is a 4 year old walking in on us having sex. Eat." Lakhe: "I'm taking him to Sandile for the day." Me: "I don't really trust Sandile to look after a whole human being."

Lakhe: "You're right. I think Dumi will be a better candidate. Anyway, speaking of kids, what are we going to do about Chris?" I heard a giggle in the lounge. Lakhe: "What is he watching?" I listened to the sound the TV was making. Me: "Mickey Mouse clubhouse." Lakhe: "Okay. So, do we keep him?" Me: "How do we just keep him? If we keep him, then that means we're supporting what my dad did." Lakhe: "Well, my father says its legal. He looked at the papers so did Dumi. The only creepy part is why Tyrone was still there when he had a flight to catch and why was he so willing to sign the child over." Me: "What if the child is related to him in some way?" Lakhe: "but why would he want to give him away then? I'll have to get someone to look into this guy." Me: "You didn't want me to snoop." Lakhe: "Yes because you're pregnant. I don't want to put you in any danger. Anyway, I'll get a lawyer and a social worker. Hopefully, Chris will belong to us by the end of the month, I want to enrol him at school too." Me: "You already thought that far?" Lakhe: "Of Course. I want to make sure he's in a perfect school. With lots of activities and a great education system." Me: "Lulo's school is amazing." Lakhe: "Well....." Me: "What?" Lakhe: "Lulo's dad is a lawyer and mom is a salon owner." Me: "And? What's the difference?" Lakhe: "Chris' parents are CEO and MD of one of the largest companies in the country. Have shares in the biggest hotels. Worth millions. There's the difference." Me: "You're already in competition? We haven't even signed the papers." Lakhe: "I just want what's best for him." Me: "What's best for him is a comfortable learning space. Our net worth has nothing to do with it." Lakhe: "It has everything to do with it. I don't want him to be left out of things just because he has wealthy parents. I don't want him to feel uncomfortable because of other people's situations." Me: "Oh My God. You're fixing your life through him." Lakhe: "I'm not-" Me: "You are! That's why you want to adopt him. So that he has the most perfect life possible. You felt uncomfortable because your parents were rich? Be honest." Lakhe: "Yes I did. When Rob adopted me, I wasn't used to expensive things, not even normal things. I'd come from a poor home. Then lived in an orphanage and was picked on a lot there. So, when I moved into this huge house with him and Stella. I was an only child and very overwhelmed. Part of the reason why I never spoke. At school, he'd take me with that big car and everyone would stare at me like I'm an alien. I got friends but they too only liked me because of my family wealth. My dad being the superstar he was as well. It was only when Sandile came along I felt more comfortable because I had someone to share this with." Me: "I'm sorry about your nice life experience baby but Chris is fine. He is a happy child. You need to trust that he will be okay. If not, we will find a way to make it right." Lakhe: "Okay." Me: "Good, so I'll register him at Lulo's school. We'll need a heads up from the social worker though." Lakhe: "Fine." Me: "Don't sulk. This school is amazing. Lulo plays rugby

and Zimi does ballet. Chris might find something he likes too. Like a musical instrument. That would be lovely." Lakhe: "I guess." We ate our breakfast. Lakhe: "So the day after you left me, the lawyers came and told me there is someone who confessed to killing Dez." Me: "What!! And you didn't think of telling me?" Lakhe: "You were gone baby, and when you came back I couldn't talk. Anyway, Quincy is trying to figure out who the guy is. My question is, what made him confess? I was the only suspect. He literally would have gotten away with it." Me: "Well we just need to thank God. No matter what the reason of this person's confession." Chris came in the room again holding his plate. Chris: "Finished eating." Me: "Good boy! Are you full?" he shook his head. Lakhe: "let's get you some more then." they went to the kitchen....

In the main house, Sandile was in the lounge waiting for breakfast. Sibulele in the kitchen, making the breakfast. Rob came to sit followed by Stella and Vicky. Rob: "Where's Spho and Masilakhe?" Sands: "They left last night." Rob: "I remember them leaving, didn't they come back?" Sands: "No tata." Stella: "Where did they go?" Sands: "because I'm The Herald? I know everything?" Rob: "Okay Wow. Why are you so spicy?" Sands: "Sibulele has been in that kitchen for three hours. The smoke detector has gone off twice. I'm about to eat my hand!! I'm hungry and- You know what, fuck it." he grabbed his keys and walked out to his car. Dumi: "Where's he off to?" Rob: "Who knows with Sandile." he picked up Zimi tossing her in the air. Stella: "Vicky and I are going to church darling, we'll be back later." Rob: "Can I have my black card back?" Stella: "Why would you think I have your black card? And aren't all your cards black?" Rob: "I know it was you who took my card Stella. The Investec one. Only you and God, knows how you manage to spend with it. Nonetheless, I want it back." Stella: "I don't have your card." Rob: "I'm not an idiot." Stella: "Neither am I." Rob: "Is this about that vanishing cream of yours you think I stole? What the hell would I do with it?" Stella: "it has diamond exfoliators Robert! You know what you did with it! Do you know how much that thing costs?" Rob: "No, how much?" Stella: "Mxim!" Rob: "I bet my bank card knows. You have your own money and a degree. What do you want from me!!" Stella: "I don't have your card!!!!" Rob: "Then who else would take it? Nobody else in this house knows my pin!" Stella: "Maybe its in the exact same place you left my vanishing cream then!!!!" Rob: "I don't have your stupid vanishing cream!!!!" Stella: "I'm leaving!" Rob: "open your purse!" Stella: "excuse me!" Rob: "You heard me. Open. Your. Purse." Stella: "I will do no such thing Robert Monwabisi Sobukwe!!" Rob: "You took my card!!" Stella: "When did I take it!" Rob: "Then give me the purse." she gave him the bag and he

looked through it. Rob: "I'm opening your wallet." Stella: "I can see that. It boggles my mind why you still ask for permission when you practically accuse me of theft." he gave her back her things. Rob: "I know you took it. Where did you hide it?" Stella: "I will strip butt naked if I have to, I did not take your card!" Dummi: "Please don't." Rob: "If I hear another alert on my phone and you dare come back here with new things. All 9 sections of hell will break loose. Try me." Stella: "Congratulations Robert!! You've managed to anger me on a Sunday right before a church service." she stomped out. Robert went to his room. Sibulele: "Breakfast is served- Where's Sandile?" Dummi: "He's having a Sobz moment." Sibulele: "a what?" Dummi: "All members of the Sobukwe family act a little crazy at the same damn time. Sandile stormed out of here without an explanation, then his mom and dad started yelling their throats out and she left, now Rob locked himself in his room. A Sobz moment." Sibulele: "That's some creepy shit. Where the kids?" Dummi: "playing outside. Zimi!! Lulo!! Come in here." they rushed in the house. Sibulele: "So its just the four of us. I'll go find Luke." he went down the passage. Nosi tiptoed into the house. Nobody had noticed she had gone out the previous night and by Gods grace nobody would notice her come in. Zimi: "Nanku." except Zimi. Dummi: "Hey." he looked up. Dummi: "Where have you been?" Nosi: "I just took a stroll." Dummi: "With high heels in your hand?" Nosi: "I know what it looks like but can we keep it between us please?" Dummi: "You want me to lie?" Nosi: "No, not at all. Nobody will ask, so you won't have to tell. Where are my parents?" Dummi: "Mom went to church, your dad in his room looking for his bank card." Nosi: "Shit! He noticed?" Dummi: "You took the card?" a door opened. Nosi: "I borrowed it. I'll put it back." she ran to her room. Sibulele: "So I guess its the five of us." he came to the dining table with Luke. Robert came back out his room. Rob: "I'm going golfing for the day. If anyone asks." Dummi: "You're really going golfing?" Sibulele: "I'll pack a lunch." Rob: "I'm not going with you two today. Stay here." Sibulele: "and do what?" Rob: "find something. I'm not really going golfing!" he hissed. Dummi: "why are you whispering? There's nobody here." Luke: "Where are you going?" Rob: "I'm going on a date." Sibulele: "I knew it. Spho chose you that outfit, didn't she? You look too dapper for golfing." Dummi: "Is that why you were looking for your black card. Trying to impress on the first date huh." Rob: "Impress what? Imagine me carrying a black FNB card on a first date. She'll think I'm a chancer." Sibulele: "You know to us regular people, FNB on its own, issa lot. Imagine it matte black. That's just dangerous." Dummi: "Yeah, you passed the rich line. Should change your name from Robert to Richard. Richard Wealth Sobukwe. Sounds about right." Sibulele laughed. Sibulele: "I should borrow you my card. The normal gold one." Dummi: "No, we need a Capitec card actually. This will test her loyalty. If she flees, she's not the one." they laughed.

Rob: "What the hell is Capitec." Luke: "Just go." Robert left them laughing in the lounge.....

After Lakhe washed the dishes, I bathed Chris and dressed him. He wore a white plain t shirt and jeans with elastic on the ankles. Instead of the sneaker, he chose to wear his brown sandal and went to the kitchen to show Lakhe. I made the bed and jumped in the shower. When I was done I took out my beige bodycon dress. Lakhe: "I love these cute dresses. Showing my baby off." he kissed my tummy. Me: "thank you. What will we be doing today?" Lakhe: "We can drive to the Elephant park. I'm sure Chris will love it." Me: "Okay, Go shower so long." I kissed his chin. Chris: "Someone is knocking at the door." he yelled from the lounge. Lakhe: "I wonder who that is." we went to the front door. When Lakhe opened, Sandile was leaning on the wall with his hands in his pockets. Great. Lakhe: "How the hell did you find us!" Sands: "You're really going to ask me that? Me?" he walked in. Lakhe: "the whole idea of leaving was to get breathing space." Sands: "Without me?" Lakhe: "I'm trying to bond with my family Sandile." Sands: "Did you make breakfast?" Lakhe: "No, leave." Sands: "and go where?" he took out his phone. Sands: "You throw me out and I bring them all here. I got all the time." Lakhe: "This is a three bedroom house." Sands: "Gotta keep the yoppa on me, I got all kinds." Lakhe: "What are you saying!" Sands: "Basically, Try me." Lakhe: "Fine. What do you want?" Sands: "Breakfast." Lakhe: "There's an extra plate and you better be done when I'm done dressing. We had plans." Sands: "When are you coming home?" he sat on the bar stool. Lakhe: "When we feel like it." he walked to the bathroom. I warmed up the plate in the microwave. Sands: "I won't tell anyone where you are unless you keep me a plate." Me: "What's going on with you lately. You've been cranky. More than the usual." Sands: "I'm not cranky." I took the plate out the microwave and stared at him. Sands: "How could you leave me behind, I'm your favorite." Me: "The house is too full. We just needed time alone." Sands: "but Chris is here." Chris: "I can hear you." Sands: "Why does he get to come along?" Me: "he's the child. We certainly can't leave him with you." Sands: "You've got a point there." he took the plate. Sands: "thank you. By the way I think Sibuburnt your kitchen. He tried making breakfast. For three hours. The smoke alarm went off more than 3 times. You might wanna make this your permanent home." Me: "Thank you for the update. How is everyone else?" Sands: "I don't really care. This is good bacon. Is it from Woolworths?" Me: "Yes." Sands: "They always have the best." Me: "Its why I buy it. Sandile...." Sands: "I know you're trying to figure me out and understand why I'm like this." Me: "that's because you're my brother in law. I care about you." Sands: "No, you're trying to protect your kids because

you don't know what I might do." Me: "hayi Sandile." Sands: "I will never hurt you or your children. Ever." Me: "Why do you find it so difficult to let someone else love you? I'm your sister. Why can't you unclog your pores and relax for once?" Sands: "unclog my what?" Me: "When I ask what's wrong, I genuinely care. I will run after you if I can but I mean look at me man! No Sandile." Sands: "So now I'm getting yelled at again?" Me: "just eat." he ate quietly. Chris: "You too much of a big boy to be sad. You know what I do when I'm sad?" Sands: "Chris, I don't care." Chris: "I sing my duck song. Let's do this." Sands: "You're scared of ducks but they're your motivation?" Chris: "That's why I sing." Sands: "I don't want to sing." Chris: "Then you'll dance." Sands: "Spho-" Me: "listen to the boy. He knows what he's talking about." Chris: "Quack quack quack, join the duck parade." he danced pulling Sandile. Chris: "Waddle, waddle, waddle, waddle, watch them wave. Bums up, head down, shake your feathers all around, everybody dancing at the duck parade!!!" Sands: "Fine!! Fine! I'm happy now! See?" Me: "Coward." I whispered. Chris: "You gonn let me know when you need me." he walked back to the lounge. Sands: "That is the most traumatizing song I've ever heard." Me: "Wait until you hear the other one. Then you'll know trauma." he looked at his phone, walking to the bedroom. Lakhe was getting dressed. Lakhe: "Because privacy is a myth here. Why was Chris singing his happy song?" Sands: "He thought I was upset. When is he going home?" Lakhe: "He isn't. This is his home." Sands: "What?" Lakhe: "You heard me. So what you want?" Sands: "Sibulele found the witness. He says he'll be moved in two hours. We have to act fast." Lakhe sighed. Lakhe: "And I thought I'd get a break and take my family to an elephant park. We gonn have to fight." Sands: "Why can't you just once stop making everything about you!!! I'm part of your family too!" Lakhe: "Sandile you're old you're supposed to be having your own!" Sands: "Oh so you're trying to say I'm a failure now? Mr big shot?" I walked into the room. Lakhe: "What the hell is wrong with you!! Why are you blaming me for what you're doing to yourself!!" Sands: "I thought You'd have my back whenever I needed you Lakhe!!" Me: "What is going on!!" Sands: "Clearly I'll never be good enough for you." he walked out. Me: "What did you say to him!" Lakhe: "Sandile is being childish." Me: "Lakhe you can't say he's childish. You're his big brother. Xa ekhubekile who must he turn to!" Lakhe: "His dad!" Me: "Have you thought maybe his dad isn't available? Stop being selfish and go talk to your brother. Go." he took the car keys and walked out. Sandile drove out the yard, Lakhe followed after him. After a few kilometers stopping at the red robots together. He pulled down his window. Lakhe: "1 hour max." Sands: "iss all I need. I called Sibulele. He's meeting us at the warehouse." Lakhe: "cool." Sands: "and P.S you are so going to hell. You staged a fight and lied to your wife, the universe gonn punish you

man. Haha." Lakhe: "It'll start with you." Sands: "Gonn have to catch me first." he sped off.....

#113

In the warehouse, the three guys stood around the table together. Sibü: "They will be changing shifts in about 35 minutes. We need to make it snappy. This place has a back entrance. Once the police car parks out front, the two officers will leave the house, the ones in the car get out the car and into the house. Which means we have less than a minute to get in, take him and get out unseen. Unless....." Sands: "Unless what." Sibü: "Unless you're in for a blood bath. These officers are heavily armed. This is not just any witness. This is a very important person to them because they're the only one that saw what happened by detail to the death of two Komander employees. I'm sure the police think, Komander did this. They're doing all they can to prove it. This is why they move his location every few hours, they know he's a wanted man." Sands: "Fine. We need to get moving. There's not much time left." he wore his beanie. Sibü: "We'll take my car. Let's go." he took the oversized duffel bag on the floor and they walked to the car. Sandile got in the driving seat, waiting till everyone was inside then sped off. Sands: "direct me." Sibü: "keep on driving I'll tell you when to turn." after 10 minutes of driving had past. Sibü: "Right at the next light." Sandile turned right. Sibü: "second street on your left and park." Sandile turned and parked. Sibü: "this is the back street we'll use. This house isn't occupied, the old lady that lives here is at church." Lakhe: "So the target house is behind it on that other street?" Sibü: "Yes." he pulled out a small bottle and syringe. Sands: "What the fuck?" Sibü: "I got this from Black. This will paralyze our victim for a few hours so we pump this in them on sight, they fall limp, we carry them out. No hassle." Sands: "I thought we'd just shoot them in the head three times and leave. Why do we got to take him with us?" Sibü: "You really want to shoot someone on a Sunday?" Sands: "Even if I shoot them tomorrow, they'll be dead nonetheless." Sibü: "Time to go. Drive this car in this yard." Sandile backed the car up the driveway then covered their faces with balaclavas. Lakhe: "I'll check the coast. Sibü will move in and give him the shot. Sandile swoops in right after and catches them. Both of you carry him out to the car, I stay behind you to cover you. Once we're in the car, we out of sight. This is a risky job. We need to be quick." they got out the car, swiftly moving to the back yard and looked over the wall at target house. Sibü: "okay I see the two officers. They're getting ready to leave." Sibü filled up the syringe. Lakhe: "Where's the damn witness!" he whispered. Sibü: "can't see him yet." Lakhe bent down and took out his gun attaching the

silencer. Sibú: "moving to the lounge. I hear a car. Let's go." they jumped over the wall landing softly on their feet like cats. Lakhe walked quickly over to the door, pointing his gun down. Lakhe: "Sibú." Sibú stepped in the house straight for the bedroom. The officers were standing at the gate, relaying the evening's report and the next location. Sibú found the witness in the bathroom brushing teeth. He sunk the syringe on the neck and caught them falling limp. Sandile helped him carry the witness out the back. They climbed over the wall struggling with the heavy body. The officers were done talking, two moving to the car. The other two toward the house. Lakhe ran to the back wall and jumped over too. Sandile and Sibú shoved the body in the boot and they all got into the car. Sandile driving off quietly. Sibú finally let out a sigh. Sands: "Did your informant bother to let you know the witness is a woman!" Sibú: "I'm sure he didn't know." Lakhe: "What are you two planning to do with this woman?" Sands: "You were the one who wanted us to find her." Lakhe: "How could I have predicted it would be a woman." Sands: "It doesn't matter. What matters is, she threatens our lives by her existence." Lakhe: "Do whatever it takes. I want her gone. Send her to China for all I care." Sands: "As long as she's alive Lakhe, you'll never know peace. She has to die." Lakhe: "I don't want a woman's life on my conscience. Or yours for that matter. We don't kill the innocent. I'll think of a plan by the end of the day. For now, keep her in the warehouse basement." they drove into the warehouse underground parking. Lakhe: "I have to go. Can I trust the two of you to not do anything sketchy?" Sibú: "Yes sir." Lakhe took off his beanie tossing it in the car then walked away.

Robert came home mid afternoon with a bright smile on his face. Dumi: "How was your date?" Stella: "date?" Rob: "Yes Stella, I went on a date and it was magical." Stella: "Sorry to tell you this but you're incredibly boring. The only reason someone would tolerate you is for a free meal and money." Rob's phone rang. Rob: "Hold that thought." he fixed his voice and answered his phone. Rob: "Robert speaking." Stella: "Where?" Rob: "Hi Noma, how are you?.....I'm fine thanks.....did you get home safe?" Stella: "Its mid day." Rob: "I had an amazing time too. Did I tell you how stunning you looked?" Stella: "urgh." Rob: "Don't worry about that sound its just the kettle. So tell me, when am I seeing you again?" he got up and walked to his room. Vicky: "I will start dinner." Stella: "No. Don't. I will do it Victoria." Vicky: "then I'll help." they walked to the kitchen. Vicky: "I know it hurts." Stella: "Don't be silly Victoria. Robert can do as he pleases. I myself will be going on a date too." Vicky: "you don't have to Stella." Stella: "I'm not doing it for him but for myself. My personal trainer has asked me more than once to join him for a drink. Maybe I

should say yes." Vicky: "Isn't he 20?" Stella: "He's 28. Which is basically 35." she took out her phone. Stella: "You can continue with dinner. I am going out." Vicky: "Stella-" Stella: "foodies honey." she walked to her room. Robert came to the lounge and switched to the sporting channel. Rob: "Where is Sandile and Sibulele? You'd swear these kids are allergic to this house." Dumisani: "If only I knew. I'm just glad my kids are here keeping me company. Tell me about your date." Rob: "Well, she's pretty and funny too. I had a wonderful time. She's a nurse at Greenacres hospital. We met the time Lakhe went in for his allergy." Dumisani: "While your son is sick, hanging on his life by a thread. You find time to pick up women?" Rob: "It was on Friday morning. He was fine by then. Do you think Stella is jealous?" Dumisani: "Nope. She's happier than she was when she came in. Why?" Rob: "When is she thinking of giving me back my bank card?" Dumisani: "I doubt she's the one that has it." Rob: "Who else would take it? Masilakhe! How dare he!" Dumisani: "Except Masilakhe is grown and has his own money." Rob: "You're right. And Sandile isn't really into money. If he took it, he'd buy a car for himself and give me back the card saying thank you." Dumisani: "That boy is a class act." Rob: "You don't know the half of it. Nosi is my baby, she'd never take the card. So who? Sibulele?" Dumisani: "Not his character." Rob: "I really don't know who. Stella is the only person with enough motive." Dumisani: "I don't think she took it." Rob: "Then wh-" Stella walked out the passage to the front door. Rob: "Where are you going?" Stella: "Out." Rob: "Stella where is my card." Stella: "This is boring. I won't be back till late. Don't wait up-" Rob: "Where the hell are you going talking about don't wait up! The fact that you're all boujee'd up and going out speaks volumes! I swear, if you use that card-" Stella: "Yeah, yeah, all 9 sections of hell will burn. If I had your bank card. I'd be in Rome right now, walking through those ancient buildings taking selfies. Then I'd book a trip to the Vatican City and visit the Pope. Then I'd buy him dinner. After that, go shopping in Milan. Buy a factory or two. Fly to New York attend a fashion week dressed in head to toe Versace. Following week, visit Paris. Shop at Givenchy. Then go buy my children matching Burberry coats. Find a young french artist, fund his work, buy him a studio then come back, and tell you all about it. Now if you don't mind, I'm going out." Rob: "I know for a fact you're planning to do exactly this. Stella I am warning you." Stella: "I don't have your stinky card." Rob: "I dare you to do this." Stella walked to her car. Rob: "She has it all planned out. She wants to bankrupt me!" Dumisani: "I don't think that's possible." Rob: "That's it! I'm calling the police." Dumisani: "You can't tata. You can't prove she took it. Maybe you misplaced the card. I'll help you look." Rob: "I'm giving her 24 hours.".....

Sibulele and Sandile sat in the warehouse basement with the captive. She looked at her feet. Her ankle chained to a pole. Her wrists locked together. They had put a blanket over her. Sands: "Are you fully awake?" he asked her. Its almost evening and You've been out since morning." She: "Who are you?" Sands: "don't worry about me. Would you like something to eat?" she shook her head. Sands: "Fine with me." Sibulele: "Come on sisi, you need to eat to keep your strength." She: "Are you going to rape me?" Sands: "I am offended you even asked." he shuffled the cards in his hands. She: "What do you want from me!" Sands: "Tell us about Friday evening. What you saw." She: "Nothing." Sands: "Alright then." he stacked a few cards in front of Sibulele then himself. She: "I swear I won't tell anyone. Please just let me go!" Sands: "You were ready to tattle tale a few hours ago to the police. How does it feel that they can't even protect you. Imagine if the bad people came to get you, then it would have been different kinds of hell for you. Luckily, we got there in time. Now let's play a game, if you guess this correctly I'll let you go, if you don't, we gonn sit and chat some more. Here's the question: Do you think we're the good or bad guys? Hint, There's no correct answer." he chuckled. Sibulele: "Come on bra." Sands: "I'm just having a conversation." Sibulele: "here's some water sisi." he gave her the bottled water. His phone rang in his pocket. Sibulele: "excuse me." he took it out and answered. Sibulele: "hello?" "Sibulele..." Sibulele froze at the cold dark voice in his ear. "I need to see you. Tonight." Sibulele: "Of course.".....

#114

Sandile looked at Sibulele. Sands: "who the hell was that on the phone with you." Sibulele: "Because you have to know every detail of my life." Sands: "Yes. I will not let you go through what you went through again." Sibulele: "Then here. Call him back and admit you don't trust me." he gave him his phone. Sands: "If you're trying to use reverse psychology, its not going to work." He redialed the last number. After two rings, someone answered. "What now?" Sands: "Who's this?" "Are you serious? We just spoke a minute ago." Sands: "You were speaking to my brother not me, and since he's a sneaky son of a bitch, I need to know who you are." "I'm Orlando. He hired me as a private investigator to look for his dad." Sands: "Okay. Thanks bye." he hung up. Sibulele grabbed his phone. Sands: "I had to check, the last time I let you run wild, you got possessed and was Komander's minion." Sibulele: "You are the last person I expected to not trust me. Honestly fucking disappointed in you." Sands: "I'm trying to look out for you. The only thing that will make me sleep better at night is knowing you're safe! If I overstep the line every once in a while, Tough!

I am not going through that crap with you again!" Sibü: "And rubbing it in my face every chance you get that I was possessed as if I went out there looking for a demon." Sands: "No you didnt-" Sibü: "I can't do this with you. I'm leaving." Sands: "You can't leave!" Sibü: "Watch me." Sands: "Are you honestly mad that I questioned your actions?" Sibü: "its not you questioning anything but you not trusting me. Do you think it was fun not being in control of your own mind, body and spirit? Do you think I enjoyed the feeling of being numb and not caring? Do you think I especially liked the part where my body was forcing me to kill my sister. I had to fight for my life and almost lost it. To think that you're assuming I'd go back to all that pain is just damn shameful man, I don't know what kind of monster you think I am." Sands: "Mans, I'm sorry." Sibü: "Keep your apology. I see how you guys are mindful of me and always watching my every move at home as if I'm some mutant. What happened to me was not my fault, I didn't ask to get kidnapped, I didn't ask him to do what he did to me, so just...just leave me alone." he had tears in his eyes. Sands: "What did he do to you?" Sibü walked out of the warehouse. Sands: "Can I trust you not to move?" he asked the witness. She nodded. Sands: "What am I saying. Of course I can't. Women are tricky." Witness: "Your brother was possessed by a demon?" Sands: "As you heard, he doesn't like talking about it." Witness: "Do you blame him? He's already embarrassed and you made him feel as though he asked for it." Sands: "Do me a favor and put them lips together. Leave me alone while you're at it." he sent a message on his phone. Sands: "Now I need to get you a baby sitter that will treat you okay. Black is too busy, Bull is not that safe, he looks like the type of guy you might wanna stay away from in prison, Ky has become a whiny pants all of a sudden, Frankenstein is in a 12 foot grave, oooh I know who." he sent a message. Sands: "he'll be here in 44 minutes, no that can't be right." he called the number. Sands: "Serge? I'm not waiting 44 minutes for your ass." Sergio: "I meant 4 minutes my Sandcastles. I'm almost there." Sands: "alright." he hung up. Sands: "So its actually 4 minutes. How are you doing?" Witness: "I need the toilet." Sands: "Keep it in. This will all be over soon, I swear." she started sobbing and praying. Sands: "You are chained to metal. If your God can get you out of this, it would be conclusive proof that He really is that good. On the other hand, he took a demon out of the mans. I mean it was pretty wild. So keep on." Sergio came down the stairs. Sands: "Yo wassup man." Sergio: "Sandcastles. What it do." Sands: "I need a few hours of your time watching this lady over here. The mans is mad at me and I have to go and apologize I guess maybe get some flowers too." Sergio: "uh huh. Not a problem." Sands: "thank you. Don't worry she's really nice but she a chatterbox. I left you some cards too. There's food and water over there. You don't let her loose for absolutely no reason at all. Unless the building crumbling down. Call me."

Sergio: "Wait let me go fetch my charger and chill supplies in the car." Sands: "Be quick please." Serge left the room. Witness: "Is he going to hurt me?" Sands: "He literally went to fetch a phone charger and chill supplies. Which man ever brought chill supplies to come hurt you?" Witness: "why don't you just kill me!!" Sands: "That was the initial consensus but we don't kill innocent women." Witness: "Why are you keeping me alive if you don't want to let me go!" Sands: "You really are a chatterbox." Sergio came back with a back pack. Serge: "Got a whole 6 seasons of Lost on my ipad. With healthy 45 minute episodes with 24 in each season. Some biscuits and a chocolate, few magazines. Whole package." Sands: "At what point do I look like I care about your Dora the Explorer hand purse?" Serge: "Why am I here again?" Sands: "I'm kidding. But I have one question, you keep this in your boot in the hopes that someone will ask you to come keep an eye out?" Serge: "Precisely yes. I also have a getaway bag." Sands: "This is as healthy as fried chicken but okay. I'm leaving. I'll be back in a few. Again, no letting loose. She been praying, and I doubt you're strong Serge, don't let her get to you." Serge: "I'm not an idiot." Sands: "I'll try to remember that when my big brother has you on the chopping table ready to remove your head. So goodbye." he walked out.

Later in the day, we left the elephant park to go have some lunch. Chris had fallen asleep on Lakhe's shoulder. Me: "What are we having baby?" Lakhe: "Anything you want my queen." Me: "Lakhe I need an answer." Lakhe: "We can try a seafood restaurant." Me: "I don't want seafood." Lakhe: "Then let's drive back to PE baby, its only 45 minutes. I'll cook for you." Me: "Are you sure?" he smiled and kissed my cheek. Me: "You've been acting strange all day. What did Sandile say?" Lakhe: "He's fine baby. I'm just worried about him." Me: "So you want to check up on him?" Lakhe: "No baby, this is our time together." Me: "You've been distant and when I comment on that you try making up for it by being sweet. Like you're buttering me up for something." Lakhe: "Heee ubaby." Me: "Talk to me. I'm supposed to be your best friend. If you can't open up to me, who will you talk to?" Lakhe: "I know you're my best friend baby. There's no where else I'd rather be." we got to the car, and we secured Chris in his seat. Me: "Tell you what, I'll do the cooking. You rest okay?." Lakhe: "No. I cook. You sleep." Me: "What are you going to cook?" Lakhe: "Spaghetti. And you're going to eat it." Me: "We can get pizza-" Lakhe: "Spaghetti." he started the car and drove off. I checked my emails on the road back to Port Elizabeth. Me: "Sarah says she'll process my resignation in the afternoon tomorrow. I think she still hopes I'll say I was joking." he didn't respond. Me: "honey?" silence. Wow. Okay. So I carried on with my phone.

Lakhe: "Why do you have to leave the company Sphosenkosi when we've fixed our problems? Why you gotta let everyone know we're fighting?" Me: "But when did we fight?" Lakhe: "I don't understand why our home problems are taken to work." Me: "I thought you'd be happy that I'm not going to be working and will only be taking care of myself and the baby." Lakhe: "Did you have to quit? You couldn't just take maternity leave?" Me: "I thought you'd like that I'm away from your company and clients." Lakhe: "Oh so you decided that after they liked you?" Me: "Who said they liked me." Lakhe: "After you took over from me without my permission, obviously they liked you. Now I'm going to look like an ass when I explain that You've quit your job. Possibly I'd lose clients too." Me: "You can't lose clients just because I quit. That would be stupid-" Lakhe: "You've just doubled my work." Me: "Why do you like fighting with me unnecessarily?" Lakhe: "So I'm being an inconvenience to you now?" Me: "I'll talk to you when you're calm. I see you're agitated." Lakhe: "Of course I'd seem agitated when I'm talking the truth." I kept my mouth quiet. The rest of the way to our house was silence. Not even the radio was playing. I didn't bother myself tu. If he wanted to play the guilt card, it was all his for only 5 cents. I wouldn't be endangering my mental health because of his tantrums whenever I "sabotaged" him at work. I couldn't handle it. I just needed to have some space and relaxation. He parked the car in our second house. I got out of the car and took Christian with me. Once I put him in bed, I went to the kitchen to make myself some food. I sat with my sandwich in the lounge when I got a call from Sibu. Me: "Hey. Unjani?" Sibu: "I'm good, you?" Me: "Great. What's up?" Sibu: "Can you talk?" Me: "Yeah I can talk. Is everything okay?" I walked out the sliding door. Sibu: "Yeah, everything is fine. Orlando called me some hours ago. He says there's something he wants to tell me. He found something." Me: "And? Did you ask him what?" Sibu: "No, we haven't met. I just thought I'd let you know, in case you wanted to come with." Me: "I won't be able to come along but I want you to let me know what he says." Sibu: "Okay. I will." Me: "You seem a bit shaky." Sibu: "Just an argument I had with Sandile." Me: "What about?" Sibu: "Nothing. I'll call you later after I meet Orlando." Me: "Okay then." Sibu: "bye." I hung up. When I turn around to walk back into the house Lakhe was standing right behind me. I got a mini fright. Me: "Why did you sneak up on me like that?!" Lakhe: "I never sneaked. You were the one that was taking private calls outside." Me: "I was talking to my brother." Lakhe: "I didn't ask." I walked past him into the house. I don't know what his problem was today but I was not in the mood. Lakhe: "So You're not going to respond?" Me: "How do I begin to respond to that? Lakhe undifuna ntoni?" Lakhe: "Do not resign. Call Sarah and tell her to delete it." Me: "you can't tell me what to do." Lakhe: "You'll file for maternity leave instead then come back after birth." Me: "I don't

want to come back to your company Masilakhe. You have the potential of being a horrible boss. I can't take that chance because I'm in love with you, you're my husband and child's father. I don't want tension between us." Lakhe: "When have I ever been a horrible boss?" Me: "You're being bossy right now telling me what to do." Lakhe: "Spho, I'm not being bossy. You can't just quit because of one small difference." Me: "I'm not quitting because of a difference. I'm quitting because I'm tired. That's it." Lakhe: "So you're trying to tell me you're going to be a house wife?" Me: "Yes." Lakhe: "I don't believe you." I lost my appetite. I didn't know what he wanted from me. Lakhe: "I know you love working Spho, why do we have to fight about it?" Me: "I'm going to take a nap." I went to my bedroom and closed the door behind me. My head was already pounding. This is why I don't want to go back to work. He puts so much pressure without realizing it and I cannot take it.

Late evening, Sibulele went back to the main house after his meeting with Orlando. The minute he walked into the door Sandile came to him. Sands: "I've been looking all over for you." Sibulele: "I don't want to talk to you." Sands: "I know, so you'll listen. I'm sorry, I didn't mean what I said. I didn't realize it would hurt you. That's the last thing I want." Sibulele: "It's not about what you said. It's about your actions, not trusting me. What am I supposed to do then Sandile?" Rob: "What is going on here?" Sibulele: "I'm moving out." he went to his room. Sands: "Sibulele!!" he marched after him. Sands: "I refuse to let you leave this house!" Sibulele: "It's not your choice Sandile." he packed his suitcases. Sands: "Sibulele, I do trust you. What I did was just a reflex to protect you." Sibulele zipped up the first suitcase and went on to pack the second. Sands: "Sibulele bra, come on. I'm sorry." Sibulele: "I hear your apology." Sands: "Then don't go." Sibulele: "It's clear I make everyone here uncomfortable." Sands: "That's not true." Sibulele: "You know it is." Sands: "I'm telling uLakhe. I can't let you do this." Sibulele: "Go ahead and tell him. I don't care." he zipped the second suitcase then pulled his charger out the socket in the wall. Sands: "Sibulele." Sibulele: "Sandile, stop. Please. I'm not fighting with you at all." Sands: "At least tell me where I can find you." Sibulele: "At the Radisson. I'll see you around." he took his suitcases to the car. Sandile stood in the lounge. Rob: "What did you do now?" Sands: "I'm not the only, You're all treating Sibulele differently ever since this demon thing and he noticed and guess what? It hurt him." Rob: "Well, I didn't realize we treated him differently. I am barely ever here. Why didn't he-" Sibulele walked in. Sibulele: "Tata, I have something to tell you." Dumi came into the lounge as well. Rob: "What's going on?" Sibulele: "I've decided to move out. I need my own space. I'll be at the Radisson for a few days but I'll come visit. Always." Rob: "What is this about Sibulele?" Sibulele: "Nothing tata. I just feel like being by myself. I have to go." Rob:

"Well you'll have to tell Lakhe, I won't be able to." Sibú: "I will sir. Thank you." he walked out the house.

I woke up in the late evening. I could smell the delicious meal that I wasn't sure what was. After going to the bathroom I made my way to the kitchen. Lakhe and Christian were watching TV in the lounge. Me: "hey." Lakhe: "hey mommy. How was your nap?" Me: "It was great." Why was he being so nice? Lakhe: "Sibú called, he wanted to talk to you." Me: "Oh yes. I'll call him after dinner." Lakhe: "You can call him now." Me: "I'm hungry." he just looked at me. Lakhe: "Did you know he moved out of the house?" he finally said. Me: "No, when?" Lakhe: "Today. I'm surprised because you were busy whispering with him on the porch." There it is. Me: "All he said was that he was going to meet with Orlando and he had a fight with Sandile. He didn't want to talk about it." Lakhe: "maybe he wants to talk now." Me: "Fine I'll call." I dialed the number and listened to it ring. Sibú: "Hello." Me: "Hi Sibú. how did it go?" Sibú: "Are you sitting down?" Me: "Of course." Sibú: "Well, it so happens that Rey was our uncle. Miriam's younger brother." Me: "No!!" Sibú: "Yep. That's the connection between those two. Orlando has gotten in touch with their grandparents. That's if they want to talk to us." Me: "You think perhaps if they do, they'd know who our father could be?" Sibú: "Possibly. Its worth a try. We're getting closer to the truth Spho. Soon, we'll know who he is." Me: "doesn't that scare you?" Sibú: "a small part of it scares me but the fact that Orlando can find out his name within days makes me calm. I have faith." Me: "Why did you move out the house?" Sibú: "You moved out the house and You're asking me?" Me: "I needed a break." Sibú: "Same here." Me: "So did you fix things with Sands first?" Sibú: "I didn't. Sandile needs to understand not everything is a joke." Me: "I get that but let's be honest Sandile is a child. I'm sure he's sorry." Sibú: "I just need my space." Me: "I hear you." Sibú: "Ohhh hell...." he whispered. Me: "what?" Sibú: "I just received an email from Orlando. I'm reading it right now." Me: "What does it say?" Sibú: "Rey died just after the 1st birthday of his child." Me: "Oh that's so sad." Sibú: "he says the child's name is Christian."

#115

I dropped the phone on the floor. Lakhe: "baby?" I stepped back. Lakhe: "Spho, don't you dare run from me, what did he say." I turned to walk to the bedroom quickly. Lakhe: "I'll be right back Chris okay? Keep watching the score for me." Chris: "Okay." Lakhe took the phone from the floor and rushed to the bedroom. He closed the door behind him and kneeled on the floor

between my legs. Lakhe: "Baby." Me: "Christian." was all I could mumble. Lakhe: "He's okay, he's watching soccer. What did your brother say?" Me: "Rey, is Christian's father." Lakhe: "Who's Rey?" Me: "Siyanda's best friend that was killed. He is Christian's biological father. And Rey was my mother's younger brother." Lakhe: "How the hell...." Me: "The question is how the hell did he end up with us. Its so creepy." I whispered. Lakhe: "The child did nothing wrong Spoho. Perhaps the mother was bringing him to Miriam." Me: "Now both his parents are dead, and his aunt. This is not a coincidence." Lakhe: "I know its not. Maybe its not such a good idea finding all this out. Seemingly Komander knew this family. And very well too." Me: "Sibu said this before after his abduction. He said Komander knows everything. Do you think he knows we have Christian?" Lakhe: "I doubt he would want to hurt a child. Spoho, you do realize your father knows something about this, right?" Me: "I know." Lakhe: "And baby, I need you to stay away from it. It seems as though everyone who comes into contact with Komander dies mysteriously. I don't want to lose you or anyone in our family." Me: "I promise. I won't do anything." Lakhe: "Are we still thinking about adopting Chris as ours rather than just a cousin? Legally, he's supposed to be with us since he doesn't have family. You're his cousin. What I want to know is, do you want him to be our son?" Me: "Yes. But we have to be honest with him Lakhe." Lakhe: "When he's older we'll tell him the truth, for now I want us to focus on him having an amazing normal childhood with two loving parents and baby siblings." Me: "I understand baby. Do you think we need to tell the family?" Lakhe: "They don't need to know, Sibu is fine but that's it. Can't put anymore lives in danger." I nodded. Me: "So tomorrow where should I go to apply for adoption." Lakhe: "We'll call the social worker." he stood up and sat next to me. Lakhe: "I made lasagna. Chris helped. He was the one imitating the YouTube video." I laughed. Me: "really?" Lakhe: "Yeah. So if you're hungry, we can dish up for you. I need to go check up endlin, resolve this Sibu moving out issue. Then I'll be back." Me: "Okay baby." he kissed my lips. Lakhe: "I love you." Me: "I love you too." Chris: "Its a goal!!!!!" he barged into the room. Chris: "Come see!! Its a goal." he pulled Lakhe out to the lounge. They cheered together. I pulled myself together and went to the kitchen to dish up dinner. Me: "Food, guys." I brought them their plates and we ate in the lounge while they watched soccer. After our dinner, I washed the three dishes and the pan he used to make the food. Lakhe: "Honey I'll be back just now. Chris is watching the score for me." Me: "I'm not watching soccer." Lakhe: "There's only 10 minutes left of it baby." he kissed my cheek. Lakhe: "I'll be quick." Me: "Okay baby." he left the house.

Lakhe arrived at the warehouse at the same time as Sandile. Lakhe: "If you're just arriving and Sibiu is awol. Who's watching the witness?" Sands: "Sergio. I had business to take care of." they walked in together. Lakhe: "What did you say to Sibiu? Why can't you just keep quiet at times?" Sands: "You want me to tell you or keep quiet?" Lakhe: "Tell me!" Sands: "Well, I kinda overstepped the boundary by asking who he was talking to on phone further verifying it. He feels it was unnecessary and that we've been treating him differently ever since his demon possession. Like we're scared that he is harmful." Lakhe sighed. Lakhe: "I'll talk to him." they got to the basement where Sergio was binge watching his series. Sergio: "Mr G." Lakhe: "Yes. How's everything going?" Sergio: "Just well. She's been asleep for a while." Lakhe: "You drugged her?" Sergio: "I had to. Her begging was annoying." Lakhe took out the pistol from behind his back and attached the silencer. Sands: "What are you doing?" Lakhe: "What we should've done in the beginning. There's no point in keeping her alive. She knows what we look like and why we want her here. If she gets loose again, our lives are over." He pointed the gun at her forehead. Sands: "But Lakhe we could just pay her off and fly her out to some foreign country." Lakhe: "And then she comes back here after some time? Not only are the police looking for her, so is Komander. He wants to know the person who killed two of his soldiers." Sands: "She is harmless-" Lakhe pulled the trigger, a bullet whizzed through her skull, and a second one to make sure followed. Blood oozed out of the two abnormal holes in her head. Lakhe: "Get rid of that body then go home." he walked out. Serge: "Shit. I knew your brother was hard-core, but shiiiiit." Sands: "We have some work to do I guess." he sighed. Serge: "perhaps if we check our usual contact for the 12th sin." Sands: "She didn't do anything wrong. She doesn't deserve to be shoved in a 12 foot grave." Serge: "You do know if the police find her body, its gonn be a wild frenzy. The media, the city." Sands: "Her family needs to bury her. We'll be careful. Seal your boot with plastic to protect it from the blood, when we transport her. Bring it down the underground parking." Serge: "Sure thing." he walked out to his car. Sandile looked at the lifeless body before him. Sands: "I'm so sorry."

Lakhe arrived at his mansion. Rob was sitting in the lounge alone. Lakhe: "Hi." Rob: "Hi." Lakhe went to his bedroom to shower and change. He came back when he was done. Lakhe: "Are you okay?" Rob: "Yeah...no....I don't know." Lakhe: "You need to make up your mind, I have a wife and kid waiting for me." Rob: "Well, aren't you just polite. Its just, I like Noma. She's amazing, she's funny and pretty." Lakhe: "Is this one of those million nicknames you give to umama?" Rob: "No. This is another woman. We went on a date." Lakhe:

"Oh....and mama knows about this?" Rob: "Yes. Now she went on a date too. Some gym freak that looks like a damn sculptured balloon! He just wants her money." Lakhe: "And why do you care?" Rob: "Because once he's done eating her money, she'll come take mine!! You know your mother!" Lakhe: "Is it possible that you're jealous?" Rob: "Why would I be jealous?" Lakhe: "Because you're still in love with her." Rob: "That's not true. I just don't want her to make a mistake and come ruin things for me!" Lakhe: "I see." Rob: "So what do I do?" Lakhe: "Nothing." Rob: "You're useless. Please call Spho, she can reason with her. She'll listen if it comes from your wife." Lakhe: "No tata, my wife is not going to be a pass ball for you and your ex wife. If you want to talk to ma, talk to her straight. Or talk to the guy, find out what he's about." Rob: "You're right! I saw on his Instagram page, he's not private so I'll DM him." Lakhe: "What?" Rob: "DM, Direct Message? You need to get on track with the times." Lakhe: "I'm not on social media so....that's far from me. Anyway, I gotta go." Rob: "Bye." Lakhe: "Wait, Uphi uDumi?" Rob: "he's in the game room with the kids." he looked on Instagram. Rob: "he's so unrealistic. Looking like a doll. I bet he's gay." Lakhe: "Dumi? Gay? Erhh, no." Rob: "I'm not talking about Dumi, I'm talking about this swine." Lakhe looked at the screen. Lakhe: "Wow. Okay." Rob: "See? He's a con artist." Lakhe: "Dad, you need to relax. Just because he's a model of some sort doesn't make him a con artist." Rob: "Not because he's a model, but because he's dating older women. Two things, he either has major mommy issues or he's a con artist." Lakhe: "Or maybe he likes mama and makes her happy." Rob gasped. Rob: "Are you trying to say I never made her happy?" Lakhe: "I'm trying to say focus on Noma and leave mama alone with her Ben 10. If you're dating, why can't she?" Rob: "He's younger than YOU!!" Lakhe: "Okay, And? Its not like I can put anything on offer. Let her live her life. Stop butting in. Get off that boy's profile and take Noma out for ice cream." Rob: "I'm no-" Lakhe: "Get. Off. The. Profile." Rob: "Fine! Fine!" Lakhe: "You don't go back there for any reason. It makes you look petty and weak. And I have no weak father. Straighten up." Rob: "You're awfully bossy today. What's wrong with you?" Lakhe: "Nothing. I have to go back to my family." the intercom buzzed. Lakhe opened the gate. Lakhe: "its the lawyers. Must be paying them good money for them to drive around in Porsche's." Rob: "Be nice." Lakhe: "I'm trying but I don't have a Porsche." the two lawyers came to the door. Lakhe: "Come in." Ryan: "Mr and Mr Sobz." Rob: "Evening Ryan. Its kind of late isn't it?" Ryan: "This won't take long. We found the guy who confessed." Lakhe: "Who is it?" Ryan looked at Quincy. Quincy: "Do you know a Gregory Sander?" Lakhe: "The name sounds familiar." Rob: "You've met him?" Lakhe: "I don't think, met. Ohhh, he's Dez's ex. She dated him before dating me." Rob: "So her ex killed her?" Lakhe: "That's the weird part. Gregory was the one who dumped Dez because he'd fallen in

love with someone else. She accepted it and they remained civil. There was no bad blood. Why would he just decide to kill her?" Quincy: "In his confession he says they had fought and he lost his temper." Lakhe: "No....that's not true. They dated for about 3 years, Dez never mentioned anything about him being abusive in any way. There would have been a sign somewhere. Nobody just wakes up and becomes a murderer." Ryan: "Well, whatever happened. He's the killer. He confessed and the charges will be dropped against you by the end of the week. You'll be a free man. Enjoy your evening gents." they walked out. Rob: "This is great news, why aren't you happy?" Lakhe: "Dad, something isn't right. Gregory just chose to confess out of the blue? Do you have something to do with this?" Rob: "Absolutely not!" Lakhe: "Someone just saved my life and very soon.....they'll come collect the debt."

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#116

I woke up early Monday morning. Lakhe was awake staring at the ceiling and I had a feeling he hadn't slept. Ever since he came back from the main house, he was quiet and distant. Me: "Baby?" Lakhe: "hey." Me: "What time is it?" Lakhe: "its 5 honey. Go back to sleep." Me: "I can't. You haven't slept. You didn't even tell me what happened last night." Lakhe: "The lawyers told me that it is Dez's ex that confessed but I think someone paid him to. I know he didn't do it, the question is, who?" Me: "Why do you think he didn't do it?" Lakhe: "Because he's not abusive Spho. Dez never for once complained about him if anything I was the one annoyed that they stayed friends." Me: "Okay, why do you care if he didn't do it?" Lakhe: "Spho, You'd never understand. Someone out there killed Dez and framed me. Either the same person, or someone different paid Greg to confess, so that said person has a hold over me." Me: "I know you're worried, but I don't think you should be." Lakhe: "I have to talk to him." Me: "That's not a very good idea. The police might think you're the one that did the paying." Lakhe: "What do I do Spho? Someone is out to get me." Me: "Not necessarily right now. We will face it together when it happens. For now, you focus on me and Chris and your company." I kissed his lips. Me: "Chris is still asleep." I whispered. Lakhe: "aren't you going to work?" Me: "We spoke about this." he caressed my breasts. Lakhe: "Can I convince you otherwise?" Me: "You can try." Lakhe: "fine." he lay back in his spot. Me: "Lakhe, can we please have sex? Its been weeks. Do I really have to ask?" Lakhe: "Didn't we have sex last week?" Me: "that was three weeks ago!" Lakhe: "Oh." Me: "You think I'm unattractive because of this hue tummy right?" Lakhe: "Absolutely not." Me: "Then what is it! Everytime I try

to pursue you, you turn me away." Lakhe: "I'm just tired baby that's it." Me: "Lakhe I am sexually frustrated." Lakhe: "I can kiss it better.." he came to kiss my lips, I pushed him away. Me: "Tell me what's wrong?" Lakhe: "Nothing." Me: "Are you having an affair?" Lakhe: "Where would I even find the time for that?" Me: "Why won't you sleep with me then?" Lakhe: "Its been a busy few weeks Spho. Come on." I was hurt. He was disgusted by how I looked now that's why he didn't want me. I got out of bed. Lakhe: "Baby, please. Can we not fight today?" I switched on the shower and stepped in. After a minutes he joined me. Lakhe: "Sweetheart I love you. Of course I want you." Me: "ok." I was done with my shower. He pressed me against the wall kissing me full on the lips. Cupping my breasts, I reached for his manhood and disappointedly found it limp. He wasn't in the mood. Me: "Just stop." Lakhe: "I'm sorry." I stepped out the shower and dried myself up. I didn't even know what to do. I just hated how I looked immediately. My heart was heavy and I couldn't wait to just give birth and work out back to my slender body. This pregnancy was ruining everything. All my dresses looked wide as curtains and I felt like an elephant. There wasn't any decent thing to wear. I wiped my tears and just slipped on a pale blue maternity maxi dress and my usual sandals. I combed my hair after making the bed and went to look for Chris. He was still sleeping. I went to start making breakfast. As much as I didn't want to see Lakhe, I had to stay because of Chris. I wanted to register him at pre school today then meet with the social worker. Lakhe came out the bedroom dressed and ready. Lakhe: "uhm, I have to get to the office early." I kept quiet. Lakhe: "I guess I'll see you later." he went to his car outside. After a few seconds he came back to the kitchen. He kissed my cheek. Lakhe: "I love you." he walked out after that. I had so many questions. Where did Lakhe keep disappearing off to? Plus, for the first time ever he's trying to keep me busy at all times. First by adopting Chris and second not wanting me to quit my job. Why was he so insistent on making sure I was busy? I ate my breakfast alone. Chris woke up just after 6am. He came to eat and I fixed his bed then bathed him. He got dressed in jeans and a Superman t shirt and red sneakers. Since we had only come with one car to this house we had to Uber home to fetch my Range Rover then off to our errands. Chris carried his back pack and we got into the cab. After arriving at the Sobukwe mansion, I realized everyone was still asleep. Which was a good thing. I wrote a quick note in case someone worries. 'Came to fetch the Range. -Spho' and left it by the keys bowl. I buckled up Chris and off we went.

Khaya and Zama arrived in Port Elizabeth Monday morning. Zama: "That was a lovely get away." Khaya: "For you maybe. I just spent days and days of

stress. What in the fucking world happened at that harbor? Two of my guys were led out and shot dead in a ditch by an obvious assassin. In the report given its stated that the bullets come from a height and the car was obviously moving because it crashed into a pole seconds after. So tell me, what kind of normal breathing human can shoot like that?" Zama: "Its not like you could've seen it coming." Khaya: "I'll tell you what I see coming Zama, a war. Whoever that was, was trying to prove a point. And they did. Its clear we're being provoked." Zama: "So you're trying to say someone is after Komander Ultimates Group?" Khaya: "That's exactly what I'm saying." Zama: "Then that would be the world's most stupidest person in history." Khaya: "Nobody can find him or her. The witness has disappeared before she said anything. Its a damn nightmare. How does someone just vanish in thin air? I need a drink." Zama: "No, you need to be fully sober. Komander will be here any minute now and you need to be alert." Khaya: "I can't calm down when my ass is on the line." his phone rang. Khaya: "Yes?" "Hi, I just received a call from Spho, asking about the adoption process. What should I tell her?" Khaya: "Just stall her for a while. I need to sort something else out in the a meantime. I'll let the boss know." "Cool." they hung up. Khaya: "As if life is not complicated enough, Spho wants to adopt Christian." Zama: "What? No Khaya, what if she finds out the truth?" Khaya: "How could she? We were careful. I can't deal with this right now, you take it. I on the other hand have to fix this mess." a strong scent greeted them followed by Komander in full black attire. His face looked unpleasant. Kom: "I had to cut my trip short because of this bloody mess You've created!!" Khaya: "I apologize sir. I did everythi-" Kom: "You didn't!!!! Seemingly, a ghost led them out the harbor and shot them like experienced assassins and the only witness has disappeared probably dead by now!! How the hell did the cameras in that place break? They were fine when I booked it!" Khaya: "I understand your anger sir, I will do everything I can to find out what happened." Kom: "Like Hell you are. Do you know who did this and why?" Khaya: "No sir." Kom: "Then how in the damn universe did they gain entry!!" Khaya: "Sir, I promise to find out." Kom: "I want a neck in my hands at this time tomorrow. You better pray to God its not yours." he walked out. Khaya: "Shit." Zama: "What are you gonna do?" Khaya: "I have no bloody idea. I need to drink something my brain can't think." Zama: "Drinking won't solve a thing baby. You just need to find out who was unauthorized to be there. It could be easier than you thought." Khaya: "That's not my problem Zama, I know Komander couldn't care less for these dead boys. He is specifically looking for that assassin. How many of our soldiers have been killed, at about no point did he care. He wants the shooter." Zama: "What do you think he wants with him?" Khaya: "Oh Zama.....we're talking

about a whole lot of destruction. That shooter combined with Komander can bring the world a load of pain."

Monday late afternoon. I'd gone to the school with Chris to register him. I'd gone to buy him his school supplies. Then bought him more clothes, since the ones we bought were only a few. Finally we arrived at our house. Sandile's car was parked out front. Still amazed at how he managed to find this house. Me: "Hey you. Come help me with these bags." he picked up the plastics and we took them in with Christian behind us. Me: "how are you?" Sands: "Good. You?" Me: "I know you're not. Might as well tell mama. What's wrong?" Sands: "I feel like I'm not doing well in the business side. I've never really excelled in it and now my hotel is starting to suffer." Me: "So what are you thinking?" Sands: "Well, since you quit your job with Lakhe, I was wondering if you could help me revamp the hotel to something hip and happening." Me: "You're hiring me to improve your brand?" Sands: "Yes." Me: "You do know I'm expensive right?" Sands: "Don't I get a family discount?" Me: "No." Sands: "Fine, send me your invoice. Just try and do this for me quicker than possible. And please don't tell Lakhe." Me: "Of course not. I'll have to meet up with your team tomorrow and find out what they're all about. One of the first things you need to understand is that happy employees represent a successful brand. I'll need to work on them before the actual business." Sands: "I'm glad I came to you. I understand why Lakhe is so frustrated that you left the company." Me: "Well, he'll have to be strong." I was thinking of getting takeaways because I was too tired to cook. Me: "I'm actually excited to be working for you. Even if its only going to be for a short while." Sands: "Why don't you just start your own company?" Me: "Well...Lakhe will think its an attack." Sands: "How? He's telecoms, You'd be marketing, advertising and brand influencing. In what world is that an attack?" Me: "I was his department of all those. Basically makes up of 60 percent of that company." Sands: "Spho, you're good at what you do. People want your work, he knows this. Not only are you good but you're easy to work with and super polite. He can't be mad at you for that." Me: "I know but Sandile this is the married life. I have to keep him happy and comfortable. Maybe if he can replace me in the company I'd start a company of my own knowing he's taken care of." Sands: "He does not deserve you." Me: "Every princess has a beast. Its life." I smiled. Me: "So who takes care of Dumi while you're running around." Sands: "Dumi is very self reliant. He does everything himself its quite impressive. He can bath himself, dress himself, take himself to the toilet. He is very independent. Vicky only helps him with the kids and only under his supervision." Me: "I'm proud of him. That's really amazing." Sands: "What are we having for dinner?" Me: "I'm

ordering in. Kind of tired. Maybe pizza." Sands: "Lakhe doesn't eat take outs."
Me: "What did pizza ever do to him?" Sands: "Nothing. He just doesn't like it."
Me: "Your brother has been living under a rock all his life. I'll roast him some
meat." Sands: "I'll help..."

Babalo and Lakhe sat at the back of the restaurant, a waiter brought their drinks to the table. Babalo: "So what's the issue man." Lakhe: "I don't know who to talk to." Babalo: "We've been through some pretty dark shit together in the past few weeks. So talk to me." Lakhe: "I'm scared of losing my wife." Babalo: "That makes the two of us." Lakhe: "and I feel like everyone is so drawn to her. If she ever left me I'd be left with nothing, like all my family would take her side rather." Babalo: "Why do you think that." Lakhe: "I was talking to my dad yesterday and he just said, please call Spho, she'll know what to do. And I felt really useless. She's good at work, she's good with the kid, she's good with my family." Babalo: "That's what a good wife is supposed to be like. What is your real problem? I'm confused so help me out, Is it possible that you're jealous of your spouse?" Lakhe: "No, I'm proud of her. She's done really amazing for herself and for us too." Babalo: "I'm still waiting for the problem." Lakhe: "She thinks I'm not attracted to her. That I'm having an affair." Babalo: "Are you?" he sipped his drink. Lakhe: "bruh, I had to move two meetings to make time to see you. Where would I find time to cheat? She's my whole world." Babalo: "then why do you feel she feels like that?" Lakhe: "Because I avoid having sex with her." Babalo: "I'm confused again. Man, have you seen your wife? I mean no disrespect but daaaamn. She looked great before she fell pregnant but she looks so much better with her round tummy and curves. Lakhe, what is your problem?" Lakhe: "Bra..." he sighed burying his head in his hands. Lakhe: "I am so scared of hurting her. The last time we had sex, I couldn't enjoy it because I kept thinking how the baby was feeling. Like I was hurting him in there, invading his space." Babalo: "You don't hurt the baby whilst having sex, its safe. Doctors approve of it." Lakhe: "Doctors didn't do shit when I watched her miscarry our first baby. I was there Babalo and I felt so helpless. I literally watched the life drain out of her. Do you know how that feels? I can't risk this one too. I refuse to." Babalo: "I understand, After the miscarriage Hlumi had, I cut myself off from the world. Its very traumatic but you need to talk to Spho and let her know how you feel. Then together you can go to a therapist to help you deal with this PTSD. Because whether you like it or not, you are traumatized by what you saw. That's why this is affecting you, and it won't stop until you fix it."

I'd roasted meat for Lakhe and seemingly Sandile because he kept stealing a piece. Our pizza arrived and we dug in. Sands: "I'm so full. Thank you Spho." he said after 5 slices. Sands: "I'm going to take a nap." Me: "Okay." I cleared up the table while he went to flop on the couch. Chris: "You're in my spot." Sands: "Your spot is on the floor." Chris: "I'm going to hurt you if you don't get off my spot." Sands: "I'd like to see you try." Chris picked up his car keys. Chris: "This is your last chance." Sands: "What you gonn do? Hijack my car? I'd like to see you drive an i8. Something even your daddy can't do." Chris: "Oh I'm not going to drive your car. But the toilet will." Sands: "What?" Chris strolled to the bathroom. Sands: "Boy, you better get back here with my keys!!!" Chris flushed the toilet. Sandile screamed. Sands: "What did you do!!!!" he rushed to the toilet. Chris gave him the undamaged keys. Chris: "Next time, make sure you stay off my spot. This your last warning." he went back to sit in his spot in the lounge. Sands: "You are the devil." Chris: "You'll learn to love me." he changed the channel. Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "I heard a scream all the way down the street. What is going on and what are you doing here?" Sands: "That child almost flushed my keys down the toilet-" Lakhe: "That child has a name." Sands: "He tried to flush my keys!" Lakhe: "Chris did you try flushing the keys?" Chris: "Yes." Lakhe: "Why did you do that?" Chris: "He was sitting in my spot and didn't want to move. What was I supposed to do Uncle?" Sands: "Sit on the other couch!!" Lakhe: "Do you ever sit on another couch at home? Or do you remove people from your seat?" Sands: "That is besides the point." Lakhe: "The point is, Sandile in this house that is Chris' spot and you don't sit in it. At home, nobody will sit in yours. Christian, you don't ever take another persons belongings without their permission. Not for fun, not for damage. Do you understand me?" Chris: "Yes Uncle." Lakhe: "Sandile do I make myself clear?" Sands: "ewe bhuti." Lakhe: "Good." he turned to the kitchen. Lakhe: "My heart. I'm starving." Me: "I was wondering when you'd notice me." Lakhe: "had to sort out the kids before they burn down the house." he kissed my cheek. Lakhe: "how was your day?" Me: "it was okay. The social worker said she would get back to me regarding Chris and I got him into pre school he starts tomorrow." Sands: "Thank God. I will drive him there if I have to!!" Lakhe: "ndithetha nawe?" Sands: "Sorry." Lakhe: "So you registered him at that hillbilly preschool?" Me: "Its a good school." Lakhe: "The name is Pumpkin Patch Preschool. Its a hillbilly school." Me: "Unfortunately there isn't a Havard of Preschools willing to take him in right now. There's year long waiting lists. And we agreed on this." Lakhe: "I know. So what activities is he going to participate in?" Me: "I haven't signed him up for those yet, I want him to be comfortable and choose for himself what he wants." Lakhe: "He's 4. He

doesn't know what he wants." Chris: "I want to play the piano." Me: "See? He knows what he wants." Lakhe: "What do you know about the piano Chris?" Chris: "My mom said my dad used to play it for her. He was good she said. So I want to play it too." Lakhe looked at me. Sands: "Don't mean you'll be good too." Lakhe: "Sandile." Sands: "Did you box just because your dad was a professional boxer? Uhhh, NO. If anything, you can't box to save your life." Lakhe: "You keep quiet or you leave my house. Chris will play his piano. Baby, does that school offer piano classes? Of course not. Their best activity is probably Catch The Ball." Me: "I'll find a music school." Lakhe: "Good. Now that's sorted out. When is our doctor appointment?" Me: "On Friday. I roasted you some meat, There's also veges. We had pizza." Lakhe: "Thank you my wife." I dished him his plate and he went to sit down eating. I was done cleaning the kitchen so my next thing to do was a nice hot bubble bath. I ran my bath in our bathroom, adding the bubbles and lighting up scented candles. After undressing I stepped in and relaxed my body in the hot water, immediately calming my muscles. Should've brought a book. It was almost 20 minutes later when Lakhe walked in the bathroom. Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "hey." Lakhe: "You look comfortable." Me: "I am. Also sleepy now so I need to get out." I got up and rinsed the foam off my body then dried myself off with a towel. Lakhe: "I want us to talk." Me: "No. Its okay. If its about this morning, then its fine." Lakhe: "What is that supposed to mean?" Me: "it means I don't care about it anymore. I understand." Lakhe: "No, that's not making me feel better at all." I took my lotion to the bed. Me: "Babe. I get it. I wouldn't want to sleep with a whale either. We can wait until after birth." he took the bottle of lotion from my hand. Lakhe: "I can't let you say that because it hurts me. Spho I love you with everything I have. I want you of course. All the time, the only problem is...." he sat down. Lakhe: "I'm scared Spho. The first time you were pregnant we didn't know. When you lost the baby, I was crushed. I hated myself for not being able to protect him. Now, we got a second chance. I don't want to ruin it. I don't want to hurt him. It mentally fucks me up when I think about having sex, not because I don't want you but because I'm scared we might lose our baby. I know this sounds stupid but I don't think I can emotionally afford that type of pain again." I was super sleepy from that bath, barely keeping it together but I heard everything he said and it was sweet that he was trying to protect his little baby. Lakhe: "Please say something." Me: "Baby, I'm sorry I was hard on you before. I really didn't think of that. I just thought it was me you didn't want, I didn't realize that it hurt you. I'm sorry and I do understand. Its just that, do you mind if we put the conversation on pause for tomorrow? I'm struggling to stay awake." Lakhe: "Yeah, I see that. I will massage you to sleep. Go ahead baby." Me: "I love you for that." Lakhe: "I

love you too." I lay on my back in bed and he massaged my thighs, legs and feet. I don't know what else because I drifted off to sleep.

Tuesday morning I woke up at my usual 6 am. Lakhe was already tapping on his laptop. A part of me was really pleased I didn't have to do that anymore. Lakhe: "Good morning." Me: "Hi. I fell asleep didn't I?" Lakhe: "At least you had the decency to announce yourself and tell me how handsome I was." Me: "I don't remember that." I kissed his arm. Lakhe: "So Sandile slept here. In the guest room. I'm beginning to think I've had a child all this time just disguised as a grown man." Me: "Could've figured that out when he followed you from Durban. He adores his big brother. He has no one else to look up to that pays attention to him. Tata Rob is a great dad but he's preoccupied with his life. Sandile sees you as his hero." Lakhe: "I know. That's why I can't throw him out, but you can." Me: "I'm not throwing him out. He's welcome to stay as long as he pleases." Lakhe: "What was the point of leaving that house if they follow us here?" Me: "Sandile lived perfectly with us alone without any extras. He's used to that set up. We didn't mind. The whole family is the issue." Lakhe: "Fine. I hear you but Chris and him have beef." Me: "Obviously, that's only because siblings fight, daddy. You are going to have to sort them out." he didn't respond. Lakhe: "Shit." he finally said. Me: "What?" Lakhe: "Telkom. They're sending two company reps to come visit. What do I even do with them?" I went on to Facebook and caught up on life. Lakhe: "Baby, I swear I'll do anything. I will literally sign my soul over to you just please come back to work. Or, work from home. Just help me." Me: "I'll give you pointers, but I won't help you. Its either you do this yourself or hire another MD. Put Harold in the meantime." Lakhe: "Fine, pointers it is." for the next 45 minutes I helped him with a brainstorm session and a pick up point for the team when he gets to the office. I had to get Chris ready for school. Me: "You're good to go regarding Telkom." I got up and took a shower. After getting dressed, I went to bath Chris. His outfit today was slim fitting cargo pants, a white t shirt, black jacket and black baby Timbaland boots. He looked super cute. I made him his lunch and watched him eat cereal. His bag was packed and ready to leave. Sands: "Finally, I cannot wait to see you gone. I will sit on your spot all day and fart." Chris: "I will make you hurt." Me: "you guys, come on. Let's go Chris." Chris: "Where are we going?" Me: "I'm taking you to pre school." Chris: "Why?" Sands: "because you're annoying." Me: "Sandile stop it. You're not annoying Chris, I want you to learn how to read and write. So that you can read the baby bed time stories and write me lovely letters, Okay? You'll be back at 12. I will come fetch you." Sands: "or forget you there." he disappeared into his room. Me: "Don't listen to him. Nobody will forget you

there okay? We'll go for ice cream afterwards." Chris: "pinky promise?" Me: "pinky promise, my buttercup. Let's go." we left for Pumpkin Patch Preschool.

Sandile and I had gone to his hotel at 10 that morning. I had to meet up with the team. After a thorough staff meeting, followed by one on ones, I started to get more of an idea on how to revamp the place. It was just before 12 when I realized I couldn't pick Chris up. I called Lakhe. Me: "Pumpkin." Lakhe: "Hi." Me: "Do you mind fetching Chris? I'm a little busy right now." Lakhe: "I've got a meeting in 30 minutes." Me: "He comes out at 12, that's only 10 minutes from now. Then you can take him to Sandile." Lakhe: "Might as well marinate him with barbecue sauce and drop him in the middle of a crocodile infested river. I'll fetch him and take him to the main house. The family will keep an eye on him for a few hours." Me: "Thank you honey." we hung up. Lakhe looked around his office then picked up his keys. On the way to his car, letting his assistant know where he's off to. He drove to the preschool and found little Chris waiting by the gate. He opened the door for him and he climbed in. Tears began welling at his eyes. Lakhe sat next to him. Lakhe: "What's wrong kid?" Chris just sobbed instantly. Lakhe: "Christian is someone bothering you there at school? Tell me right now." Chris shook his head. Lakhe: "Then why are you crying?" Chris: "I want Aunty." he wailed. Lakhe: "You're crying because you want to see Aunty?" Chris: "Yeah." Lakhe: "You miss her?" Chris: "Yeah." he started sobbing again. Lakhe picked him up and put him on his lap. Lakhe: "We're going to see aunty right now okay? Stop crying." he hugged him, Chris hid his face in his chest. Lakhe: "You gotta stop crying. Are you sure no one bothered you in there? I'll sort them out real quick." Chris: "I'm sure." he breathed. Lakhe: "Okay, let's go." he secured him in his seat properly and drove to the main estate. On the way, calling Spho to come too. Lakhe parked in the drive way and took Chris inside. Lakhe: "Hi." Rob: "And who are you?" Lakhe: "Funny dad. Where's everyone?" Rob: "Your mom went shopping with that toenail of Satan boyfriend of hers. Nosi is at school, Dumi at work, Vicky is cleaning the kitchen. Where's Spho." Lakhe: "on her way. Luke?" Rob: "In his room. There's Spho at the gate. Open it." Lakhe: "She has a remote dad." Rob: "okay. What's up with little fella, why did you make the child cry Lakhe? He's only 4." Lakhe: "Thank you for having no faith in me." I walked into the house. Me: "I'm here. Hi tata." Rob: "finally, you're home. I need your help." Lakhe: "Tata, Can you just wait? Baby, please take Chris with you. He was crying for you the minute I pulled up at school." Me: "hi sweetie." he ran to me and hugged me. Me: "I'm so sorry my angel. What's wrong?" Chris: "Did you forget me?" Me: "Absolutely not sweetie, I called uncle to fetch you because I was busy. Why were you crying?" Chris: "I missed your face. That place is

horrible. I don't wanna go back. The teacher looks shady and the kids are peeing everywhere. I can't." Lakhe: "told you." Me: "we'll talk about this later honey okay? For now, we're getting your ice cream." Chris: "Thank you." Lakhe: "Now that's sorted, I can go back to work?" Luke: "Masilakhe. I thought I heard your voice." Lakhe: "Hi Luke, I'm really late man. Can we talk later?" Luke: "Lakhe I had a vision about you. A dark cloud is forming above you. Someone is going to try hurting you in order to get your attention. This person will begin with the things you treasure most. Your family. Watch out Masilakhe. He's closer than you think."

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Lakhe looked at Luke. Lakhe: "So what do I do?" Luke: "You can't really lock yourself indoors this time. We just have to let them find you. The sooner the better." Lakhe: "And hurt my family?" Luke: "They won't be able to hurt your family. Go about your life, I'll pray for your protection, Spho as well as your mother." Lakhe: "Luke I need to know if you'll be able to take care of my family." Luke: "I will." Lakhe: "Babe, I'll ask Sandile to bring Chris' things this side for the time being. Is that okay?" Me: "Yes. Be careful." before he walked out Sibulele came barging in. Sibulele: "I've been looking for you everywhere! Sandile said I'd find you here." he looked at Lakhe. Sibulele: "Oh...Hi." Lakhe: "Hello." Me: "What's going on?" Sibulele: "Orlando. He called. I gave him the note we found in mama's things. The one from our alleged father. He matched the handwriting." Me: "To who's?" Stella walked in as well. Stella: "hello fam-" Rob: "Will you be quiet!!! Keep talking Sibulele." Stella: "I want to tell you about my date." Rob: "NOT NOW! Sibulele, I will beat this out of you." Lakhe: "Why are you so interested?" Rob: "You're not?" Me: "Sibulele?" Sibulele: "Its your father's handwriting Spho." Me: "We know its our father, but who is it." Sibulele: "Dr Khaya Ngudla." I felt so faint. Me: "What?" Rob: "Now I'm confused." Sibulele: "Orlando says our mother was involved with Khaya, decades ago. But he was obliged to marry Zama instead." Me: "I don't understand. My biological father is my adoptive father? Why would he lie to me all those years?" Sibulele: "That's the thing Spho. He never lied. He just took you in and had you as his daughter." Me: "What about you? Why didn't he adopt you too?" Sibulele: "That remains a mystery. The grandparents are living in Grahamstown now. I'm waiting for Orlando to approve so they can travel here to meet us." Rob: "This is deep. The question is, why does Khaya fail to mention he was involved with Miriam, fathering two of her kids? Why was he obliged to marry Zama? Why then pretend to adopt one of the kids and keep quiet about the other? Where's Sandile when you need to solve a puzzle." Lakhe: "Where is he anyway?" Me:

"He's at work." "WORK???" they said in unison. Me: "At his hotel." Rob: "He has a hotel?" How did they not know this? Stella: "Like a real live hotel where people book their stays and not collapse suddenly?" Me: "Yes." Rob: "I need to see this." Me: "Not yet tata. We're still working a few details." Lakhe: "We?" Me: "I'm just giving him a few ideas to make the place more lively." Stella: "Oh my goodness! My son is a businessman! We have to host a dinner. Get all his friends Spho, I'll make the arrangements." Lakhe: "Uhm... You've never hosted me a dinner though. And I've been a businessman." Stella: "That's the problem Lakhe, with you its not a surprise. You've been a businessman since 14 years of age. Sandile on the other hand, Rob?" Rob: "We basically never saw it happening. He's a bit of an idiot." Lakhe: "So I'm not getting a dinner?" Stella: "No." Me: "I'll host you your own dinner sweetie." I whispered in his ear. Lakhe: "Thank you my love. I have to go. Keep me posted. Bye Chris." Chris: "Where you going?" Lakhe: "I'm going to work boy." Chris: "Are you gonna come back?" Lakhe: "Yes." Chris: "I'll wait for you." Lakhe: "Thank you my boy." he walked to his car. Stella: "So about my date." Rob: "We're not interested." Stella: "I wasn't talking to you. Spho darling, come sit with me. Let's chat about Vuyani." Rob: "Leave Spho alone, she's fired." Me: "I would love to hear about him, Where's he from?" Rob: "Hell." Stella: "Don't be nasty Robert. Vuyani is from a small village in King Williams town. He's a graduate from NMU, he works at my gym as a personal trainer. That's how we met." Me: "So how was the date?" Stella: "Absolutely amazing. We had dinner at Blue Waters." Rob: "Hmm." Stella: "and after that we took a stroll down the beach..." Rob: "hmm..." Stella: "Then we had ice cream at the boardwalk." Rob: "hmm-" Stella: "Do you have an ulcer!?" Rob: "How long will it be until you grow tired of cheap restaurants and beach strolls?" Stella: "Robert, I hope one day you realize, life isn't all about money. I enjoyed myself tonight. More than I've ever had on any date with you." she stood up and walked to her room. Me: "Have you spoken to Noma today?" his face flushed. Rob: "uhm...no. I was busy." Me: "Hmm.." Rob: "I really was." Me: "I didn't say anything." Sandile walked in. He looked tired for the first time in his life. Well, since I've known him. Rob: "Hi, where have you been?" Sands: "Out." Rob: "Out where?" Sands: "Tata, I'm not 5." he turned to me. Sands: "Can I talk to you?" Me: "Sure." he marched to his bedroom. So he wasn't just tired but also in a bad mood. Great combination in Sandile. I followed him into his room. Me: "wassup?" Sands: "We have to move the revamp up. Quickly. I'm losing money Spho." Me: "How about, before we rush into things we have a special event there? A nice band playing and a limited edition, gourmet meal served. Or....comedy night. That should be fun. We first have to figure out our target market. Bands are usually for older married couples, comedy night caters for everyone." Sands: "I like the comedy night but I want to keep my hotel classy. I don't want those

varsity kids there." Me: "A band it is. I'll speak to your manager. How about it be an exclusive event? Like invitation only. Treat your regular clients to a night of fabulous dining." Sands: "I love how your mind works. Let's do it." Me: "Its going to be fantastic! Oh and heads up, your parents kind of found out that you own a hotel and your mom wants to host a dinner." Sands: "Mom would host a dinner even if I lost a tooth. I'm not surprised. Thank you for everything Spho." Me: "You're welcome." I walked out the room. Vicky was making supper. Sibu, Luke and Rob were in the lounge talking. Chris was outside by the garden. Me: "hey you." I walked to him. Chris: "Hi aunty." Me: "What you busy with?" Chris: "Playing with dirt." Me: "Aren't you going to get dirty?" Chris: "yeah, but we're home, right?" Me: "Sure." Chris: "Aunty, are you going to keep me here with you and uncle?" I was hoping to have this conversation with him and Lakhe present. Me: "Well, sweetie, We are working on that. We're just not sure if the judge will agree. We love having you here." Chris: "I also like it here. And the other house too. As long as I see you." Me: "You don't have to cry when you don't see me honey. Alright? I will never abandon you." Chris: "Okay." he dusted his hands off. Chris: "If the judge agree then I stay here forever?" Me: "Yes." Chris: "If I ask the judge, will he say yes?" I chuckled. Me: "You cannot ask him sweetie. A smart man will ask on your behalf." Chris: "but will he be able to ask properly? With manners." Me: "Of course. I will make sure of it." No wonder they didn't get along with Sandile. They have the same exact personality. Chris: "Thank you aunty. I do not want a rude person speaking on my behalf." I giggled. Me: "Tell me what happened at school." Chris: "when you dropped me off, I went inside and the teacher told me her name was Stacy, like I asked. So we said hi and she showed me to my seat. I have my own cubbyhole and my own desk and chair. So, the whole class was there and she told ME to introduce myself. And I did. She was trying to scare me but failed. After breakfast, she taught us a song. That's when Lucy peed. And the teacher took me to the naughty corner." Me: "Why did you end up in the naughty corner?" Chris: "Well, I was the first one to see Lucy peeing herself so I was the one who went to Miss Stacy and said; 'Loose Juice over there had an accident.' Stacy got mad and told me I shouldn't call others names. That's why she took me to the naughty corner." It was taking all of me, to not laugh. I swear. Me: "She's right Chris, you can't call others names. Its rude." Chris: "I wasn't trying to be rude but I understand." Me: "Maybe Lucy was scared or nervous so she had an accident. Would you want someone to make fun of you if it was you?" Chris: "No." Me: "Then do not do to others, what you don't want done to you. No more name calling okay? Especially girls." Chris: "Okay aunty." Me: "Then what happened next." Chris: "Well, We then did our coloring. Then we sang again. Then, Stacy read us a story book. This was when Tucker peed." Lol, Tucker why? Chris: "Again, I see it

first and I tell Stacy. I say; 'Miss Stacy, Ginger Tucker over here had an accident.' Now this time, I didn't yell, I whispered in her ear. She still gets mad at me as if I was the one giving them ginger ale juice." I couldn't hold in the tears of laughter anymore. I kept wiping them silently. He on the other hand was playing and focusing on the puddle of dirt. Chris: "So it was finally nap time and we got on our mats. I was looking forward to it because its my favorite time. So I close my eyes and finally sleep. Miss Stacy wakes us up again, and now its my turn to get cross. I wasn't even finished napping and she just had to cut it in half because we had to eat. She needs to be stopped aunty." Me: "Why did you say she was shady?" Chris: "I wasn't sure at first if it was Miss or Mr Stacy so I was confused. I'm still not sure." Me: "Its Miss." Chris: "Well, she dresses like a boy. Its upsetting." Me: "Did you make friends?" Chris: "I didn't have a chance. Between the singing and peeing and napping." Me: "Maybe tomorrow you'll get a chance." Chris: "I have to go back again tomorrow?" Me: "Yes." Chris: "I thought I only have to go one time." Me: "No honey. You see everyone inside there? They all went to school. Even uncle, that's how he bought this big house. And I bought my big car." Chris: "So if I go to school, I can buy myself a big car?" Me: "You will go to pre school, then go to primary school then go to high school, after high school, you attend tertiary school. You'll get a good job, and you'll buy a big car." It wasn't that easy really. He'll have to learn when he's old enough, I was too lazy to explain. Chris: "Okay. I'll go." Me: "Great. Let's go look for Uncle Sandile." We went to Sandile's room. There was only one way to cheer him up. A fight with Chris. Me: "How about you go in there and say hi?" Chris: "okay." he pushed open the door, I walked back to the kitchen. Sands: "SPHO!!!!!" he yelled. Lmao.

Khaya: "Oh my God." Zama: "What?" they were sitting in the dining table just before dinner. Khaya: "Masilakhe." Zama: "What about him?" Khaya: "Find out from Spho, where Lakhe was on Friday night." Zama: "I can't do that." Khaya: "You can't or you won't? Komander will be here any minute." Zama: "you're going to hand your son in law over to Komander?" Khaya: "If it was him, Yes." Zama: "Khaya, he's about to be a father to your grandchild." Khaya: "My grandchild already has a murderous father, what difference does it make?" Zama: "You don't know if it was him! How the hell did you come up with that anyway?" Khaya: "It makes sense. Lakhe is still in his shipment and drugs business. If he was at the harbor that night, he went there to fetch his merchandise, but realized it was on lockdown, so he tried to escape, unfortunately the two idiots spotted him and he ran, further luring them away from eyes and shooting them dead to protect himself." Zama: "Even though

that sounds convincing, will it convince K?" Khaya: "Just call Spho!" Zama: "Fine." she dialed the number and listened to it ring. Zama: "Hi sweetie." Spho: "Hello mama. How are you?" Spho: "I'm great, and yourself?" Zama: "I'm good sweetie. Haven't gotten a chance to speak to you these last few days. I hope Saturday went okay, did Lakhe sleep well on Friday after being discharged at hospital." Me: "Yes, he slept well." Zama: "That's good sweetheart. As long as he slept through the night and well." Spho: "Is everything okay ma?" Zama: "Yes sweetie. How's everyone in the house?" Spho: "They're doing okay. You should come visit." Zama: "We sure will sweetie. We'll let you know." Spho: "Okay ma, I gotta go. Love you." Zama: "I love you too sweetie." she hung up. Zama: "She's being highly evasive. Something isn't right." Khaya: "Tell her we're joining them for dinner tonight." she sent a message. Zama: "Done. I should go change." Khaya: "You look fine." Zama: "Fine is not going to cut it. Stella is there." Khaya: "Ohh, yep. I understand." she went to the bedroom. A knock on the door startled Khaya. He went to open and was faced with Komander. Kom: "I'm in a good mood. So I expect good news." he walked in. Kom: "Where is your wife?" Khaya: "She's changing sir. We're going to Spho and Lakhe's house for dinner." Kom: "That should be nice." Khaya: "Yes sir." Kom: "His mother still lives with them, right?" Khaya: "Yes sir." Kom: "Lovely. So have you found out who killed my men?" Khaya: "I'm working on it sir and I'm getting closer." Kom: "Are you? Or are you just going out for dinner?" Khaya: "I am doing everything I can. Would you like to join us?" Kom: "Am I allowed?" Khaya: "You're welcome to join us sir." Zama: "Ready." she came out in her soft pink dress and metallic Cinderella sandal heels. Her hair was neatly cupping her oval face, her lips in pink lipstick. She had her usual bracelet and ring from Komander on her wrist and finger. A pendant around her neck. Both men stared at her quietly. Zama: "Good evening sir." she looked down. Kom: "Hi." he looked at her from her neatly styled hair down her silky neck, the dress caressing her body, flowing freely at her hips, her bare bottle legs moisturized and smooth, her pretty toes in those shoes. She looked like a queen. Kom: "There's a rule in our contract that stipulates I'm the only one that has to look this gorgeous." she giggled. Zama: "I apologize sir." Kom: "I'll let it happen, just for you." Khaya: "Will we travel in the same car sir or will you be using your own?" Kom: "Kompany will drive me. Lead the way." they left the house. Khaya and Zama in their car. Kompany driving Komander in his matte black Audi Q7.

I'd had to help Vicky prepare the extra food and some starters for when our guests arrived. I took a bottle of Veuve Clicquot to the lounge where everyone was and poured them each a glass. Me: "My parents will be here

any minute. In the mean time, here's a glass of bubbly to keep you entertained." Stella: "Oh Spho darling, I don't know what I did to deserve you! You're such an amazing host. Lakhe is so lucky to have you." Me: "Thank you ma." Stella: "Which brings me to my next agenda. I have to absolutely introduce you to my country club ladies, they'd love to meet such a successful, beautiful and smart woman. Most of them are just dumb married to rich Roberts." Rob: "Dumb huh?" Stella: "Watch him ruin it." Me: "I'll be in the kitchen guys." I chuckled walking back to help Vicky. On the other hand texting Lakhe to come back early because somehow we've managed to have guests and a special dinner. Chris: "Aunty?" he walked in rubbing his eyes. It was time for his nap. Me: "Hey sweetie." Chris: "Uncle Sandile won't let me sleep." I picked him up and he rested his head on my shoulder. Me: "Sleep baby. I'll talk to him." the starters were ready. I needed the table set so I went to the lounge. Rob: "Let me hold him Spho. Isn't he heavy?" Chris: "Please don't touch me?" Ouch. Me: "Its okay tata, he's light as a feather." Stella giggled. Stella: "I don't blame the boy. Who wants Robert's gravel hands touching them?" Me: "Sibu please help set the table?" I went to find Sandile, knocking on his bedroom door. Sands: "Enter." I walked in and found him in his hot tub with a bottle of Courvoisier. Me: "Good God. Cover up!" I closed my eyes. Sands: "In my room? You know I strive better nude." Me: "Just get dressed. We have guests coming and I want you to serve the starters. Wear that nice shirt I got you. The white one." Sands: "You have some nerve coming in here making demands." Me: "You better get out that tub, stop acting like a baby, dress like a member of this household and serve the starters! I will not repeat myself Sandile Sobukwe!" Sands: "Yes ma'am." I walked back out. That man knows how to drive me nuts shame. Stella: "They're here!!" she opened the gate and waited by the door. Stella: "uhm....why is it two different cars? Spho does your dad drive a black Audi?" Me: "Not that I know of." Stella: "Awfully gorgeous I might add. Looks like they brought President Jacob Zuma with them." I laughed. Me: "Sibu, will you be fetching Dumi from work and the kids from school?" Sibu: "No, he said Zingi will bring them here. They had a meeting with Lulo's teacher." Me: "Okay. I'm sure she'll join us too." Stella: "Oh my..." Rob: "Breaking news, what is it now?" he rolled his eyes. Christian had fallen asleep already and I had to put him down before he broke my arm. Stella: "I need to go touch up my make up!!" she sprinted to her room. Sibu: "Should I get another bottle of champagne Spho? This one is finished." Me: "Yes please Sibu. And a bottle of wine as well, my mother drinks wine." he went to the cellar. Sandile finally appeared. He was wearing stone washed jeans fitting his legs perfectly, the white shirt tucked in and unbuttoned down the chest. He wore brown leather formal shoes and a brown watch on his wrist. Rob: "STELLAAAAA!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" he screamed. Me: "WOOW!!! Don't you

look just exquisite." Sands: "I feel so uncomfortable, dad stop it!" Rob: "STEEELLAAAA!!!!" he continued screaming. Sands: "What is wrong with him?" Me: "He hasn't had a scotch yet. You look absolutely handsome sweetie, now get the starters ready." Sands: "Let me take Chris to bed first. He is heavy, trust me." Me: "Please don't wake him. He only sleeps 30 minutes, its his final nap in the day." Sands: "I will make personally sure he's awake in two minutes." Me: "Sandile." Sands: "I'm joking. Hand him over." I handed him the child. Sands: "Aren't you a big boy." he tickled him. Me: "Stop it!" I hissed. Sands: "Sorry. Hi Dr Ngudla, Mrs Ngudla, stunning as always." I looked behind me. My dad had walked in, followed by my mom.....followed by Tyrone. My heart stopped. Did he have to be so breathtaking every damn time? I couldn't take my eyes off him. Sands: "Aren't you going to introduce me?" he whispered in my ear. Me: "Erhh...Uhhh..." What was his name again? Ty: "Pardon me, I'm Tyrone." Me: "Yes, this is Tyrone. This is Sandile, Lakhe's brother." Ty: "Sandile. For a second there I thought you were Lakhe." Sands: "For a second I thought you were a movie star." he smiled and left for the bedroom. Me: "Sibu is getting some refreshments. Sandile will serve the starters as soon as he puts Chris down for his nap. Mam'Stella is getting ready-" Stella: "Here I am darling, Zama you look gorgeous honey. Dr Ngudla, as handsome as usual. And of course.....Tyrone. As breathtaking as a midday eclipse." Ty: "Darkness during the day, love it. How are you." he kissed her hand. Stella: "I am exceptional." Robert cleared his throat. Stella: "Of course we have frogs in this house." Rob: "Robert Sobukwe." He held out his hand. Ty: "Pleasure to meet you, Rob. Call me Ty." he shook his hand. Me: "So we can all go to the table now." Sands: "Starters coming up, where is that handsome husband of yours?" Me: "he just texted he's on his way. Did you call Luke from his bedroom?" Sands: "Says he's not feeling okay, he's skipping dinner. Did Sibu get lost in the cellar again?" Me: "There he is." Sibu: "Spho, you didn't specify if you wanted red, sweet rose, or dry white, so I brought them a-" he froze staring right behind me. The bottles slipped from his hands and dropped on the floor at his feet breaking to pieces. The noise didn't even shake him. He tried to breath, obviously struggling. He was having a panic attack. Sibu: "my....." he dropped to the floor.....

#119

Zingi and Dumi left the children's preschool. Dumi: "Do you think we could talk before you took me back to Lakhe's house?" Zingi: "Okay, where do you want us to sit?" Dumi: "Let's go to your house." Zingi: "That is both our house Dumisani." She drove to her place. Zingi: "I have to go to mom's house

tonight, since she's babysitting the kids already I might as well sleep there."

Dumi: "Is the baby giving you trouble?" Zingi: "No, not at all. She's an angel."

Dumi: "You can tell me." Zingi: "This is my third baby Dumi, I can handle it. I just get tired a lot and my salon is suffering. I need to hire a new manager and stylist. My nail technician has also just upped and left." Dumi: "Okay, how about I put up an ad for a Salon manager, a stylist and nail technician then Mary can hold the interviews and then she'll send you a shortlist of people?"

Zingi: "Mary is your assistant. Why would you do that for me?" Dumi: "I have two assistants and technically we're still married. You're the mother of my children and I have to make sure by all means your wellbeing is excellent. I can't let you suffer." Zingi: "That's sweet of you." Dumi: "So should I?" Zingi: "Yeah." Dumi: "Great." Zingi: "Thank you Dumisani. Despite our differences, you're a good man." Dumi: "You're a great mom. Someone has to take care of you too. So, are you seeing anyone?" Zingi: "I gave birth only 3 weeks ago. Where would I have met someone?" she laughed. Dumi: "I don't know. Maybe you met before you gave birth." Zingi: "There's no one. And you?"

Dumi: "I don't think its possible for me. Who wants to date someone in a wheelchair?" Zingi: "A human being. There's a lot of people who'd love to date you. You shouldn't speak down like that. You're a great guy." Dumi: "Yeah, but I feel like an inconvenience." Zingi: "Honey, if someone makes you feel like an inconvenience they're not worth it. Get those thoughts out of your head." she parked in her driveway and helped him out the car, wheeling him inside the house. Dumi: "You got new curtains?" Zingi: "Yes. I ordered them online about two months ago when I was feeling emotional. They arrived last week and mama hung them up." Dumi: "They looknice." Zingi: "I was heavily pregnant. Don't judge me." Dumi: "I'm not judging." they relaxed in the lounge. Dumi: "Zingi I want us to talk about our marriage. I want to know what happens next." Zingi: "I'm not sure. I was kind of waiting for you." Dumi: "Its not the same anymore Z, I love you, I always will but I doubt our marriage can work. The trust is absolutely destroyed. My only problem is the kids. I don't want them to grow up with divorced parents like I did." Zingi: "So what do we do?" Dumi: "We need to make sure our decisions don't affect them at all. For instance, supporting each other, spending time with them together, important family moments." Zingi: "This separation for now, is working for me. As lonely as this big house is, its the better option. We're both not looking for relationships at the moment anyway so There's no real rush." Dumi: "What happens when you meet someone?" Zingi: "I'm only interested in my kids and business right now. Nothing else." Dumi: "Okay. We'll give it time. In the meanwhile....." Zingi: "Why are you smiling like that?" Dumi: "Do you think it would be awkward if we....explored a bit." Zingi: "Explored what?" Dumi: "you.." Zingi: "you mean casual sex?" Dumi: "How did you jump to casual sex

now? But since we're on the subject, yes." she laughed. Zingi: "you cannot be serious. I gave birth 3 weeks ago. How can I be having sex? How do you even think of that?" Dumisani: "With that body? You're kind of distracting.....sexy. I thought I had a chance." Zingi: "If you keep that up, you might." Dumisani: "if you're going to tease me, at least give me something to play with?" Zingi: "a teddy bear?" Dumisani: "a titty." she smiled. Zingi: "We're expected at Lakhe's house." Dumisani: "Can I at least see it?" Zingi: "You're kidding." Dumisani: "I haven't seen any action in months. Can I please see a titty?" Zingi: "I don't want to show you." Dumisani: "Zingisa, I need you to have mercy-" she sat on his lap. Dumisani: "So yes?" Zingi: "for 5 seconds. No feeding." she showed him the breast. Dumisani: "oh she's so pretty." he kissed it. Zingi: "there. Now can we go?" he shook his head. Dumisani: "I just need two minutes." Zingi: "I'm not having sex with you." she giggled. Dumisani: "You're denying your paralyzed husband? Lightning will strike you." Zingi: "Then it should. Dumisani don't be like that." she moaned. Zingi: "I really can't. The doctor says we have to wait until I've healed." Dumisani: "Okay. I'll wait. I was going to let you sit on top of my face but okay." Zingi: "You are cruel. What time is Spho expecting us?" Dumisani: "you're considering?" Zingi: "No silly, I want to watch my show." Dumisani: "if its 30 minutes then let's chill." she curled up on his lap and switched on the TV. Dumisani: "Hehake. I'm a couch now?" Zingi: "just play with the titty and be quiet." he smiled.

(Scene from previous chapter.)

Lakhe walked in the house, as soon as he saw Sibulele drop to the floor, he ran to him. Lakhe: "What the fuck happened!!" he picked up his head. A piece of glass stuck a few centimeters behind his ear. Lakhe: "Someone better explain to me what the hell is happening here, or I swear I'll burn this whole fucking house down!" Khaya: "He had a panic attack Lakhe and fainted." he knelt on the other side of Sibulele. Khaya: "At least this isn't deep, it just grazed his skin." he pulled out the piece of glass. Lakhe: "Sibulele?" he held his cheek giving it a light slap. Sibulele started regaining consciousness. Lakhe: "You okay buddy?" Sibulele: "yeah... My head." Khaya: "You might have a concussion. We have to check you at the hospital-" Sibulele: "NO." Lakhe helped him up. Khaya: "Sibulele don't be stupid, this is serious-" Sibulele: "I'd rather drop dead than go anywhere with you!" Khaya: "What?" Oh Shit. Me: "uhm Sibulele-" Sibulele: "No Spho. I don't want him anywhere near me." Ty: "Let the boy be Khaya, he said he's fine." for the first time Sibulele looked at him. His voice stuck at his throat, he backed away, shivering unable to breathe properly. I looked at Tyrone. He was staring at Sibulele. I could have choked on my own saliva. Me: "Uhm, excuse me? Can we all sit down? Right now." Sibulele: "I don't want-" Me: "SIT. Since we already

have a judge present this shouldn't wait any longer." everyone sat down. How was I going to start this? Me: "Tata." Khaya stared at me with his eyes wide open. Clearly alarmed. Me: "Mama." she looked at me too. Their facial expressions spoke volumes of nervousness. Me: "Sibu and I came about a certain letter in Miriam's belongings." Khaya: "What letter sweetheart?" Me: "The letter came from our father. Stating he couldn't take care of us as our father and that Miriam should raise us, giving Sibu to some woman and making sure we never found out about him. So the man that raised me, abused me till I was fourteen, was not my biological dad." he swallowed. Zama: "Spho, maybe the let-" Me: "Then we hired a private investigator." Lakhe: "baby-" Me: "He found out that Rey, you know the guy killed by that psychopath Komander, he happens to be Miriam's brother. My uncle. Now, we had already found out that before Rey died he stopped talking after some fight with Siyanda, yes Dr Siyanda Kusile, matter of fact Sandile call the doctor here too. I am sick and tired of tiptoeing around this situation and one of you will tell me the truth today. Nobody is leaving until I'm satisfied." Sands: "Yes ma'am." he took out his phone to make the phone call. Khaya: "Sphosenkosi-" Me: "I'm not done talking, everyone will get a chance to talk. Or do you want to call your pastor? Please do." Khaya: "You don't have to do this. I am your father, this is your mother anyone else does not matter." Me: "I said tata, call your pastor." Sands: "Siyanda, we have a bit of an emergency here, please come quick!! Its Spho!.....Yes!! Right now!!" he hung up. Sands: "he's coming." Me: "Great. Baby, can we please get our guests something to drink. I want to wait for Siyanda to get here." Rob: "I'll get it." he rushed to the cellar bringing a tray filled with wine, champagne and cognac. Lol, Robert though. He didn't want to be sober for this. Everyone got a glass of their choice. We waited for Siyanda who arrived in 15 minutes flat. He ran up to the door out of breath. Siya: "What happened!!" Me: "Sit." he stared at our guests. Siya: "What's going on?" Me: "Ngena Siyanda and have a seat." he walked in slowly and sat down next to Stella. Siya: "You said it was an emergency!" Sands: "I lied." Me: "Siyanda, we're having a meeting and I would've liked for you to join us and participate. Would you like to contact a pastor or lawyer?" Siya: "No." Me: "Great." I brought him up to speed. Me: "So after Rey stopped talking, he disappeared only to be found months later. Mutilated. And branded with an X. Miriam, went mute, days before she supposedly committed suicide. In her journal, the last night she spent at the clinic she wrote the name Komanded. Over and over again. Then she said, Komand Will Come. Sibu was then abducted, the night of his return, he had a nightmare. The next morning, I found Miriam's body hanging in her ceiling, a few days later the mortuary calls, her body is missing till today. Now, I KNOW this is no coincidence. Tata, you knew Miriam. She knew you." Khaya: "She

was a patient." Me: "Is that the story you're sticking with? I want you to be sure." Khaya: "Its not a story its the truth! You know what, I don't know what's got into you but I will not stay for this! Ever since you got married to that man You've shown me absolutely no respect!" Me: "So You'd rather lie to your only child." Khaya: "When did I lie to you!!!!!" Ty: "Calm down Khaya." Khaya: "Zama, let's go!" Me: "If you walk out that door tata, I want you to understand you've walked out of my life never to return." Khaya: "Are you threatening me?" I looked at him quietly. Ty: "Spho, continue with your findings. I for one am interested. Khaya, relax. Have some wine." Me: "Thank you Ty. Tata, Miriam knew you, you knew her." Khaya: "She was my patient." Me: "You were involved with Miriam over two decades ago. Before you married umama. Miriam, fell pregnant twice for you. And you went to marry umama. Writing a letter to Miriam telling her to never reveal who you are. Yes, the private investigator matched your handwriting to that of the letter." dead silence. Me: "I'm going to give you a minute to digest that. Siya, What did you and Rey fight about?" Siya: "We didn't fight." Me: "I'm asking you one more time." Sands: "If I were you, I would tell God's truth because if you think your secret is safe, you're delusional and drunk." Siya: "it was just a disagreement." Me: "About." Sands: "Last chance, man." Siya: "He wanted to leave the country to work in Brazil." Me: "Is that the story you're sticking with?" Sands: "You done fucked up." Siya: "Yes." Me: "So, all the men I trust with my life lie to me without blinking an eye. Sandile and Chris are the only ones who actually have the decency and self respect to tell me the honest truth." Sands: "that's right girl." Me: "Siyanda, Rey wanted to leave the Komander Ultimates Group. He was tired of hiding their sick secrets. You said to hang in there. That it would get better. You tried all you could to talk him out of it, he didn't listen. So, you told Komander. I don't think you understood what you did at the time. You thought your Komander will offer him candy and make him stay, instead you handed your best friend over to the devil himself." dead silence. Me: "You're probably wondering how did I know? Considering you're the only person that knew and spoke to Rey. I'll let you chew on that for a second." I looked at my dad. Me: "Dad, do you want to tell me the truth?" Khaya: "yes." he whispered. Me: "So?" Khaya: "I am your father." Me: "Why did you not want me in your life?" Khaya: "I was scared. I was young Spho." Me: "No you weren't. You were in your early 30's tata. That's pretty grown to me. Why didn't you adopt Sibu or even tell me about him at least?" Khaya: "I didn't think You'd find out." Me: "And Rey?" Khaya: "I never knew Rey." Me: "That's the story you're sticking with? You impregnate someone and you don't even know their brother? Okay." I finally sat down. Me: "Now what I've realized tata, is that you are somehow connected to that sociopath of a demon. And so are you." I looked at Siya. His eyes darted about. Me: "Tata. I'm about to have a child

with my husband. I can't have someone this cruel and evil around my child. Which means, I can't trust you." Khaya: "Spho, nothing will happen to your child." Me: "See You've lied to me twice already and now I can't trust you. Why would you involve such a thing in your life? He's not a murderer tata, he is a Serial. Killing. Sociopath. With absolutely no regard of human life. How in the world Siyanda do you live with yourself?" he looked at Tyrone then Khaya. Me: "You said you'd never lie to me." Ty: "Spho, what I'm hearing here is, you're not so much mad at these two men, but you're mad at the sociopath in their lives right?" Me: "No, I'm mad at these two men AND the sociopath." Ty: "So, what exactly do you want, them to cut contact with said sociopath or ..." I stared at him. Me: "Bhut' Tyrone, Where did you meet my father?" he stared right back at me. Khaya: "We-" Me: "Tata." my gaze never leaving Tyrone's. Ty: "You want the truth?" Chris: "Aunty?" he walked to me. Me: "Hi pumpkin, how was your nap. Chris: "Are they coming to fetch me? Did the judge say no?" his voice shaky. I picked him up and sat him on my lap. Me: "Don't worry. They're not here to pick you up." I hugged him. Me: "I asked a question Bhut' Tyrone." Ty: "We met in Cuba. While he was working at the hospital." Me: "And you became besties." Ty: "I wouldn't say besties." Me: "Tell me about Chris tata." Khaya: "I told you his mother died in an accident. His uncle.....wait, Why are you even asking when you already know?" Me: "I want you to tell me." Khaya: "What is the point?" Me: "The point of this exercise is honesty." Khaya: "Chris' mother died in an accident. We have been waiting for his relative to pick him up." Me: "Is that the story you're sticking with?" Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "Yes baby?" Lakhe: "Give me the child. He can't be here for this." he took Chris. Lakhe: "Let's get you a juice box. Aren't you thirsty? I want you to tell me about school." he walked to the kitchen. Me: "Siya, do you recognize Chris?" Siya: "a little." Me: "From where?" he looked at the floor. Siya: "He, is Rey's son." I clapped my hands. Me: "The truth finally! So dad...what were you doing with Christian." dead silence. Me: "Oookay. So Chris and I got close. He said to me, he doesn't have an uncle of any kind. He's never met any member of his mom's family. Then I realized something, he calls everyone Uncle. So, you were going to give him away. To just anybody to raise. Like you did with me." Khaya: "That's not true." Me: "Siyanda, what was the cause of the accident." Siya: "I don't kn-" Me: "So if I get a hold of that police report, it won't state you as the doctor treating this woman's injuries." dead silence. Me: "That accident, is the same kind of accident Rey was in when he was young, that killed his parents and left him as a survivor. Then, he grew up and was forced to be part of Komander's secret society which got him killed. You didn't even try to save her. You were Komanded to let her die." Khaya: "Spho that's enough!" Me: "Is it? Is it enough that my baby cousin was going to be raised by complete strangers in a foreign country? Is it enough

that I'd never have found out about him? Is it enough that there would be a chance that he'd be molested and sodomized every day of his life? You see tata, you don't get to say its enough. You are the last person to tell me that. You long lost that right! You left me in her hands to suffer!! When I found her body hanging in that ceiling I couldn't even react because I felt nothing for her! Do you know how long it took me to trust a man again? Even with my husband right now? Don't you ever tell me its enough!" I wiped my tears. Me: "Sandile, call the police." Zama: "Spho, no!!" Me: "I want you both out of my life, and out of my children's lives. And you're never getting a hold of Christian!" Ty: "Wait..." Me: "No, you too. Those papers you signed, illegal. What kind of judge are you Bhut' Tyrone?" Ty: "I need you to calm down and sit. Sandile, wait, before you call the police." we looked at him, waiting. Ty: "This has nothing to do with them. This is between you and me." Me: "I don't even know you bhuti." Ty: "Yes, and that's why you're so angry and hurt. Both of you. I now understand its all my fault." Me: "What are you talking about?" Khaya: "Ty-" Ty: "Stop. Don't. Just, let me." he stood up. My heart was hammering in my chest. He looked like a tower over me. His eyes pierced through mine. A flashback flickered through my memory. [Him, laughing, me tackling him. 'come on, forgive daddy my angel. Okay, okay, take it. Its yours.' Hugging him. 'I love you my little doll. Daddy loves you.' Another memory running to him and falling. Him running to me to pick you up. 'I'm so sorry angel, I'll destroy this floor if it ever hurts you again.' Picking me up.] Ty: "Spho. I'm....your father." Me: "No...." Ty: "I'm so sorry." Me: "Don't you dare come near me." Ty: "Spho..." Me: "NOOO!!!!!! You can't..... You're....." he looked down at himself. Lifting the black jersey. Khaya: "No-" Ty: "She has to know." Khaya: "Please-" Tyrone stared at him viciously. He lifted the jersey that had been covering him from the neck down, he took it off his head with the vest. His toned upper body glistening with tattoos. The more dominating one crawling up his neck. A serpent. Branded. Komander. Me: "NOOO!!!!!!!!!!" I screamed.....

#120

Lakhe walked out the kitchen. Lakhe: "Am I going to have to throw all of you out of my house!!" he looked at his wife. Lakhe: "Baby?" he kneeled by her side. Me: "My back...." I breathed. Lakhe: "Let's get you to the hospital. Sandile, start the car. Help me Sibu." Stella: "I'm following you with my car." Rob: "I'll drive-" Lakhe: "NO. All of you stay right where you are. I said Sibu and Sandile. Yabona wena." he stood up, pointing at Komander. Lakhe: "I don't care who the fuck you think you are, if anyone in this house disappears, dies

or is hurt, I will find you and I will kill you. I promise to God. You will be Komander to that whole world, but nobody will hurt my family. And you better get the fuck out my house. Masambeni Sibu." he carried his wife out. Sandile driving them to the hospital. Komander sat down. Stella: "Sooo.....I have an appointment." she took her bag. Kom: "You don't have to be afraid of me." Stella: "Uhm...I've read articles about you that would make Satan's knees buckle." Rob: "Stella that's rude." he whispered. Siya: "I have to go to the hospital to check on her-" Rob: "If Lakhe smells you anywhere around that hospital, you're a dead man." Siya: "I can't sit and do nothing." Stella: "you're gonna have to. Sooner or later Lakhe will come back here and have questions you have to answer. And Mr Komander over there better be long gone on a flight to another country." Zama: "Its true, if Spho loses a second baby, only God can help you." Khaya: "You never told me this. When did this happen?" Zama: "when she had the accident." Kom: "I need to make sure she's okay. I can't leave things like this." Stella: "Would it be rude if I asked why?" Kom: "why what?" Stella: "Why are you this cruel? What in the world environment did you grow up in?" Kom: "I only answer to my children. Not you." Khaya: "We should get going." Kom: "I'm not leaving. You go ahead." Khaya: "Lakhe will not hesitate-" Kom: "I told you to leave. And you as well." Rob: "I uhm, no we should just sit here and wait together as a group." Komander stared at him. Stella: "Like I said, I have an appointment." Rob: "You will not leave me here with him, I swear I'd haunt you for the rest of your life." he whispered in her ear. Stella: "Damn it Robert, I have a man waiting for me, I can't be spending all this time with you. I need to go before my breasts sag any lower. Please!" Rob: "We have a family emergency Nokwakha, surely your sexual activities can wait!" Stella: "Are we going to do this in front of guests?" Rob: "You didn't care about them a minute ago." Chris: "Is anyone looking after me?" Stella: "Oh dear! I'm so sorry honey. Come here." Chris: "Where's my aunty and uncle?" Stella: "They'll be back right now." Chris: "Where's uncle Sandile?" Stella: "He drove them." Chris: "They left me here with you?" he looked at Komander. Kom: "They'll be back son." Chris: "Okay, so why are you naked?" Kom: "uhm..." he put back on his jersey. Khaya: "Its a bit hot Chris. Why don't you bring your coloring books?" Chris: "Okay." he ran to the bedroom. Siya: "I have to go." Khaya: "You can go nyana. Its okay." Siyanda walked out the house. Kom: "Who else is in this house?" Rob: "No one." Kom: "No, There's a few others." Stella: "Okay I'm gonna say something." Rob: "Don't." Komander sighed. Stella: "No I have to. Mr Komander. You have demons, correct?" Kom: "I told you, I only answer to my children. This is the last time I'm addressing you." his voice low and dark. Robert pulled Stella behind him. Rob: "I told you to shut your mouth." he hissed. Rob: "Let's go check on Chris." they walked down the passage. Khaya: "Sir, you don't have to do this."

Kom: "I want to. I can't let them suffer any more. They had to know." Khaya: "Yes but now they want nothing to do with you." Kom: "I can live with that as long as they know who I am." Khaya: "What if someone rats you out, you know Lakhe won't let you near this family." Kom: "I know its him." Khaya: "Him?" Kom: "He's the assassin. He had the look in his eyes I see in myself when I look in the mirror. My daughter married me..." he buried his head in his hands.

Kom: "If only I'd been a better father. Made better choices. She would've done much better. I ruined her life. God will be punishing me through her, and Khaya I don't think I can take it." Khaya and Zama stared at each other with their mouths hanging open. Khaya: "Sir-" Kom: "Don't call me that."

Khaya: "If there's anything I know about Spho, its that she is a forgiving soul. She's kind. She doesn't even spend time on anger. Sooner rather than later, she will put this behind her." Kom: "And what about my son? He will never forgive me for letting him grow up without me." Zama: "You have the world's most sweetest children. They will not condemn you." Komander stood up.

Kom: "I have to go." Khaya: "I thought you wanted to make sure she's okay." Kom: "I can't. Those children will destroy me and all I've worked for." Zama: "Why are you so scared to let someone love you?" Kom: "Love means nothing. It is an empty feeling that destroys you!! It distracts you! And I don't want it in my life." a car pulled into the driveway. Kom: "Get me out of here. Now." Khaya: "Let her see you." Kom: "NO!" Khaya: "She will not reject yo-" Kom: "I said no!!! Komodity, keep in your place! I wouldn't hate to remind you where you stand." Sandile walked in. Sands: "WOW. You're still here?" he shook his head. Zama: "How is Spho? Is she okay?" Sands: "She's fine. I have a few questions." Kom: "I don't answer to you-" Sands: "Before you catch an attitude I want to remind you, I fear my brother more than I fear you. Back to the questions, why on earth would you reveal your true identity here? Do you understand how much You've hurt Spho? And when you hurt Spho, you hurt ME. Trust me, You do not want to see me hurt." Kom: "She needed to know the truth." Sands: "Your son is in a state of stunned shock. You kidnapped him. Put him in a torture chamber and made him experience things no human being should, as if that was not enough you invaded his body with your sick demons, summoning him to kill his own sister. So why the fuck would you do that!" Kom: "I said I don't answer to-" Sands: "Oh but you're gonna start to answer. I want you to get angry Komander. I have to admit, I once feared you but seeing all this bullshit You've put my family through. You gonn make me want to fight you. You are going to answer me." Komander kept quiet. Staring daggers at him. Sands: "You broke your own son trying to turn him into a monster. And for what? Attention? You thought nobody loved him enough like nobody loved you so you wanted to turn him into you!" Khaya: "Sandi-" Sands: "You better get the fuck off of my arm before I break you, limb by limb.

See now You've pissed me off." he stared at Komander. Sands: "You know Spho was raped. Repeatedly. As a child. You're standing there claiming to be her father yet you let the man who did it roam around the streets free. I had to take care of it. So called fathers. Thee mighty Komander and his right hand man. Don't come and fucking play here." Komander breathed in short breaths trying to control his rage. Sands: "I want you to hit me. Put your little goons and demons aside and hit me. I want to give Spho one reason to hate you because for the love of God, I don't understand why the hell she's still weeping for her father!!!!!!" he screamed. Sands: "Get out of this house Komander." he looked to the side. Sands: "Before I saw your damn head off." Kom: "You don't tell me what to do-" Sands: "Fucking Hell, he tried me." he stomped off to the garage. Khaya: "Its better if we leave. That boy isn't well put together." Kom: "If he wants to play that game, I'm in." Khaya: "Firstly yo-" a growling sound came from the garage. Zama: "Dear God!" Sands: "Yep, that's the one." he walked into the lounge with the machine in his hand. He revved it, marching to Komander. Zama: "Sandile!!!" Khaya pushed Komander out the way, the machine sawed at his head while wrestling with Sandile. Stella: "S A N D I L E!!!!!!" she screamed. Sands: "Oh I'm not done." he pushed Khaya's limp body to the floor. He looked at Komander. Kom: "You think you can kill me?" the machine died down. Kom: "Then kill me. All of what I am, my demons you so call upon, my sins and weights, will be transfered to you and we'll see how your little relationship will Spho will end up." Rob: "Call an ambulance!!!" Sands: "My relationship with Spho will be better than you'll ever wish. Because unlike you. I love her." he dropped the machine and walked off to his bedroom. Zingi wheeled Dumi in the front door. Zingi: "Good evening guys, sorry we're" they stared at the bloody scene. Zingi: "Oh my God....." Rob: "Can somebody please call an ambulance!!!!!!" Dumi fiddled with his phone shaking and calling.

I was lying in my hospital bed waiting for the doctor to release me. It hadn't even been an hour and I was already tired of this place. Sibu was sitting in the far corner staring at the floor. Lakhe next to me holding my hand. Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "Hi." Lakhe: "How are you doing?" Me: "My father is a sociopath that has killed thousands, if not millions. Adolf Hitler seems like an angel now compared to him. How do you think I'm doing?" Lakhe: "No need to be spicy." Me: "I am a seed of Komander. That's enough spice to last me my life!" Lakhe: "Baby, your father isn't you, what he's done isn't a reflection of you. If anything, its actually difficult to believe something so cruel could create something so pure and innocent. You guys aren't your dad. I don't even know what he is." Me: "Can you believe he stood there and took off his damn polo

neck? Why did he have to do that? I didn't want to know!! Now he's ruined it! Is the family safe?" Lakhe: "They'll be fin-" Me: "Call them!! I left them there with a psychopath and his purse. Dial!" he dialed the number. Lakhe: "They're not picking up." Me: "Oh Dear Lord, he's killed them all!" I got up. Lakhe: "Where do you think you're going? No Spho!" Me: "Home! He needs to be stopped Lakhe!" Lakhe: "He wouldn't dare-" Me: "Your threat wouldn't have shaken him. He is the actual devil." Lakhe: "Sandile is home!" Me: "Would you like me to send you on a free trip down memory lane? He put demons into his own son. Why on earth would he listen to Sandile?" Lakhe: "Sandile is a reasonable person, they'll talk it through. That's why I sent him." Me: "umntanam Lakhe!! Find Christian! Why did you leave him behind!" Lakhe: "Sweetheart, the doctor said do not stress. Please calm down." He made a call to Stella, no answer. Rob, no answer. Zama, no answer. Lakhe: "Oh shit.." he stood up. Lakhe: "I'll go check what's going on." Me: "You can't leave me here Lakhe please." his phone rang. Lakhe: "Hello Dumi? Where are you?..... Who told you we're at hospital?..... WHAT!!!Yes of course." he directed him and hung up. Me: "What!!" Lakhe: "I'm going to need you to be calm. Dumi and Zingi are bringing Chris." Me: "Okay." I sighed. Me: "Is everyone okay." Lakhe: "uh....no." Me: "Masilakhe what happened please?" Lakhe: "I don't know. I'm right here with you." he looked at Sibulele. Lakhe: "You okay mans?" no response. Lakhe: "Sibulele, I know its hard. I can't imagine at all what you're going through. Just know I'm right here if you need to talk. Or let out steam." Dumi came in followed by Zingi and Chris. Chris: "Uncle!!" he jumped on Lakhe. Lakhe: "Hey you." he picked him up. Chris: "You left me in the kitchen." Lakhe: "I told you I would be back." Chris: "They covered my face with a blanket when we were walking out of the house. We were playing ghost stories." Lakhe: "ooh, were you Casper the ghost?" Chris: "No, I thought it was weird." he wiggled to the floor and rushed over to sit next to Sibulele. Me: "What happened there Dumi? Is everyone okay?" Dumi: "Uhm." he looked at Lakhe. Me: "Tell me!!!" Zingi: "Oh it was awful Spho." she sobbed. Me: "What did he do?" I had a lump in my throat. Why did I leave them alone with him!! Dumi: "We don't know. We were just one minute late from everything." Me: "What's everything!" Zingi: "There was blood everywhere..." Dumi: "Your father Spho. He was sawed on the side of his head. They just brought him." Me: "Which father are you talking about?" Dumi: "Khaya obviously. Who else is your father?" Me: "He'she's dead?" Zingi: "With the blood I saw, I don't think he will survive.".....

"Me paenitet et infantem. Numquam voluit nocere tibi. Omnia iam pede pulsata meae ego conatur ut videamus faciem vestram iterum. Aufer iniquitatem patris." I heard this voice, whispering. Someone holding my hand, brushing it against his face. I woke up so confused. When did I sleep? Me: "What are you saying?" "You're awake." I opened my eyes and almost choked. Me: "What the hell are you doing here!" Kom: "I had to see you one more time. I haven't felt this warm feeling spread over my heart in a very long time." Me: "I am not your feeling keeper! What were you saying in my sleep!!" Sibuh: "I'll tell you what he was saying." he walked in and stared at his father. Kom: "Son." Sibuh: "I am not your son." Kom: "Yes you are Sibulele. Sit." Sibuh: "I'm not going to sit and listen to your sob story. I know exactly what you are." Kom: "You're still my child-" Sibuh: "You tried to kill me!! You put demons in me! What kind of father would do that? You know what? Get out. When Lakhe gets here, he will go ape. I suggest you leave." Kom: "Both of you mean too much to me. I just want you to know. I love you. This will be the last you see of me. I will not bother you again." he stood up. Me: "What happened to your face." Kom: "Demons are asleep, I look hideous now don't I?" he smiled. Me: "That's not funny." Kom: "I wasn't joking." Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "God is really testing me today." Kom: "Bit dramatic don't you think?" Lakhe: "You want to see dramatic? After the chaos You've caused today, you still want to see dramatic?" Kom: "Idcirco praecipio tibi ut stabit." he hissed. Lakhe: "What is that?" I looked at Komander as I sat up from bed. A cold air breezed around the room. His face became clear and.....antagonizingly gorgeous. Oh God no. Me: "Lakhe, stop!!" Lakhe: "I-" Me: "Please, just stop!! Stop right now!!" Lakhe: "This isn't over." he sat down on the chair. Komander looked at me. Kom: "I have to go now." Me: "So this is what you do. You run away when you feel." Kom: "Your husband wants to kill me and I won't let him. Besides, Khaya needs me right now." Me: "I want to see him." Kom: "Not tonight. Rest." he walked out. Lakhe: "What the hell Spoh?" he stood up. Lakhe: "That man, is a demon. How do you go ahead and be nice to demons? You know sometimes you just piss me off!" Sibuh: "He would've killed you without touching you." he looked at Lakhe. Me: "before you walked in, I asked him what was wrong with his face, he said the demons are asleep. That's why he looked like that." Sibuh: "When you began to challenge him.....he commanded them to wake. Bhuti that thing is dangerous, there is nothing that can help you when it grabs a hold of you. You have to control your anger." Lakhe: "Are you seriously believing this shit?" Me: "We can't take the chance Masilakhe. What was he saying to me Sibuh?" Sibuh: "He was asking for forgiveness, saying he is sorry. That he's been dying to see your face again." Lakhe: "I don't want him in our lives. We have children in the house. We're about to have a baby. He can't just show up and shove demons in people. I will not allow it!" he paced

the room. I was shaking to such a point I wanted to pee. Yet I was afraid of going to the toilet. Komander was a part of our lives now and that scared me to the hills. Me: "Where is Chris?" Lakhe: "Zingi is getting him supper." Me: "Any word on my dad?" I gave it a second thought. Me: "I mean Khaya." Lakhe: "Khaya is your dad. Komander cannot be your father Spho." he had his hands on his hips, tapping his foot nervously on the tile. Lakhe: "If he's your father, this means he's my father in law, and we'll be obliged to invite him for family gatherings. We don't even like each other. He is literally demonic. He causes destruction everywhere he goes. My kids, Spho!" Me: "I don't like this either. I can't even yell and scream anymore because I have to be calm for the baby. It kills me that I can't express my true emotions which in this case is pissing my pants." Lakhe: "Let me help you baby." he took me to the toilet....

Komander walked in the ICU room. Kom: "They're getting you ready for surgery in four hours." he stood beside him. Kom: "You aren't meant to survive this surgery. I just can't let you die on me yet. You saved my life, giving up yours. I've overlooked you for so many years. You've always protected me. You proved it this evening, when someone tried to kill me, which has never happened before, you were my shield. Even though you were unprepared." he held Khaya's head. Kom: "Idcirco praecipio tibi ut expergiscere." (I command you to wake up.) he touched his chin, opening his mouth. Kom: "This will hurt." he bent down and blew into his mouth. The machine began to beep loudly. He held Khaya down from his restless struggle and he finally calmed. Komander stopped and closed his mouth. The nurses barged in. Nurse: "You're not allowed in here!!" Komander walked out. Nurse: "Excuse me!!" Kom: "What do you want?" he stared at her. Nurse: "Nothing. Absolutely nothing." he walked down the passage. Zama: "What happened!! How is he?" Kom: "Go home." Zama: "I can't leave him here, he's all I have." Kom: "Khaya will be awake. He just won't be the same Khaya you love. The husband you had, is dead." he walked down the passage bumping into Lakhe. They stared at each other quietly. Kom: "You have a stupidly brave brother. If he ever tries something like that again, he'll see flying Lucifers all around him for the rest of his life. I did not come to bother you, I didn't plan this but if you continue to disrupt my life, you will understand why they call me Komander." Lakhe: "I'm also not here to bother you, I just want you to stay away from my family. They're good people, if you want trouble, here I am. Don't go for defenseless humans." Kom: "How cute. I don't fight with mortals. Its a waste of time because I won't even have to touch you." he proceeded to walk. Kom: "Oh and if anyone, finds out who I am, please relay this to your family as I hate repeating myself, a plenum sectione infernum manet." then

past him walking out of the hospital. Lakhe walked to Zama. Lakhe: "Hi ma." Zama: "Hello Lakhe." he sat down next to her. Zama: "I know you don't want to be here. Why are you forcing yourself?" Lakhe: "Why would you say that?" Zama: "You've just found out that Khaya and I are working for the most ruthless criminal in the world." Lakhe: "Despite you judging me from the day you met me." Zama: "Khaya didn't want his daug- Spho to marry someone like them. He wanted her to have a normal life." Lakhe: "Khaya sounds like a hypocrite." Zama: "Yeah. So why are you here? Making sure he's really dead? Sandile took care of that for you." Lakhe: "Spho asked me to come here and stand by you while your partner is in a critical condition. She told me a story about how you lent her your things when she was upset, like clothes and jewelry so that you could pretend to be sisters since that's what sisters do. So she wanted to lend you her husband." she broke down in wails. Lakhe held her shoulder. Zama: "Don't!" she sniffed. Zama: "Lakhe I can't. Please just go." Lakhe: "I'm the one that can't, Spho told me I'm not allowed to come back to her until she's clear that Khaya is okay." Zama: "What did I do to deserve that child Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "Boggles my mind. Where did Spho grow up? How does a human being go through so much and still has a heart of gold? And how the hell is she Koma-" Zama: "Shhhh!" she looked around. Zama: "You can never say it out loud. That would endanger her life." Lakhe: "Fine, Tyrone then." Zama: "When Spho was born, Tyrone took care of her. Sibu helped him as little as he was. He was delighted to have a baby sister. The first four years of his life, The first two years of Spho's life. He had so much love for them. Then.....he saw his father." Lakhe: "Tyrone has a father?" Zama: "If you thought Tyrone is bad. You'd kill yourself just seeing his senior. And I'm not joking. Once You've seen him, the angel of death haunts you endlessly until you feel compelled to end your own life." Lakhe: "So what happened when he saw his father?" Zama: "He decided to take the children away because he was afraid his father would kill them or turn them into more versions of their kind." Lakhe: "Oh." Zama: "That's all he told me. There's a lot more to Tyrone than you'd think. He's not a monster." Lakhe: "After our last encounter down the passage, I beg to differ." Zama: "what did he say?" Lakhe: "Something like plenim section inf....and I lost the rest." Zama: "a plenum sectione infernum manet?" Lakhe: "Yes." Zama: "Lakhe Stop provoking him. He is trying all he can not to hurt you. Please. Do not provoke him anymore." Lakhe: "What does it mean." Zama: "That is the serpents warning, it means: 'A full section of hell awaits.' That's his last warning. Leave him alone now." Lakhe: "How can I? I've spent a decade hearing about this man, now all of a sudden he's here. He's my wife's father. My child's grandfather. What are the odds?" Zama: "He will not hurt Spho. She's his first love along with Sibu." Lakhe: "Now I don't believe that. He put demons in him! Who puts demons in their child?" Zama:

"Komander the first." Lakhe stared at her perplexed. Zama: "Look, just stay out of his way. Sooner or later, he'll be gone. For such a long time, you will forget he exists." the doctor walked to them. Doc: "Mrs Ngudla? May I have a moment of your time?" Zama: "Yes." Doc: "In four hours, we'll be having the surgery. It will take approximately nine hours. The chances are very slim but we'll be doing the best we can to keep him alive. He is stable, although the operation isn't risky, the complications are. I would like you to take a look at these brochures and form should anything happen." Zama: "Organ donation? He's not even dead yet and you're already eyeing his organs!!!" Doc: "Mrs Ngudla, I need you to understand, even if the operation is a success. Dr Ngudla has 70 percent chance of being brain damaged. He might never wake up again. It is a miracle that he's actually still alive. Scientifically, it would be impossible for him to function as a normal human being again. I'm really sorry." Zama: "Just go and do your job. My husband will survive this." she put the papers aside. Zama: "Its time for me to go."

Sibu took the food on the table. Sibu: "I haven't seen you eat." Me: "How can I?" he sat on the bed. Sibu: "Open your mouth." I opened and took a spoonful. Sibu: "I don't think I can forgive him Spho. Sandile was right, it would have been better if I didn't know him. My life would have been normal. Now I'm the son of.....I can't even say it." Me: "I know, but we know him now. What happens next? He did say he would leave us alone." Sibu: "That's good because I don't ever want to see him again. He almost killed me!" Me: "Don't you want to know why?" Sibu: "No! I don't want to know why!" Me: "You look a lot like him especially when you're angry." Sibu: "I do not." Me: "I know you do. Look, Sibu I asked this question when we were still searching for our father not knowing it would be him. We both agreed that we wanted to know him. Well, here he is." Sibu: "I wasn't counting on it being HIM. Of all people in the universe. God chose him to be my dad? Why would he do such a thing Spho? Kanti what have I done? I spent my whole life with my so called mom, wishing to have a dad, someone to talk to. I encouraged her to go on dates but she said she was too busy. Busy hiding this thing it seems. I hate him." Me: "I can't seem to find it in my heart to hate anyone. I'm just hurt and disappointed. I don't want to see him just yet." Sibu: "Lakhe is right. You're too nice its sickening. You're not my favorite person right now." Me: "I'm not my favorite person right now either. What happened at the house, how did Khaya get hurt?" Sibu: "Your dad obviously attacked him. What other reason could there be. There always has to be a corpse wherever he goes. God I wish I could drain out my DNA and swap it with anyone else." Me: "Why would he attack the one person who kept him a secret?" Sibu: "Because he's a

psychopath that's out of control, that's why." Me: "I don't think he's really a psychopath. I feel like he wants people to think he is, so that they don't get close to him." Sibuh: "And why do you think that Dr Phil?" Me: "Sibuh come on." Sibuh: "I don't know what its going to take for you to see this monster who has become a permanent stain in our lives." Me: "I can't afford the stress Sibuh. I can't lose my baby. I need to be calm no matter how much I want to scream and hit something. So in a way, his grandchild is favoring him." Sibuh: "That's creepy." Me: "it probably is." Lakhe walked in the room. Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "hey." Lakhe: "Your mom is going home to change. She said she needed to be alone for a few hours before Khaya is done." Me: "I told you not to leave her side." Lakhe: "I tried everything, she said thank you but will need to be alone." he sat down. Lakhe: "You won't believe what she told me." Me: "What did she say?" Lakhe: "He says, Tyrone lived with you both. The first years of your lives he took care of you." Me: "I had a flash of memory." Lakhe: "Well, he had to take you guys away when he saw his father. Said he feared that his father would kill you two or turn you into them. He couldn't let it happen so he sent you away." Sibuh: "Mxim." Lakhe: "Apparently, the father is something much worse than he is. People commit suicide just by seeing him." Sibuh: "That is a lie. All to hide behind being a victim. I do not believe it." Lakhe: "That's what she said." Me: "Where's Sandile?" Lakhe: "Probably in hiding." Me: "Why would he be in hiding?" Lakhe: "Whenever he does something absurd he runs away from me because he knows I'm angry at him." Me: "What did he do?" Lakhe: "uuhhm... Nothing." Me: "Just tell me please." Lakhe: "I can't Spho. We need to get you better." Me: "Please don't insult me. What did Sandile do?" Lakhe: "Sandile was the one operating the chainsaw. Your mother said he wanted to chop Tyrone's head off. Khaya pushed Ty aside and wrestled Sandile with the machine until he fell." If I wasn't heart broken already, I definitely was now. I couldn't even breath. Me: "Khaniphume." Lakhe: "baby-" Me: "I need some time alone. Please get out. Go. Both of you." they walked out the room. Sibuh: "He should've killed him. He shouldn't have stopped!" he said in the passageway. Lakhe: "That's the weird part Sibuh, Sandile does not stop. Until the job is done. Casualties along the way have never been a distraction to mission completion." Sibuh: "Are you saying he was compelled to stop?" they looked at each other. Lakhe: "Shit."

#122

Lakhe and Sibuh arrived at home around 10pm. The front door was still open but the lights were on. Vicky and Luke were scrubbing the blood from the wall and tiles. Lakhe: "Sisi, Uphi uSandile?" Vicky: "Andikamboni." he walked to

Sandile's room, knocking on the door. Lakhe: "Sands? Vula." there was no response. Lakhe opened the door. Sandile was in his bath tub Smoking a cigar. Lakhe: "And then?" Sands: "What's happening?" Lakhe: "what's- Sandile, la mess you did in that lounge is being cleaned by Vicky and Luke and you're sitting here having a bubble bath!!" Sands: "So?" Lakhe: "Get out of that bath right now!" Sands: "I didn't tell them to clean it. I was going to hire a company-" Lakhe: "I don't care. You're getting out of that tub and helping them! What were you thinking doing something that stupid!!" Sandile flicked the cigar in the ashtray. Lakhe: "Sandile I swear, I will drag you out of there!!" Sands: "I couldn't just sit there and let him get away with what he'd done. To Spho, to Sibbu. Why am I the bad guy when Komander is the one causing all the pain? I was doing everyone a favor." Lakhe: "Yes however you got the wrong person. I understand you were angry but He could've killed you Sandile." Sandile got out the bath. Lakhe: "Really?" Sands: "You said I must get out the bath." he took the towel and wrapped it around his waist. Sands: "Bhuti I don't want him here. We can't have Komander as part of our family." Lakhe: "I know. I just don't think we have a choice Sandile. It seems Spho's anger hasn't kicked in yet because of the baby." Sands: "And if she doesn't hate him, chances are we'll have many braai's he's going to be invited to." Lakhe: "Exactly." Sands: "So what do we do?" Lakhe: "Sit." they sat on the bed. Lakhe: "Zama told me a story about Komander. Something we can use against him." Sands: "How? We don't even know where he is." Lakhe: "We don't have to because we'll never have to see him again." Sands: "You have an evil plan." Lakhe: "Its going to hurt Spho but its the only way." Sands: "And the baby?" Lakhe: "The baby will be fine. She's healthy so the baby won't be harmed." Sands: "So what do we do." Lakhe: "Zama says Spho and Sibbu were living with Komander the first few years of their lives. Then he saw his father, The first Komander. He says he had to get them away because he feared his father would kill them or turn them into more versions of them. Anyway, my point is; Zama says once you see the father, the angel of death haunts you until you feel compelled to end your own life. Which I think is what happened to Miriam. She must have seen the father." Sands: "Didn't you say you thought she was murdered." Lakhe: "I did. But now there's this new piece of information." Sands: "Okay, carry on." Lakhe: "We have to make Spho believe your life is in danger because of Komander. You were the last person he had an encounter with. Since I haven't told her about the last warning." Sands: "What last warning?" Lakhe: "He said some riddle in that demon language of his. Something about hell waiting. Zama believes it to be the last warning. I can't provoke him again otherwise..." Sands: "What!?" Lakhe: "Yeah." Sands: "And you don't think your plan will infuriate him?" Lakhe: "How will he know?" Sands: "The same way he knows everything. I don't remember switching that

machine off but it just stopped." Lakhe: "Just do as I say. Komander won't harm any one of us knowing it would hurt Spho. And if Spho wants nothing to do with him, he will do whatever it takes to make it right." Sands: "So how do I act as though my life is in danger?" Lakhe: "Well, you have to be suicidal." Sands: "You think anyone is going to believe that I, Sandile Sobukwe am suicidal. I'm the most self centered person I know. And I know quite a number of people." Lakhe: "Firstly, its very healthy for you to admit that. Secondly, There's no type of person for suicide. Especially if its compelled. Even the strongest people go through it. The difference with your case is that, you'll first have to go a little senile." Sands: "Crazy?" Lakhe: "I need you to do this for me. We have to get that man as far away from Spho as possible and if her favorite in the house is negatively affected by his presence, its bye bye birdie." Sands: "Did she say I was her favorite?" he smiled. Lakhe: "Of course. She talks about you all the time. Now, nobody can know that this is fake. Not even Sibu." Sands: "Where is he anyway?" Lakhe: "In the lounge helping them clean. Listen, according to me, you'll be fine. We'll all be calm, pretend everything is roses but suddenly, you act strange. He has to be the one who notices it. If it can convince him, then we're good to go." Sands: "So you say the angel of death haunts until someone can't take it anymore?" Lakhe: "Yes." Sands: "Okay. Done. I'll start tomorrow." Lakhe: "Just don't play a character please. Make it look believable." Sands: "Will you trust me?" Lakhe: "I'm trying to. But here you are next to me naked as the day you were born." Sands: "I'm wearing a towel." Lakhe: "You're gross." he walked out. The lounge was looking clean. Lakhe: "Where's my mom and dad?" Luke: "They took Nosi to the movies from school. They didn't want her to see the blood." Lakhe: "Good. I'm going to fetch Chris." Sibu: "How's Sandile doing?" Lakhe: "He's fine. Being his usual annoying self. I told him to come help you guys seeing that he was the cause to begin with." Luke: "Its okay. We're already done. How is the victim?" Lakhe: "He's in theater as we speak. Unfortunately for him, on the table rather than next to it. Are you okay now? I remember you said you were sick earlier." Luke: "I was fasting. Vicky joined me for a prayer session. Its amazing how this guy didn't die on the spot." Lakhe: "He has you to thank Luke. Although I doubt he'll have a normal life after this." Luke: "Me neither. There's a trace of uncertainty with his blood. Its making my skin crawl." Lakhe: "Luke, at this point I have a feeling we'll talk till morning. Let me go fetch my boy." he walked out to his car.....

Wednesday morning Chris was up early. Chris: "Uncle? Wake up." Lakhe: "what is it?" refusing to open one eye. Chris sat up on the bed staring at him. Chris: "I have school today. Aunty says if I go to school, I get to buy a big car.

So please." Lakhe: "huh?" Chris: "I want Aunty." Lakhe: "Chris, its early son. Please go back to sleep." Chris: "I can't." Lakhe: "Why?" Chris: "I have school." Lakhe: "I thought you like sleeping." Chris: "I do but on time and now is not the time. Wake up." Lakhe: "Fine." he got up from bed. Lakhe: "I'm up. Come." he took Chris to the bathroom. Lakhe: "hold this." he gave him a toothbrush smearing toothpaste on it. Lakhe: "You're going to put it in your mouth-" Chris: "I can brush teeth. Its my shoe laces I have a problem with." Lakhe: "You're wearing slippers." Chris: "Am I going to wear slippers to school uncle?" Lakhe: "Just brush your teeth." he walked to the bedroom to make the bed. Lakhe: "Smart ass." after cleaning the room and bathing Chris. He took out their clothes. Chris: "Is this what I'm wearing?" looking at the denim dungaree and yellow t shirt. Lakhe: "Yeah you'll be fine." Chris: "And risk looking like a cartoon? Where's Aunty?" Lakhe: "What kind of 4 year old knows the word risk." he whispered to himself. Chris: "I'm going to look like a joke." Lakhe: "Fine. What do you want to wear?" Chris: "I don't like the color yellow. It hurts my eyes. And this thing," he lifted the denim. Chris: "Looks like Bob's clothes. I want to wear my black jeans and a t shirt." Lakhe dressed him. Chris: "My laces please." Lakhe: "You know the word risk but don't know how to tie laces?" Chris: "I can learn but I don't have to because I have you." he lifted his little leg up to Lakhe. Lakhe sat on the bed and tied the boy's laces. His phone rang. Lakhe: "Masilakhe Sobz speaking?" Chris: "Masilakhe Sobz." he giggled. Lakhe: "Yes sure. Definitely.....I'll call you back and let you know." he hung up. Lakhe: "Time for breakfast buddy. Go look for Vicky to make you porridge and pack your lunch, I need to shower." Chris: "Ok." he ran out the room. Vicky was already making breakfast. Chris: "hello." Vicky: "Hi Chrissie. How are you?" he scrunched up his face. Chris: "Chrissie is a girl name makhulu. Can I have some porridge please?" Vicky: "Stella is makhulu. Not me." Chris: "Okay. Uncle says please pack my lunch." Vicky: "Okay." he went to wait in the lounge. Sandile walked in the lounge. Sands: "Get away from my spot." Chris: "Make me." Sands: "I'm not playing with you." Chris: "And I am?" Sands: "Christian!" Chris: "Uncle Sandile! That's what you are, you know. A big ol uncle. Except you're missing your chin hair." Sands: "I can and will throw you out of this house into that duck pond." Chris: "My teacher says we threaten others by saying the things we are afraid of ourselves. So I double dare you." Sands: "You think you're smart?" he charged for him. Chris: "Uncle Sandile leave me alone!!!" he screamed. Lakhe: "Sandile!!!" he yelled from the bedroom. Chris stuck his tongue out. Vicky: "Christian, Here's your porridge." she gave him his bowl. Vicky: "Be careful." Chris: "Is it hot?" Vicky: "No, I cooled it off in the fridge." Chris: "Thank you." he ate his breakfast carefully. Victoria went back to the kitchen. Sandile tipped the bowl over and spilled the porridge on Chris' lap. Chris screamed in anger jumping up and down. Lakhe:

"What in the universe is happening there!!!!!" he stormed to the lounge, holding the phone in one hand. Sandile was sitting on the other couch watching TV quietly. Chris: "Uncle Sandile threw the porridge on my lap! He messed my clothes!!" Sands: "he spilled on himself. I did no such thing." Chris: "You're lying Uncle Sandile!!!!!!!!!" Lakhe: "Really Sandile? He's a child!" Sands: "And?" Lakhe: "I can't do this right now. Clean him up. He has another outfit on the bed, I'm too busy on the phone with Gerard. Take him Sandile!" Sandile took the boy to the room. Lakhe: "I'm sorry Gerard, their mother isn't here and they're driving me crazy. What were you saying?" Stella: "All I'm saying is darling, you're old enough to make grown man decisions. I'm not here to breastfeed you. You know my boobs aren't designed for that." Lakhe: "one more second Mr Ku'che." he looked at his parents. Stella: "Good morning sweet potato, you look so handsome. Where are you off to?" Lakhe: "Mama, I'm on the phone! Can everyone be quiet for just 5 minutes? Please?" Rob: "Who you talking to?" Lakhe: "I guess I'll just go stand outside then." he walked out talking on his phone. Rob: "What's his deal?" Stella: "He's your son. You know how cranky he is." she sat in the dining table. Stella: "Anyway, as I was saying..." Rob: "I don't want to hear about your boy toy. Just don't come running back to me when he hurts you after milking you dry." Stella: "The only things he'll be milking is these." she held her boobs. Rob: "Mxim." Stella: "How is your girlfriend anyway?" Rob: "She's perfect." Stella: "Really? Because you haven't even been on a second date." Rob: "Why does it worry you?" Stella: "It doesn't. As long as you don't feel pressured to make someone up just because I have a man with aesthetically pleasing features." Rob: "I couldn't care less." Lakhe walked in looking at the porridge mess. Lakhe: "at what point are the two of you going to leave?" Stella: "Don't be silly honey, I'm here to help out." Lakhe: "I'm glad you said that, can you please help clean that mess?" Stella: "Now you're being ridiculous. Victoria will clean it. That's why she's here. What's up with you this morning?" Lakhe: "I can't deal with Sandile and Chris in one house. They are driving me crazy." Rob: "Sandile can't be mixed with another boy child. It just never works. You should've thought of that. He takes pride in being the youngest Sobukwe male. Chris has taken it away from him." Lakhe: "Sandile is a grown man. He has to get over it." Rob: "Rather you than me son." Chris appeared from the passage sobbing. Lakhe: "What is it boy?" Chris: "I look like Bob the minion." Lakhe held in a chuckle. Lakhe: "No you don't. Chris we're going to be late if we don't leave now. All your other clothes need ironing and we don't have the time." Chris: "I don't wanna look like Bob. They're going to laugh at me at school." Stella: "Angel, you don't look like Bob." Chris: "I saw in the mirror. I do. Please uncle? Please." he held on to his leg. Lakhe: "Fine. Let's find you a jean and t shirt." they went to the bedroom to change. Rob: "Sandile?" Sands came to the dining table.

Sands: "Yes tata." Rob: "Why are you bullying Chris?" Sands: "When did I ever bully Chris?" Rob: "Why then are you challenging him?" Sands: "Tata, How do I begin to challenge a 4 year old? Are you saying I'm childish?" Rob: "No, I'm saying stop poking fun at Christian. He's a baby. Leave him alone." Sands: "Why does everything have to be about Chris?" he walked out the house. Stella: "You made him like that you know. You spoiled Sandile too much." Rob: "And you didn't?" Stella: "No, Sandile is unstable. He needs to understand No. This is why he went on a rampage last night." a car drove out the yard. Rob: "He needs to take responsibility for his actions. Nobody taught him to bottle up emotions. Him lashing out and attempting murder cannot be my fault." Nosi: "What?!" she stood at the passage entrance. Nosi: Who attempted murder?" Stella: "Your dad's friend, Conrad." Nosi: "Who's Conrad?" Rob: "A golf buddy of mine sweetie, you won't know him." Nosi: "Why would he attempt murder?" Stella: "His dad spoiled him rotten. He did no wrong in his eyes. Always a golden boy which is why when he gets angry, he tries to kill people. Justifying it as getting rid of rubbish, in this case, problems." Rob: "What are you trying to say Nokwakha?" Stella: "I'm not 'trying' to say anything Monwabisi, I already said it." Robert got up and stormed off to his room. Nosi: "Ookay. So who spilled porridge?" Stella: "Christian." Nosi: "Isn't he just adorable ma? Do you think Spho will adopt him?" Stella: "I'm not sure about anything going on in this house anymore. Ready for school?" Nosi: "Yeah. Are you driving me?" Stella: "Yes. Sooner than later young lady, you have to convince your father to buy you a car. I can't drive you everywhere like a baby." Nosi: "Why can't you buy me one mama? You know dad will never do it." Stella: "That's why I said convince him. Only your father has the kinda money to buy a Benz everyday. Let me get ready." she went to her bedroom. Nosi: "You're trying to say I'm a bad driver?" Stella: "I didn't say anything." she closed her door to change.

Wednesday evening, Lakhe came to fetch me from the hospital with Chris. I'd gone to visit Khaya but he hadn't woken up from his coma. The operation was successful but he was yet to respond. Lakhe drove me home. Lakhe: "You need to talk to Sandile." Me: "I don't want to talk." Lakhe: "Baby, he was angry. You can't blame him for that." Me: "I'm not blaming him for anything. I just said I don't want to talk, not just to him but to everyone." Lakhe: "Oh." the drive home was then quiet. No matter the recent lies and secrets, Khaya still gave me a home and a lovely upbringing after the trauma I'd endured. He was there for me at every turn. He was a great father. I was disappointed, yes, but I didn't want him to die. Not like this. He didn't even get the chance to apologize and explain himself. It wouldn't be fair and I wouldn't forgive

myself. So Sandile was the last person I wanted to see. We arrived home. Chris and I got out the car and went into the house. The family was in the lounge chatting. Me: "molweni." Stella: "hi darling. How are you?" Me: "I'm fine thanks ma. I just need some rest." Rob: "Go lie down mntanam." I went to my room. The first thing I wanted to do was shower then everything will flow from there. After my shower, Chris was waiting for me on the bed. I wore my underwear and gown then went to the bed. Me: "hey you." Chris: "hello." Me: "how was school today?" Chris: "Same as yesterday." Me: "Did you make friends?" Chris: "I didn't have time." Me: "Okay, so what did you do?" Chris: "This." he gave me a drawing of me. I looked like a big pumpkin. I really didn't know how to feel about it. Me: "This is beautiful. We need to hang it." Chris: "Uncle Sandile will be jealous." Me: "Of course, who wouldn't be." Chris: "Do you like it?" Me: "I do. I like it a lot." *coughs a bit* Me: "Where is uncle?" Chris: "There wasn't enough space to draw him too." So I'm that big huh. Me: "I'll put this up in the closet." he dug in his school bag. Chris: "this is for you." he gave me his lunch box. Me: "What's in here." Chris: "Harper had a birthday so her mommy came with cupcakes. I saved mine for you." Me: "You're so sweet. Thank you baby." he continued digging. Chris: "I'll be right back." he jumped off and ran out. I took my laptop so long and finished my proposal for Sandile's gala evening in his hotel. I took my phone and dialed the guy who makes the best invitations on earth. Me: "Hi Olwethu. Unjani?" Olw: "I'm great Spho and you?" Me: "Wonderful. I was wondering if you could help me." Olwethu: "Name it. You know I'd do anything for you." Me: "You're too kind. A friend of mine is having a special dinner and wants to invite an elite group. I'm sending you the details of this do. Then you'll make the invitations and let me check them out." Olwethu: "Is this just a normal dinner?" Me: "No, nowhere near normal. You'll see once you read it. Still using the same email right?" Olwethu: "Yes, send it through. I'll look at it tonight." Me: "Thank you Olwethu. Will send in a minute." we hung up. I sent Olwethu the email. Chris came back holding a single rose. Chris: "There. Now I'm done." Me: "What's this?" Chris: "A flower." Me: "I see that. Its beautiful. Thank you Chris." Chris: "You're welcome." he climbed on the bed and took out his coloring book and crayons. I was looking at theme colors for the dinner. Black and gold or black and red? I looked through samples of each. I was satisfied with black and red. Black being mysterious and red being the spicy fiery element. Which means our gourmet dish has to have a bit of zing. Next on my list would be chef's. It was ideal using the resident chefs at the hotel but we're talking top notch for this specific evening. Not just any regular degular will be here. I found a few contact numbers of the best rated chefs. I'd have to make the calls tomorrow morning. Next on my list is the obvious entertainment. Lakhe: "Hey." he walked in. Me: "Hi." Lakhe: "What are you guys up to?" he climbed

on the bed too. Me: "Just working." Lakhe: "You quit though." Me: "This is Sandile's event. I'm organizing it." Lakhe: "Oh." my phone rang. Me: "Hi Olwethu." Olwethu: "So, this gala evening, can I invite myself? It sounds super elegant. I have so many ideas. What are your colors?" Me: "Black and red. Formal everything obviously." Olwethu: "How about a masquerade? Without the costumes of course, just the masks." Me: "Woah....Olwethu...." Olwethu: "An opera singer as the last performing act." Me: "I love you so much right now. Yes!!" Olwethu: "This is going to be great. I'm starting on it right now." Me: "Sure thing." we hung up. Lakhe: "So what is this event about." Me: "Nothing much just treating the regular clients to a performance and specially cooked gourmet meal." Lakhe: "And how is that going to help his 'losing money' crisis." Me: "You'll see." Lakhe: "No I prefer to know now because what I'm seeing at the moment is a ridiculously expensive event that won't bring any kind of money in. You say you're treating regular hotel clients to a free performance and an expensive meal, you're even flying chefs in. What are we going to gain from that? Thank you's?" Me: "That's a great idea. A gift bag to everyone at the end of the show would make a wonderful surprise." Lakhe: "Spho are you listening to me?" Me: "I am." Lakhe: "Clearly not. I'm asking how are you going to solve Sandile's money crisis with throwing this party?" Me: "I'm not solving a money crisis." he stared at me. Lakhe: "This hotel is going to go bankrupt and I must be the one to go save it? That won't work for me. I can't Spho. Sandile needs to take responsibility and work hard to find solutions. This party is a waste of time. I suggest you cancel it." This is exactly why I stopped working for him. He just made me feel less guilty for dropping that company. As a matter of fact, maybe I should start my own. After saving my work and double checking if my laptop and ipad were in sync, I helped Chris with his coloring. Lakhe: "baby I'm not trying to discourage you but its the truth. An expensive party is the last thing we could do. If anything, we'll be digging that hotel a shallow grave. How about instead we have something called Peak pricing. We have our clients contact information on the system right. Plus we've placed it accordingly with the most frequent to the one timers. We could speed text them discount prices valid for a day. You know how people love bargains. They'll come running because its R200 less than the usual price. There's high peak prices when the hotel is getting full, off peak prices once in a while." Me: "Or we could have an app." I could feel the astonishment radiating from him. Lakhe: "An app?" Me: "Yes. People could book and make reservations on the app prior their arrival. Then check in at reception. The same app can have a notification system of your, high peak, low peak price thing." he kept quiet. Me: "Everyone has a smart phone, they will buy the app and use it when necessary." Lakhe: "That's actually a great idea." Chris: "Use this color for the horse." he gave me a crayon. Lakhe: "So, will you be telling

Sandile?" Me: "Why would I tell Sandile your idea?" Lakhe: "Its not my idea."
Me: "Then I guess its Chris' idea because its not mine either." Lakhe: "You don't
have to do that. My ego isn't bruised." Yet, I want to say. Me: "I didn't even
notice you have an ego." Lakhe: "Okay, let me leave the room before I get
struck by lightning." he walked out the room.

Sibu and Sandile were in the game room. Sibu: "Are you even listening to me
man?" Sands: "Yes, yes. The blue pin was the answer." Sibu: "You seem very far
away. Is everything okay?" Sands: "Do you think Spho is mad at me?" Sibu:
"She is." Sands: "Seriously?" Sibu: "She all but freaked out after hearing what
you did to her father. Well, adoptive father. Threw us out the hospital. That
was last night, didn't bhuti tell you?" Sandile stared into thin air. Sibu: "Sandile!"
Sands: "Shhh. D'you hear that?" Sibu: "No." he paused the game. Sands:
"There's a whispering sound." Sibu: "That's not funny." Sands looked around.
Sands: "Sibulele.....There's someone here man." his voice was shaking. Sibu:
"quit trying to scare me and let's play the game." they focused on the play
station game for a while. Sandile dropped the console on the floor. Sands:
"Ouch!!!" he blew his hands. Sibu: "What!!!" Sands: "That thing almost burnt my
hand." Sibu: "Mans, what's wrong with you?" Sands: "Nothing bra." Sibu: "You're
sweating like a mad man." Sands: "I'm fine." they opted for watching TV
instead. Sibu: "So Dumi says he'll be spending the night at Zingi's place. Since
its only gonna be us two, I was thinking how about we go to a bar for a few
hours. Catch a drink-" he stared at his friend who was staring at the door.
Sibu: "Sandile..." Sands: "You can see him too?" he whispered. Sibu: "See
who?" he looked around. Sands: "That guy. Standing at the door." then he
moved back. Sands: "he's coming....stop him Sibulele!!!" he panicked. Sibu:
"Sandile There's nobody here!" Sandile looked around. Sands: "Oh.....okay." A
knock on the door jolted them to reality. Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "Dinner's
ready. What you two up to?" he walked in. The guys looked at each other.
Lakhe: "errhh....am I interrupting?" Sibu: "No." Lakhe: "What were you two up
to before I walked in?" Sibu: "nothing. Just TV." they stood up. Lakhe: "Okay.
Let go." they followed him out the room. Sibu: "bhuti?" he pulled him aside.
Sandile walked to the lounge. Lakhe: "What?" Sibu: "Sandile is acting strange.
He's hearing whispers and seeing things. At first I thought he was trying to
scare me but I don't think so anymore. Something is wrong." Lakhe: "Are you
sure he's not messing with you?" Sibu: "I'm sure." Lakhe: "Sandile is fine Sibu.
Don't worry. You're just imagining things because of recent events." Sibu: "I
hope so bhuti. I really do. I'd hate for this to be a reality because the
consequences of such episodes are life threatening."

#123

Thursday started on a busy note. I was up by 6 in the morning, getting ready. I looked through my closet. Me: "man, I'm going to need new clothes." I didn't want to buy many maternity dresses because I obviously wasn't going to be pregnant for years. So there was only 5 dresses, 5 tops and 5 maxi's. The olive green bodycon boob tube dress was peeking at me. I paired it with all white Stan Smith Adidas sneakers. Finally done getting dressed I looked for Chris' outfit for the day. Bleached fitted jeans with elastic at the ankle and a black Batman t shirt. I wasn't sure whether he should wear his sandal or red sneaker. His clothes were on the table ready for him when he was up and bathed. For now I had to make his lunch and breakfast. While making his porridge, I had to make the call for the chefs. After those, I had to book performers, this meant a band and finding an opera singer. My phone rang. Me: "Hello?" I answered. Olwethu: "Hey, I didn't think you were up. Anyway, I have two samples I want you to look at." Me: "Already? That was quick. Send them through." Olwethu: "I've left out the performance info, have you found a singer to perform?" Me: "I have found a band, its the opera singer I'm still searching for. Believe it or not, they're incredibly scarce." Olwethu: "I know a girl but she lives in East London. Zandile Pheko. Do you want her number?" Me: "Can I first see her work? Does she have a platform where she showcases her talent." he gave me her details. Olwethu: "Once You've checked her out, call her." Me: "I will. Email the invites for now." Olwethu: "sure thing." we hung up. After making porridge and letting Chris' bowl cool off, I finished his lunch then went to wake him up and get him ready. Lakhe woke up when Chris was dressed and singing. Lakhe: "Hey..." Chris: "Hello uncle, are you coming with us to school?" Lakhe: "Not today. I have a meeting but I'll come fetch you later okay?" Chris: "Okay. Bye then." Lakhe: "You guys leaving already?" Me: "Yes. I have to meet with Sandile in 20 minutes." Lakhe: "Has it occurred to you that A) you LIVE with Sandile. B) he doesn't wake up before 8 unless he wants to annoy me." Me: "I don't to talk business at home. If he wants to be successful he needs to understand that waking up on time and showing up for appointments is important." Lakhe: "You're taking this very seriously." Me: "I am. Let's go Chris." we went to eat breakfast and left for school. Chris: "Are you going to take me in? I want to show you my desk." Me: "Of course. I'd love to see it." I parked at his school. We went inside together. His teacher, Stacy was greeting them at the door. Stacy: "Chris." Chris: "Stacy." I couldn't help but notice the cold looks they gave each other. Me: "Hi Stacy." Stacy: "Hi Chris' mom. Can I talk to you for a second." Me: "sure." Chris stood next to me. Stacy: "Chris, how about you go to the breakfast mat for now? Tucker is by

himself." Chris: "I wanted to show her my desk first." Stacy: "You will once I'm finished talking to her." he turned on his heel and went to the mat. Stacy: "So, Chris is a very different child. He's well informed, very well spoken and super smart. He learns quickly, his memory is astonishing." Me: "So what's the problem?" Stacy: "The problem is I'd like for you to take him to a child psychologist. I have a feeling his IQ is advanced for his age and as his teacher, I'm required by the school principal to request a psychologist evaluation." Me: "Just because he's smart? He's not harming anyone." Stacy: "Except me. He questions every activity I give them. He corrects me. This disrupts the class because he has an opinion for everything." Me: "I hear you. I'll speak to my husband and get back to you." Stacy: "Thank you." I went to Chris. Me: "Sweetie Where's your desk?" he jumped up and pulled my hand to his desk. Their desks had pictures of their drawings on A5 paper and a glass over it not to damage it probably. There was our house. Me and Lakhe on the grass. Something that either looked like a car or a box and Chris as well. It was so sweet. Me: "This is so beautiful honey!! I love it." Chris: "I keep it here so that I remember you when you're not around." Me: "I love it. Let me take a picture to show uncle." I took a picture of the desk. Me: "I have to go now, but promise me you're going to behave and listen to Stacy." he shot a sting eye in her direction. Chris: "I promise." I hugged him. Me: "Enjoy your day sweetie." I left the day care for my meeting.

Lakhe was dressed and ready for work, knocking on Sandile's door. Rob: "You just missed him." Lakhe: "Where did he go?" Rob: "Meeting with Spho." Lakhe: "Where are you going?" he looked at him from head to toe. Rob: "Golf." Lakhe: "Do you ever work?" Rob: "In which universe does a billionaire ever work? Don't be silly." Lakhe: "in the universe that I pay an entire mansion's maintenance. Electricity and Water. Phone bill and groceries tata. Do you know how much I spend on this house's expenses every month? I'm much poorer than you are. That is not fair." Rob: "You can afford it. I'll see you later. Stop frowning." he walked to his car. Lakhe: "This is some type of hell." he went to his own car driving to work. The minute he stepped in. His PA rushed to him. Lakhe: "I'm barely inside the door, Nwabisa. What do you want?" Nwabi: "Mr Gerard is waiting for you in boardroom A. He doesn't look happy at all. Telkom has called twice already, they say they can't get hold of Harold. Where's Mrs Sobz?" Lakhe: "She's resigned." Nwabi: "That's not going to work bhuti-" Lakhe: "And you think I don't know that?" Nwabi: "Why don't you hire a new MD?" Lakhe: "Don't have time. Besides, my wife will never forgive me for replacing her." he opened his office and went to his desk. Nwabi: "Why? She quit. She shouldn't care." Lakhe: "Once you get married, you'll understand.

Yes she's resigned. However, replacing her will make her feel as though I've been waiting to do it. I have to beg and suffer first. Besides, I really do miss her work. Look at all this shit I have to deal with now?" Nwabi: "Yeah she made things really easy for you. But, I have the perfect person who can fill in temporarily. He doesn't cost that much, please consider." Lakhe: "I have to get through this first. I'll think about it." Nwabi: "Okay." Lakhe: "come, I need to lock here." he locked his office on their way out. In the boardroom Gerard Ku'che waited impatiently. Gerard: "Finally. I've been waiting here for 30 minutes!" Lakhe: "I didn't know we had a meeting. What's the problem?" Gerard: "I am your client. You work for me. I don't need an appointment! Where's Spho?" Lakhe: "Spho no longer works here." Gerard: "Where does she work?" Lakhe: "She's at home resting." Gerard stared at him. Gerard: "You were threatened by her. Is that why you fired her?" Lakhe: "I know you're her biggest fan, but no I wasn't and still not threatened. Spho is my wife. I support her at all times. She was just overwhelmed. Pregnancy is not child's play." Gerard: "I want to know what's going to happen to my company now that she's not taking care of it. What do I do now?" Lakhe: "The team that was working with Spho-" Gerard: "Is completely useless. Masilakhe I want Spho back. If you can't get me Spho, I'm taking my business elsewhere. I'm giving you 48 hours." he got up and left. Lakhe: "Who's my next meeting?" Nwabi: "Mr Ferreria. Then you have to call Telkom. They're sending their reps here in two days." Lakhe: "Seems like my ass is on the line for two days." Nwabi: "We could call Mpumelelo. He's the best in the business." Lakhe: "Never heard of him." Nwabi: "I could set up a meeting." Lakhe: "Why are you so eager for this guy to get on board?" she looked away. Lakhe: "Tell me." Nwabi: "Its just that we've been friends since high school and I wanted to do something nice for him. He recently got retrenched." Lakhe: "You have a crush on him?" Nwabi: "No!" she blushed. Lakhe: "I hope you know my company does not allow fornication." Nwabi: "but you married Mrs Sobz after you met her here sir." Lakhe: "Does she work here anymore?" Nwabi: "No." Lakhe: "Keep that in mind. Organize this meeting, what's his full name?" Nwabi: "Mpumelelo Bandlana." Lakhe: "I need him here before 12." he walked out typing the name in a message.

I had gone to the hospital to visit my dad. He was still not out of his coma. Me: "Tata please wake up, I promise I'm not mad at you. I just need you to live. Whatever it is that you were involved in, its in the past now. We can move forward from it. Please dad, just wake up. If not for me, at least for the baby. He needs his granddad." I laid my head on the bed next to his hand. I was actually getting sleepy when I felt a change of vibe. I picked up my head

and saw Komander staring at me, gorgeous as ever. My heart almost jumped out of my chest. He didn't say a word, just quietly stared. Me: "I thought you said You'd not come back." Kom: "I said I wouldn't bother you again. Khaya was more than just my right hand man. He made my life so easy and manageable. I couldn't just leave and not know if he was okay." Me: "K." Kom: "Spho." I looked at him again. My heart melted away. My arms wanted to wrap around his body and hold him so close to me. Me: "Can you switch that off? How do you expect me to take you seriously if your demons are always enticing me?" Kom: "unfortunately I really can't switch it off. They can fall asleep though. But only for short periods of time." Me: "Then sing them a lullaby." Kom: "Its more complicated than that." he sighed. Kom: "When I put them to sleep it has to be for emergencies. Like when you were here in hospital, I had to see you. Problem is, once they wake up.....they get hungry." Me: "Can we stop discussing your pets?" he nodded. Kom: "Just try not to look into my eyes, as hard as it is." I looked at my two hands joined with my father's right hand. Me: "Fine." he pulled a chair and sat down. A strong whiff of cologne slapped my face and made me instantly weak. I would've fell off my seat. Kom: "I know I didn't raise you. I'm only your father by blood and DNA. Khaya means more to you than I ever will but believe me when I say my love for you has is still as strong if not multiplied ten fold whenever I see you. I missed you every day. I thought about you and your brother every minute. It broke my spirit in ways you can't imagine having to pretend you both never existed. It was the only way to keep you alive mami. I'm really sorry." his voice and smell made me hold on to Khaya's hand for dear life. It was so difficult to be upset now. I could not control my feelings at all. I was holding back tears. Could I just crawl over onto his lap and remain in his arms forever please? Me: "What is your real name?" Kom: "I don't have one. I only identify as Komander." Me: "If we're to move this along. I will need honesty." Kom: "Spho, I was raised by a man more cruel than Satan. I don't remember having a mother. It was always just me and him. My father invented the words evil, heinous, and inhumane. That's how you identify him. He does not have an element of empathy. He didn't care to name me. Never took me to school. All he ever taught me was how to be him." Me: "And? Are you him?" Kom: "Yes. I am my father's son. I am just the way he intended me to be. The only problem with me is I found a woman. Luckily for me, I never had a problem attracting the opposite sex. They are always ready whenever they see me. Thanks to the incubus." Me: "Hold it right there, when I still read novels in high school, I was very into science fiction and all supernatural things. I remember this because utata hated those books. Anyway, they mentioned in the story that once an incubus demon sleeps with a mortal, it kills them." Kom: "You're very well informed but I'm not full incubus. I can control myself." This was

actually disgusting but okay. Me: "So you slept with my mother." he kept quiet. Me: "Okay, so it was Incubus who slept with my mother." no response. Me: "Please tell me." Kom: "I don't want you to feel any different." Me: "I won't." Kom: "Your mother was provided to feed my desires. There wasn't any love involved." Me: "So she was your prostitute?" Kom: "Yes." Me: "Then what happened?" Kom: "She fell pregnant with Sibulele and kept quiet about it. I only noticed her gaining weight. I officially cut her off when she started getting too tired. I thought she was just exhausted until Khaya informed me she was actually 7 months pregnant. I didn't know what that meant. It was so confusing." he chuckled. Kom: "He explained that pregnancy meant a baby was coming. When he said that, my heart could have swelled and exploded. A whole human life, just for me, created by me. I felt so lucky. So happy I asked Miriam to give him to me. When she gave birth that's what she did. She gave me my beautiful son. Oh he was such a prince. I fell in love immediately." he had tears in his eyes. Kom: "I named him Sibulele. I didn't know where this gift came from but, Sibulele. I was so obsessed with him. Two years later, I then noticed the second pregnancy myself. I thought it was another boy honestly. I did everything with my little prince, having two would be complete bliss. Little did I know I was in for a huge surprise. The minute I saw you come out of your mother, I swear my heart stopped for a full two minutes. Have you ever seen a grown man shed a tear? Your face did that. To Komander. Your husband was right, I may be Komander to the whole world but child, you make me weak." I was the weak one at that moment. Me: "Tell me about your father. Guess my grandfather is Satan now." Kom: "That will never be your grandfather. I swear on my life I'd never let that happen." Me: "Okay, your father then. How you grew up, where and why." Kom: "You don't need to know that. Its time for you to go home." his tone had changed now. Me: "Who do you think you're scaring with that voice? I want to get to know you. Sibulele already hates you for demonizing him. I'm literally all you have left if Khaya decides to bounce." Kom: "Khaya is not going to bounce. And what do you all mean that I put demons in my own son?" Me: "You kidnapped him." Kom: "No. I brought him back." Me: "huh?" Kom: "My father took Sibulele. Somehow he figured out he is his blood. He did all that to him. I pulled him out of there. Sibulele was not supposed to have come back. Ever. Its funny how he leaves that very significant detail of how he got out of there. He must think he's Superman." Me: "What do you mean you pulled him out?" Then it all came rushing back, Sibulele never finished the story and never told me how he got out. Me: "Back up... Are you trying to tell me Sibulele already knew you?" Kom: "Yes Spho. Sibulele knows who I am. He always has."

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Me: "No!! Sibulele could not have kept this from me! He was just as eager to find our father as I was." Kom: "It was an act sweetheart. Sibulele already knew his father was me. He just needed to sell you an idea of hope and a bond of discovery. Which is what he successfully did. Unfortunately, I've never been able to lie to you." I was crushed. Me: "he told me he hated you, he didn't want you in our lives." Kom: "Its true, he does hate me. Unfortunately, I can't seem to get through to him." Me: "I don't believe this. I don't believe he would give me the run around. Why the hell did he hire Orlando then?" Kom: "Orlando? The Private Investigator?" Me: "Yeah." Kom: "Please forgive him Spho. Sibulele grew up as an only child. When he met you, he still had to share you with your husband and his family. This journey for you might feel like a lie but to him its genuine. Something the two of you only can bond over. This is the only moment he didn't have to share you. Don't shut him out." Me: "He lied to me." Kom: "I know. But know that it wasn't easy for him." Me: "Its not easy for me. Why can't they stop acting like babies? First it was Lakhe, then Sandile now him too? Chris is smarter than all of them combined!" he chuckled. Kom: "Don't take it personally. You're like a mama bear. Of course they're going to act like children." I leaned back on my chair. Me: "I haven't been able to talk to Sandile after what he did. We had a meeting about his hotel today and it was really awkward." Kom: "Sandile was trying to protect you." Me: "By trying to kill you?" Kom: "So he's not that smart but everyone makes mistakes." Me: "At this point I feel like I'm only around to fix mistakes. I'm so tired." Kom: "I'm here for you. Any time you need anything or someone to complain to." Me: "Thank you." I looked at the time. Me: "I have to go home. Would you like to join us for dinner? No drama this time." Kom: "I don't think that's a good idea. First sort things out with Sandile and Sibulele. We'll take it from there." I stood up. Me: "For what its worth, you're not as bad as they portray you to be. You're actually sweet." Kom: "Thank you." Me: "So....what do I call you? Mr Komander? Tyrone?" Kom: "Anything you want." Me: "how about we start with Bhuti. Its still a little weird knowing you're my father." Kom: "I understand. That's okay with me." Me: "I'll see you around." I walked out of the hospital. I felt a little lighter after chatting with him. Of course it would be a long way to go knowing him. On my drive home, I picked up a few more things for dinner then went to the house. It was after 3 when I arrived and everyone was home except Sandile, Sibulele and Dumi who were probably still all at work plus Lakhe and Chris. He did send a text explaining he had some work to finish and he had Chris with him in the office. I made myself macaroni and cheese which was probably enough for the whole house. While mixing

the cooked mince and pasta together with the cheese sauce Stella strolled in the kitchen. Stella: "Why do you look so sad?" Me: "I'm just tired." Stella: "Let me call Victoria to finish this up-" Me: "No mama. I can finish. What I mean is I'm mentally tired. There's too many lies in this house." Stella: "I'm sorry sweetheart. Would you like to talk about it?" I shook my head. Stella: "How do I make you feel better then? I hate seeing you like this and God knows I'm not good with comforting people. That's your specialty." I smiled. Me: "You can tell me about Vuyani." Stella: "That I can! He is handsome, and so strong and sweet!" she showed me his pictures. Me: "he looks really handsome." Stella: "So.....we've decided to take our relationship to the next level on the third date." Me: "That's huge." Stella: "It is. He is really eager. I've felt his....you know. And its biiig." What did I now do to deserve this twist in the conversation? Me: "Well I hope you enjoy yourself. Just relax." Stella: "I don't know if I can relax. I spent over 3 decades with Robert. We never experimented. We just had normal sex. I don't know if.....I'm sexually compatible with Vuyani." How many mother in laws discuss sex? How do I make it stop? Stella: "Spho, I don't have friends. The ladies I have tea with are big gossips. I can't share my things with them. And Victoria really isn't part of the program but you get me. We're gals." Me: "I guess we are." Absolutely fucking not. Me: "Look, Vuyani likes you very much. You need to be honest with him from the beginning. Tell him You've only had sex with Robert and you're inexperienced so can he please show you and introduce you to the things he likes in bed. That's all." I sprinkled a thick layer grated cheese on my meal. Stella: "Wouldn't it be easier if you told me?" I laughed. Me: "Unfortunately I've never slept with Vuyani, so I'm not sure of his preference. When is the big date?" Stella: "Tonight." Me: "Wear really sexy underwear. Actually do it always until he specifies on his favorite piece. Then buy more of those in different colors." Stella: "I had a wax earlier. The white lace set would look fantastic. With red heels." Me: "Sexy. Where is your date going to be?" Stella: "At Tabu. He thinks he's slick. Trying to have dinner in a hotel for easy entrance." I laughed putting my casserole dish in the oven for a few minutes. Me: "I hope you have fun." Stella: "I hope I come back with wobbly legs. Come help me pick a dress." Lawd. This woman. I set a timer and we went to her room. After going through her closet we finally found a beautiful white dress with off the shoulder sleeves and knee length. Me: "This is gorgeous." Stella: "Its Donna Karen. Robert bought it for me last year." she giggled. Stella: "imagine wearing it on a date with another man. It would devastate him. I'll go shower." she ran out the room laughing. Hehehe Yuh lomama.

Chris was sitting on the couch in Lakhe's office with his Mr Courage toy. Chris: "Uncle." Lakhe: "Yes my boy?" he was busy signing off contracts in his desk. Chris: "Can I call you dad?" Lakhe stopped moving. He looked up at Christian. The boy had a sad look in his eyes. Lakhe: "What's going on?" Chris: "My real dad is not coming back, is he?" the first tear rolled down his cheek. Chris: "even my real mom." he looked at his toy. Chris: "They left me." Lakhe: "Christian, your parents didn't leave you, they passed away." Chris: "Everyone has parents in class and I don't." Lakhe got up from his chair, walking to the couch. Lakhe: "Come here." he picked him up. Lakhe: "You do have parents. Me and Spho. Okay? We just need to finalize the adoption so you can officially belong to us. You can call me dad. Stop crying." the boy sobbed. Chris: "I'm never seeing my mom again?" Lakhe: "No. I'm sorry baby." Chris: "Even my dad? They're gone forever now?" Lakhe: "Yes. They're gone forever. But you're mine forever and I'll never leave you." he hugged him. Lakhe: "What happened in class?" Chris: "I don't want to talk about it." Lakhe: "Should I take you to mommy?" Chris: "Yeah." he held on to him. Lakhe packed up his papers and bag with his left hand. Lakhe: "We have to get this cast off your arm, is it still sore?" Chris: "No." Lakhe: "We'll go to the hospital tomorrow to remove it okay?" Chris: "Okay." Lakhe: "Let's go." he locked his office and drove home. Arriving just a little after 4pm. They walked in the house. Rob, Luke and Nosi were watching TV. Lakhe: "Afternoon." they greeted back. Lakhe: "Where's my wife?" Nosi: "Dressing mama." Rob: "For what?" Nosi: "She has her third date with Vuyani today. So she needs to look extra." she licked her finger. Rob: "extra what?" Nosi: "hot tata." Rob: "Why?" Nosi: "I can't talk to you about this." Rob: "You already started so continue." Nosi: "You're my dad. Bhuti tell him." Lakhe: "I don't know either." Nosi: "Gosh why is Sandile never here when you need him." Lakhe: "Lucky for you, he just parked." Sandile strode in dressed in his usual black attire. Rob: "I liked it better when you wore that outfit. Those light jeans and white shirt." Sands: "That was not me." he poked at Chris who was still in Lakhe's arm. Lakhe: "Leave him alone. Dad has something to ask you." Sands: "What?" Rob: "Your mother has a third date today with Qumbani and she wants to look extra hot for it she even called the big guns." Sands: "big guns?" Nosi: "Spho is helping her." Sands: "Ohhh.....So what's your question?" Rob: "Why is she looking extra." Sands: "Third date usually means going home together and having sex." Lakhe: "There's a child!!" Rob: "Whaat." Sands: "I feel like I'm getting someone into trouble." Rob: "Now why would your mother want to go do such a thing!!" Lakhe: "Maybe because she's single and she can." Rob: "We were married for over thirty years! And she just waltz out of here hopping into someone else's bed!!" Lakhe: "You were the one who asked for divorce dad. Why does it bother you that your ex is seeing someone else." Rob: "What bothers me is that piece of

filth is going to be part of this family. Sandile, I will pay you to get rid of him." Lakhe: "You will do no such thing. Mama is happy. How about you go and check on Noma." Rob: "Sandile." Sands: "I have work to do tata. Spho is really over working me. I need to soak myself, eat and sleep." Rob: "Nosi..." Nosi: "You want to pay me to get rid of mom's boyfriend?" Rob: "She could've dated a prestigious man. There's many of them around. I wouldn't have minded the competition but she had to go choose someone that is younger than Sandile? NO." Sands: "I agree. Its a bit weird." Nosi: "I want a brand new Mercedes Benz. The GLA. In black. With rose gold rims." Rob: "Done. You break them up in two days and You've got your car by the end of the month." Sands: "Wait, hold on. Can I make an offer?" Rob: "You had your chance." Sands: "Hayi ke tata, I need an SUV, where will I fit Chris and his preschool friends in an i8?" Lakhe: "Firstly, What would you be doing with my child and his preschool friends?" Rob: "Very good question." Sands: "I'd take them out for ice cream obviously. Here's Sibuy and Dumzety to back me up." Nosi: "I don't think anyone can back up your statement to want to hang out with toddlers." Sands: "Chris do you want to hang out with me?" Chris: "No, thanks." Nosi: "Yep....." Sibuy, Dumy and his kids came in the front door. Lakhe: "Nanku Lulo." Chris: "who's that?" he peeped. Lakhe: "There he is." Chris: "Ohh." he wiggled himself to the floor and they ran to the play room. Sibuy: "Molweni." Dumy: "Hi everyone." everyone greeted back. I came out of Stella's room walking to the kitchen. Me: "Molweni." I kissed Lakhe. Me: "Where's Chris?" Lakhe: "Playroom with Lulo and Zimy. There's something I need us to talk about regarding him." Me: "Okay." Stella came out the room. I already knew she was stunning. Her long legs slippery smooth and shining. The white dress hugged her body. Her make up on point and hair looking amazing. Nosi: "WOOW Mama!!!! You look stunning!!!" Stella: "Thank you sweetheart." Sands: "I love this dress ma, where did you get it? I'm sure you recognize it dad?" Lakhe: "Sandile." Rob: "You look pretty. Sad thing is that dress probably costs more than his life's worth." Stella: "Don't be silly this dress is just R10 000." Rob: "My point exactly. Enjoy." Stella: "Must be really sad being you Robert. I actually pity you." she walked out. Stella: "Don't wait up!!" she yelled from her car. Robert was frowning sitting on the couch. Me: "Tata, I made some Mac and Cheese earlier plus I bought your favorite cake from Woolies. Would you like some?" Rob: "No, my angel. I just have some work to do." he walked to his bedroom. Sands: "So Vuyani won't make it to tomorrow's sunset." Lakhe: "I will fight you if you touch that boy." Sands: "Look at how depressed my father is!" Lakhe: "Maybe then he should learn to appreciate what he has. He was the one who asked mom for a divorce, now she's single and still not allowed to date whom she pleases? Dad is dating Noma! He shouldn't care what mom does in her leisure time." Sands: "Do you really think he Wants to date Noma!

How can you be so relaxed when your father is in pain?" Lakhe: "I am not relaxed but tata needs to understand There's consequences to rushed decisions! If he didn't want to divorce umama, he should've sat her down and told her he was unhappy. Gone to therapy. Something!! He cannot blame anyone for his misery now. Nosiphiwo, you better stay the hell away from Vuyani. Both of you. Tata will learn the hard way. And I am not having this conversation with either of you again." Sands: "You are a bully!" Lakhe: "I beg your pardon?" Sands: "Nothing," he stepped back. Sands: "I'm going to my room for a soak." he walked to his bedroom. Lakhe: "Undivile Nosi?" Nosi: "Ewe bhuti." I went to the kitchen without uttering a word because this did not concern me at all. I dished up for myself some Mac and Cheese. Lakhe: "Baby." Me: "Yes love." Lakhe: "So, in the office today Chris was kinda upset. Something must have happened at school. He was asking if he could call me dad. Saying his real parents were never coming back and they left him. He just cried and my heart just couldn't take it. I told him he could call me dad. I explained to him about adoption. But I had to reassure him that he belongs to us." Me: "So he calls you dad now?" Lakhe: "Yeah. And you're mommy." he smiled. Me: "I'm okay with it." Lakhe: "I think we also need to see a therapist. He might have abandonment issues. Notice how he cries every time someone supposedly leaves him." Me: "You're right. Also his teacher asked us to take him to a child psychologist. She's convinced his IQ is highly advanced." Lakhe: "He is very smart. I'll book an appointment." Me: "Thank you sweetie." I kissed his chin. Lakhe: "Another good day of parenting." Me: "Yes, you were super dad today." Lakhe: "I was." he chuckled. I showed him the picture of Chris' desk. Lakhe: "Isn't this just cute?" Me: "I know right." Lakhe: "Maybe we should move back to our own house. Spend some time alone as a three person family. Soon, the baby is gonna come and you won't have time for us anymore." Me: "I'll always have time for you but you're right. It would be nice to have some us time." Lakhe: "now that we're both officially mad at Sandile he won't visit us." Me: "Sounds like a dream. But I still work for him." Lakhe: "That's your fault." he took out his plate. Lakhe: "You can't say no." Me: "How could I? He was suffocating." Lakhe: "Uh huh. And how do you feel now?" I really did feel like I was suffocating. I didn't want to talk to Sandile at all. Or Sibuyi for that matter. I needed a minute if not a full year away from them.

After dinner, I loaded the dishes into the dishwasher. Sandile walked into the kitchen. Sands: "Hey." Me: "Hi." Sands: "I really like your ideas. There's already a positive vibe of excitement at the hotel amongst the workers. Thank you for helping me." Me: "That's why you hired me." Sands: "Sphosam...please forgive

me. I really didn't mean to hurt you or Khaya. I lost control. I was pissed off. I didn't think it through." Me: "I don't want to talk about this." This one thinks he can bribe me by calling me Sphosam. Sands: "I want to. I can't survive you not talking to me." I closed the machine finally. Sands: "I will do anything Spho. Can we just go back to being us? Talking and laughing." Me: "Its not that simple Sandile. Khaya is still in ICU. I'm not even sure if he's gonna wake up. I begged you Sandile not to kill. You promised me but in a second of anger your first instinct was murder. Kanti what had we been praying for as a family? After everything we've been through?" Sands: "What can I do to make it right?" Me: "Its gonna take me some time Sandile. Right now its best we focus on work and making a success of your hotel." Sands: "Okay." Sibulele walked in. Sibulele: "Hey princess." that word made me quake with rage. I would've struck him if I could but Komander's words lingered in my head. 'Please forgive him Spho. Sibulele grew up as an only child. When he met you, he still had to share you with your husband. This journey for you might feel like a lie but to him its genuine. Something the two of you only can bond over. This is the only moment he didn't have to share you. Don't shut him out.' And he just had to look like his damn father! I looked at Sandile. Me: "I'll be viewing Zandile's performances in the cinema. I'll let you know once I'm done so you can do the same." Sands: "We can watch toget-" Me: "I don't want either one of you near me." I walked to the mini cinema. Sibulele: "What did I do now?" Sands: "Mans, I can only deal with my own problems with Spho. I don't know what you did, but she didn't even acknowledge your presence. Whatever it is, you're in the shits." Sibulele: "I didn't do anything!" Sands: "That's what you think. I'll be in my room for a movie." Sibulele: "Ok." Sandile walked to his room. Nosi: "Hey." she walked in the kitchen. Sibulele: "Hey." Nosi: "Is everything okay?" Sibulele: "Did Spho say something about me?" Nosi: "Nope. Why?" Sibulele: "She seems mad at me. I don't know why." Nosi: "Maybe you promised her something and forgot." Sibulele: "I didn't promise her anything." Nosi: "Maybe someone told her something about you then? Have you gossiped about her recently?" Sibulele: "I don't gossip." Nosi: "You're doing it right now." Sibulele: "I mean I don't have anything bad to say about her. She's my sister. I love her. Ever since we found our father we've been drifting apa.....oh. Its him." Nosi: "Who?" she looked around. Sibulele: "He's turning her against me." Nosi: "Your father?" Sibulele: "Yes! I should've known. He's so going to regret this." Nosi: "First Sibulele, you don't know its him. Secondly, how about you make an effort with him before you judge him. Maybe being closer to him will bring you closer to Spho." Sibulele: "You don't know the monster we're dealing with here." Nosi: "No I don't know your father but I know your sister. She loves family, loves taking care of everyone. You're making it hard for her if she has to divide herself between you and your dad." Sibulele: "I hear you but I'll have to think about it." he walked to Sandile's room.

Sibu: "Mans, what movie you watching?" he walked in. Sandile was sitting on the floor holding his head. Sands: "Get out of my head. Get out of my head." Sibu: "Sandile? Mans?" Sands: "Get out of my head you stupid voice!! I have a knife! I'll kill you!!" Sibu: "Bhuti!!!!" he yelled down the passage. Sibu: "BHUTI!!!!!!" he screamed. Sandile jumped and ripped the covers off his bed. He pushed the mattress off the base. Sibu: "Sandile stop this bra you're scaring me." Sands: "He has to go. He has to get out of my head!! Sandile can't get him out." he grabbed the knife. Sibu: "No!! Sandile!!" he held his arms wrestling him. Lakhe: "What the hell are you to bickering about?" he stood at the door. Sibu: "He's trying to kill himself!!!!"

#125

Zama entered the hospital room, finding Komander sitting on the chair. Zama: "Sir." Kom: "Told you to stop calling me that." Zama: "Old habits." she sat on the other chair. Zama: "So the operation was successful and he still refuses to wake up." Kom: "He wasn't supposed to wake up. Its going to take a long time for him to be awake." Zama: "What do I do in the meanwhile?" Kom: "You wait. He's still your husband. No matter what. You only take over from him once he's dead." he held his head squinting his eyes. Zama: "What is it?" Kom: "I heard my name. Its probably nothing." Zama: "Have you seen Spho?" Kom: "Yes. She was here. We had a chat. Such a beautiful, well mannered child. I wish I could take credit for it." Zama: "We all know what kind of person Miriam was. The good that Spho is, comes from you." Kom: "There's no good in me. It was just a stroke of luck that she is like that. I'm grateful for it. Sibu on the other hand." Zama: "he's still giving you a hard time?" Kom: "My boy wants nothing to do with me. I think my father planted something in him. This can't all be natural." Zama: "What do you plan on doing?" Kom: "Not sure. I don't want to force it. I hope he'll come around eventually." Zama: "He will. You have wonderful kids. If you need a place, you're welcome at my house. There's plenty of space and privacy." Kom: "Where will you be?" Zama: "In my house." Kom: "I don't think that'll be a good idea." Zama: "Why." Kom: "If I touch you, I'll never stop. You'll never want me to. Then that means I'll have to kill Khaya. Then my life would be at risk. I can't afford that, not even with the money I have." Zama: "Does it have to result in touching? I'm just offering shelter and healthy meals. Nothing more." Kom: "You really expect me to believe that?" Zama: "Yes. Because its true." Kom: "Okay. But my answer is still no." Zama: "Very well." they kept silent and watched over Khaya. Komander held on to his head again. Kom: "Who the hell." he whispered. Kom: "Whoever is summoning my name will regret this!" he walked out the room. Zama

looked at Khaya. Zama: "The house is really lonely without you. I need you to wake up Khaya, I can't even face Spho!" the doctor walked. Doc: "Mrs Ngudla. Good day." Zama: "Why has my husband not woken up yet?" Doc: "To be honest ma'am. He is awake. Mentally. His body is yet to respond. We're not sure why he hasn't responded yet. Everything is working perfectly in the scans. There's activity in his brain. Either he's thinking or dreaming. What is most confusing is, he's supposed to have at least opened his eyes." Zama: "So what do we do now?" Doc: "We wait until he's ready." Zama: "Is it possible that he might slip back into a coma?" Doc: "Yes but highly unlikely. Not easily with this progress." Zama: "What are the odds?" Doc: "The odds being him falling badly and bumping his head, swelling his brain." Zama: "Oh...." Doc: "Not only just falling, anything interrupting the motion of his brain is very dangerous to him. Any blow from now through the next six months might just kill him." Zama: "I see. I'll make sure he's safe even put a helmet on him all day if possible." the doctor smiled and walked out. Zama: "You heard that? Komodity if you die, I'll have to take over from you and I cannot take over your gruesome work. You better wake the hell up or I'll be the truck sending you to your grave. And I'll follow you there, leaving Spho with Komander... Wake. Up."

Sandile's room. (Scene from previous chapter)

Lakhe held his brother down. Lakhe: "Did you call him?" Sibu: "He's on his way. What's wrong with him?" Lakhe: "He's heating up. Where's Luke?" Sibu: "He went to the shops with Vicky. Spho naye isn't talking to me. Your dad has disappeared." Lakhe: "Sandile? What's going on fondin? Talk!!" Sands: "Leave!" he twisted and turned trying to get loose. Lakhe: "I'm not going anywhere!" Sibu: "Maybe we should pray." Lakhe: "if I close my eyes right now Sandile will break loose and kill all of us. Go check on Siyanda and light a fire under his ass!" Sibu walked out the room. Lakhe: "Sandile, I know I said this was an act but right now you're scaring the shit out of me. At least blink and let me know you're okay." Sandile grabbed his chest trying to push him off. Lakhe: "Damn it Sandile!!" Sibu came back in with Siyanda. Siya: "What did you do?" he stood in the room with his medical bag. Lakhe: "Nothing!" Siya: "Who else is in this house?" Lakhe: "Spho, Dumi and our kids." Siya: "Myeke uSandile." Lakhe: "He is restless." Siya: "Let go of him. Get out of here. I'll call you when I need you." Lakhe let go, Sandile's body fell limp on the bed. Lakhe: "Siyand-" Siya: "I'm fixing YOUR mess so don't even try tell me how to do it. Get out. And whatever you hear, do not open this door!" Lakhe: "You don't need to yell." Siya: "I seriously don't know what Spho saw in you." Lakhe: "Don't

piss me off ke Siyanda." Siya: "Or what? You gonn throw me out?" Lakhe: "Mxim." he walked out closing the door behind him. Siya: "What in the world were you trying to do?" he took out a syringe. Siya: "Sandile. I need you to be still." Sands: "get out..." he breathed. Siya: "I can't go anywhere. You brother called me to help you get better. When I leave here, you have to be back to your old self." he injected the needle in Sandile's arm. Siya: "This is just to relax you. I'm not here to hurt you." Sands: "he's....." Siya: "Who?" Sands: "Ko..." Siya: "Don't worry about him. He doesn't have to know. Its our little secret." Sands: "wants...kill me..." Siya: "That's not true. If he wanted to kill you, You'd probably be dead. You have a barricade of strong cement protecting you. Open your mouth." he held his chin. Siya: "Now I'm going into mode. This will hurt a lot. You have to keep strong and wait until I'm finished. Okay?" Sand: "o...k..." Siya: "This will really hurt. I won't be able to hear you. Try not to break me out of the trance because I'll have to start all over again and I can only do it once a day." he went to close the windows and curtains. He locked the door and stood at the edge of the bed. Siya: "Hoc mando tibi relinquo. Fiat ire et liberum esse." Sands: "No.." Siya: "Revertere quo factum est. Hoc non tuum est. Hanc sine corpore. Haec est domus in domum tuam. Relinquere!" Sandile screamed holding on to the bed. Sands: "Leave me alone!!!!" Siya: "Malum hoc errore deciperis." Sands: "HELP!!!!!" he cried. Lakhe banged on the door from outside. Lakhe: "Open this door!!!!" Me: "What the hell is going on!" I heard the scream from the cinema. Lakhe: "Baby. We need to get him out of there. This was a huge mistake." Me: "Get who out of there? What mistake?" another piercing scream from inside. Me: "Lakhe who is inside there!" Lakhe: "Ngu Sandile noSiyanda." Me: "What are they doing!!" I tried the door. It was locked. Lakhe: "I can't explain everything right now but I think Komander put the suicide spell thing on him. He's been trying to kill himself. Siyanda came to help calm him down. I have to break open the door. Step back." Siby: "He told us to stay out and not try to open no matter what." Lakhe: "He is trying to kill my brother!" Rob: "What on earth is going on?" Me: "Komander did this?" Lakhe: "Yes Spho! What more must happen? Who must die in order for you to understand that man is a demon, he is crazy and does not care for anyone!!" (back inside the room) Sandile stared at Siyanda standing at the edge of his bed. His eyes snow white and unnmoving. He kept talking in a language he had never heard before. Another excruciating pain erupted from right up his abdomen to his chest. He screamed, once again feeling his voice bounce off the walls. The room felt like it was spinning. Siyanda was still rigid in the same spot. Talking. Hollow white eyes. Sands: "Pleeasse..." Siya: "Revertere quo factum est. Revertere quo factum est." he chanted. The familiar pain was crawling in again and finally bursting through out, his fists locked into the mattress tearing it. His body was in agonizing pain. Siyanda stopped talking.

His eyes back in their place. Siya: "You okay?" Sandile nodded. Pain radiating through every tip of him. He couldn't even open his mouth. He felt weak to the bone. All life had drained from him. Siya: "You gonn stop playing around and summoning demons?" he nodded again. Siya: "The injection will kick in, in a few minutes. It'll help you sleep. When you wake up, You'd wish you had died. You and your brother must stop playing around with things you don't understand. Call me when you need me. Okay?" he took his bag and unlocked the door. Lakhe: "What the hell did you do!!" Siya: "You really want to ask me that question in front of everyone?" Lakhe pushed him back inside the room and closed the door. Siya: "What were you thinking? You never use Komander's name for anything without his permission. This is why people die. You could have killed your brother Masilakhe." Lakhe: "How the hell was I supposed to know that." he hissed. Siya: "How about not doing it in the first place!" Lakhe: "What did you do to him? Is he going to be okay?" Siya: "He's fine. I reversed the curse. I had to sedate him, he'll be asleep for at least 24 hours. Don't disturb him. Masilakhe, your father in law is a very dangerous man, even when he doesn't want to be. His name alone carries these types of things. I'm not always going to be around to help. I didn't do this for you. Sandile may be strong but, I can't begin to explain the amount of pain he's in. Don't you ever do this again. Do you understand me?" Lakhe: "What do I tell Spho?" Siya: "Don't even think about dragging me into your lies. This has nothing to do with me. I'm leaving. And for Pete's sake, leave him alone. Don't touch him." he walked past him and opened the door. Lakhe: "Dr Kusile." Siya looked back at him. Lakhe: "Thank you." Siya walked out the door. Me: "Siyanda." he looked at me. Me: "What happened?" Siya: "You should ask your husband." he walked out the house. I walked into the room. You could have sworn a hurricane swept through here. Sandile was on his bed, not moving. Me: "Oh my God." I rushed over to his side. Me: "Is he" Lakhe: "Siya says he's okay. He'll be fine." I felt for a pulse. Me: "Lakhe..." I didn't know how to tell him. Lakhe: "What?" Me: "I don't think he's...." Lakhe: "That's impossible. Siyanda said he'd be fine." Me: "There's..... no pulse." he felt the wrist, then his neck. Lakhe: "No..." he checked his heart. Everything was still. Lakhe: "Tata!!!" Robert came in and checked. Lakhe stormed out the room. Rob: "Spho.....I need you to call an ambulance." he sobbed. Rob: "My son is dead."

#126

A deafening silence had swept over the house. I sat on the floor next to the bed. Robert was inconsolable on the other side. I don't know where Lakhe had gone. Dumi had called an ambulance and we were waiting in torture. I

touched Sandile's hand and it felt like ice. My mind went into a turmoil. He couldn't be gone, could he? Not after the last thing I said to him. Lakhe came in the room. Lakhe: "I can't find Siyanda anywhere." he muttered. Lakhe: "He just disappeared." Rob: "What did he do to my son!!!" he cried. Rob: "WHY!!! What did he do!!!!" Lakhe: "Baby...come. You shouldn't be here." Me: "Why would Siyanda kill him?" Lakhe: "Spho if I could find Siya, I would know but he just walked out of here and vanished!" Dumisani: "The coroner is here." a tall man walked in the room with his partner and checked Sandile. I got up from the floor with a sign of hope. This was a medical professional, he knew what he was doing. Coroner: "When did you find him like this?" Lakhe: "about 15 to 20 minutes ago." Coroner: "Well....I'm sorry to let you know that, he indeed is dead. Probably for the past half hour or more." I broke down right then and there. Lakhe held me in his arms. How could this have happened? Coroner: "We need to move the body before it sets." They brought a gurney in and I walked out of there. Sandile was gone. Never to return again. Never to walk in on me in the kitchen and talk nonsense. I would never see his smile ever again. How could God have done this to me now? I knelt next to my bed and let out a heart wrenching sob. How was I going to tell his mother? My own heart was not in its place. All I felt was hatred for Komander. Him and his minion, Siya. Lakhe: "Baby." he knelt next to me. Lakhe: "There's something I need to tell you and it will make you hate me. I just can't keep it from you. Its eating me inside. I'm the one that's guilty for" he breathed in. Lakhe: "I was vindictive. I was trying to keep Komander out of our lives but I didn't realize Komander is also in Siya and Khaya and probably half this country." he looked down at his hands. Lakhe: "I convinced Sandile to fake possession symptoms. We wanted to pretend that Komander did it and he was a danger to our family, we didn't know the repercussions of our actions would actually cause this to really happen." Me: "Are you happy now that You've killed your brother?" Lakhe: "How can you ask me that Spho? I'm torn apart." Me: "You must be happy. You've proved that Komander is dangerous by killing Sandile. Congratulations Lakhe." I got up from the floor. Lakhe: "Baby please don't do this to me right now." Me: "When should I do it? I can't think of a better time to be honest. Or should we schedule an appointment for next week?." I wore my shoes. Lakhe: "Spho you can't leave me. Not now ndinje can you please have sympathy?" Me: "Sympathy is something you should have had before getting your brother involved. And why Sandile? Why couldn't you do it? Successful Masilakhe Sobz can't afford to die right?" I wore my jacket. Lakhe: "Baby please." Me: "Please what? What do you want me to do?" Lakhe: "Stay." I took my keys. Me: "That's the last thing I am going to do. I need to go find umama kaSandile and let her know what You've done." Lakhe: "Spho my mother would never forgive me." Me:

"When you plan an event don't you write out the risks involved as well? This you should have prepared for-" Lakhe: "you're my wife Spho. I'm counting on you. I just lost a brother and You're the only person I have left. Please. Please don't turn your back on me too. I beg of you." a tear rolled down his face, he clenched his jaws to prevent himself from crying anymore. Me: "I have to find her and tell her to come home. No mother should hear over the phone or the next morning when they return that her son is dead. I won't mention your involvement." Lakhe: "Are you going to come back?" Me: "I'll think about it." I walked out the room and out of the house. Inside my car, I had to compose myself before driving out. The last thing I needed was another accident. I slowly drove to Summerstrand, the Radisson Blu hotel. Hopefully Stella was still at Tabu having dinner. After parking my car at the hotel parking, I made my way up to the posh restaurant and looked around. I spotted them sitting at a cozy corner, giggling and having a visibly wonderful time. I contemplated on whether I should leave them alone and let her enjoy the evening before hearing the most devastating news a parent could ever imagine or just go ahead and pull her aside. I for one, being an expecting mom and new mom to Chris, would want someone to tell me immediately if something happened to them. A man's company would have to wait even if it is their father. Speaking of him, how could he have done this? WHY. There was no need for them to prove to me how dangerous Komander is, I already know that! Maybe I should've pretended to hate him? Would that have eased their minds. "Excuse me ma'am, can I get you a table?" a waiter asked. Me: "No. I'm looking for my mom. There she is." I walked over to their table. Stella: "Spho darling!! Come, sit." my heart was mush. I wanted to break down right there. Stella: "This is my daughter in law, Spho. Spho, this is Vuyani." Me: "Hi." Vuyani just stared at me, clearly annoyed by my presence. Stella: "You look so devastated darling, what's wrong? Is it Lakhe? I told you to ignore him. He's a big bully. I don't know why you let him get to you. What you saw in my son beats me to death and wakes me up with a glass of water. So why are you here?" Me: "Mama, something happened at home. Tata needs you." I added that last bit to sting this little python sitting here because his stare is pissing me off. Stella: "What's wrong with him?" Me: "We need you to go home ma. Something happened. I can't tell you here." Stella: "Oh dear. Is it serious?" Me: "Yes." she grabbed her clutch. Stella: "Sweetie pie, I'll call you." she placed a couple of 100 Rand notes on the table. Stella: "Let's go Spho." we headed out the restaurant. In our separate cars, she sped off to the direction of home. I personally didn't want to be there when she heard this. So my drive was slowly to my parents house. There was a possibility, my dad would never wake up from his coma. Which basically means we'll have to face the cold

hard truth soon. Two people I love, gone in days. I must have made God really angry this time.

After parking my car, I went to the front door, entering after two knocks. My mother was in her kitchen cooking supper. Zama: "Hi Spho." I just went to hug her unable to control my emotions any longer. Zama: "Oh honey. Your dad will be fine. Soon he will wake up and come back home. You need to believe that." Me: "I want to ma." Zama: "Then what's wrong?" Me: "Sandile." Zama: "The one who tried to kill your father? What about him?" Me: "He's dead mama.." Zama: "No!!" Me: "Its not even been an hour." Zama: "Spho, I'm so sorry." her hug held me tighter. Zama: "I know how much Sandile meant to you. I'm really sorry my angel. How are his parents? Stella must be distraught." Me: "I can't face them." she switched off the stove. Zama: "What happened to him?" Me: "I don't know mama. Siyanda was the last person to see him alive." Zama: "Which Siyanda? Dr Kusile?" Me: "Yes." we sat down on the couch. Zama: "Isn't Siyanda in East London?" Me: "What?" Zama: "I'm not sure baby, I'll have to ask Lorna but the last time I checked, he had left for East London." Me: "Then who was in my house mama? I saw him with my own eyes!" Zama: "He probably came back this morning. East London isn't another country. I just thought he would be that side for a while." I hugged a pillow and just stared at the rug on the floor. Zama: "Spho, I love you." Me: "I know. Why didn't you tell me mama? You were the best parents any child could have asked for. Why did you hide that you were working for Komander?" Zama: "It was for safety reasons mntanam. We couldn't put your life in danger." Me: "How did this happen? How did you end up working for him." Zama: "Now is not the right time Sp-" Me: "Mama talk to me please." Zama: "Fine." she adjusted herself in her seat. Zama: "I was young when I'd met him. I was 19, doing my first year in university. I could not stop staring at him. He noticed obviously and came over to ask me out. It was pure torture." Me: "Why would it be torture?" Zama: "I'd fallen deeply in love with him and I didn't even know who he was. I knew by then that he was probably dangerous." Me: "Yet you still went on to date him?" Zama: "No. Khaya showed up for that date. I was disappointed of course. It wasn't really what I wanted and neither of us enjoyed ourselves. After a few weeks, I'm struggling with my tuition fees and Komander offers a helping hand. On one condition." Me: "You took the bait?" Zama: "It wasn't easy. Not for me at least. The contract said that he would take care of everything school related. Then of course my own maintenance, toiletries, clothing, hair, just about everything. After I graduate, I would have a well paying job, a big house and luxury car waiting for me. Who wouldn't have jumped at that offer? The only condition, was that I marry

Khaya." Me: "Were you happy with that condition, to all these benefits you get a man as well. Bonus." Zama: "No I wasn't. I hated him. He just wasn't as captivating. The problem is, I had to make means to survive. I could barely afford anything let alone staying in school. There was no easy way out. I'd finish school, while married and focus on my job. Anything related to the so called husband will be attended to after." Me: "So you signed the contract." Zama: "Binding my entire life for as long as I live. I never realized it would be forever." she looked at her hands. Zama: "For the first two years Khaya and I didn't even touch. We slept in different rooms. We were only married on paper. This obviously didn't sit well with Kom- can we stop calling him that? I'm not used to it." Me: "We can call him by his nickname. Tyrone." Zama: "Yeah. It didn't sit well with Tyrone. He wanted us to be in love. So he added another condition to the contract, a child." Me: "This was before me you adopted me?" Zama: "Yes." Me: "What did you say to that? Obviously you'd have to sleep with a man you didn't like to please the one you did. How did that make you feel?" Zama: "Like a fool. I tried to leave and I couldn't. He promised me everlasting pain if I did. I felt like I was a piece of meat having being auctioned off." Me: "Then what happened?" Zama: "I drank. It was just after my final exams of my final year. I went into an alcoholic rage. I thought perhaps if I were drunk, Khaya would sleep with me and I wouldn't feel it and I'd get pregnant. Simple." Me: "He couldn't have slept with you drunk. That would be rape." she smiled. Zama: "You know your father too well. He didn't touch me. If anything, this was the time he took care of me. Got me to my bed, covered me up, made me breakfast. He hated the condition as much as I did or so I thought. One day we got to talk. I remember I had a hangover and he made a joke about how ugly I looked. We both expressed how uncomfortable the situation was and he assured me we didn't have to make a baby. It didn't have to be physical. He made breakfast, making sure I ate. Then left for work. He called through out the day checking on me then I started feeling guilty. Even if I didn't like him, he was my husband. Having to be married and living with your spouse and still being unable to hold her was probably torture of the worst kind. So....I made him dinner. He came home and we ate. I gave him the permission to impregnate me. There was no point in tiptoeing the situation. We were married by law, so why not?" Me: "He still said no?" Zama: "No, he was delighted. I didn't realize that he wanted to. I thought he was depressed that we had to kanti all along what upset him was me declining." Me: "And then?" Zama: "We didn't even have to try that long when I fell pregnant for him. I found out a few weeks before my graduation that I was pregnant. With a girl." Me: "You were probably happy." Zama: "Over the moon. This is the time where I actually fell for him. I was sharing a life with him. We were so excited. Even Tyrone was glad." Me: "Glad? Not

happy?" Zama: "Tyrone is never happy. So glad is more his style." Me: "Okay. Then what happened." Zama: "Khaya and I attended my graduation. After the ceremony, we went to celebrate over dinner with friends. Then it was time to go home. On our way home....Khaya swerved a stray animal on the road, within a second the car flipped over multiple times." I was numb. Zama: "I miscarried the baby." images flooded my mind from my own accident that took my baby's life. My eyes welled up with tears. Me: "why didn't you tell me?" Zama: "I didn't want to hurt your feelings, my love. You needed to heal properly and not worry about me." Me: "But mama I denied you access to me at that hospital. I didn't treat you like my mother. Why did you stay?" Zama: "You were confused Spho. It doesn't matter now." Me: "I feel so horrible." Zama: "You shouldn't mntanam. Its the past." It was the past to her but to me I still felt terrible. Zama: "After our accident, Khaya and I went to therapy to deal with the loss. Also found out at the hospital, I wouldn't be able to have more children. It was a traumatic experience for us both. Khaya was there for me every step of the way. He put aside his feelings and looked after me. The most hurtful part is that, Tyrone had just had you. He didn't even care about my own little girl. Spho you were the love of his life, nothing could deviate his attention from you. I hated Miriam. I hated that he chose her to bear his kids and not me instead. No matter what happened, I knew there was no getting to Tyrone. Not after his experience with you. I gave up entirely, falling back on Khaya who was dealing with his own problems but welcomed me with warm arms." Me: "Did he know how you felt about Tyrone?" Zama: "Yes he knew. He knew everything." Me: "So after everything, did Tyrone come and apologize?" Zama: "No. We also vowed never to speak of it ever again." Me: "Did you know Miriam was a prostitute?" Zama: "Yes but she only belonged to Tyrone and Khaya." Me: "What?" Zama: "She was kept toI can't even say it. But she was a whore for both of them. I'm sorry to say that about your mom." The look in her eyes did not look sorry. Me: "So wait, Miriam slept with two men at the same time?" Zama: "Yes. But only one impregnated her both times. Khaya didn't want to because he was married to me. He used protection." Me: "You let him sleep with another woman?" Zama: "I didn't care what he did as long as he didn't touch me. But after those two years, when we finally did touch. I didn't want him anywhere else and he in turn made himself available only for me. Well, so he tells me." I had heard enough. Everything about this was making me dizzy and I knew I was becoming less interested when my attention started drifting to Sandile. The Sobukwe family. What they must be going through. I had to get there. A familiar scent tickled my nose. Very calming. Me: "I should get back home ma." I opened my eyes. Komander was standing by the lounge entrance. When the hell did he get in? Or was he here all this time? Was my mother lying to me to keep face with

this criminal? Me: "I'm leaving." Kom: "Spho..." Me: "Bye ma-" Kom: "Sphosam." I stopped dead in my tracks. Me: "What the fuck did you just say?" Zama: "Spho!!" Me: "What did you call me?" Kom: "Sphosam." I could feel my ears ringing with anger. Me: "Where did you hear that?" Kom: "You've always been my-" Me: "You killed him, didn't you?" he kept quiet. Me: "Didn't you!!!" Kom: "I didn't kill anyone-" Me: "You Are A Liar. A Monster and I NEVER want to see your face EVER again! You stay away from my family Komander or I swear, you'll lose your place in hell." I spat. Me: "And don't you ever call me Sphosam. You're dead to me."

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Komander looked at Zama, then at the door Spho walked out of then back at Zama. Kom: "What the hell? What did I do now?" Zama: "Sandile has passed away." Kom: "What does it have to do with me? Am I gonna be blamed for everyone's death now? I wasn't even there!!" Zama: "She says it hasn't even been an hour, well probably an hour now but he just died. She doesn't want to tell me how." Kom: "So why was I being yelled at?" Zama: "I'm really not sure. What did you do?" Kom: "Nothing! We were talking in hospital and everything was fine, she even invited me for supper, I told her to solve things with San.....Oh No." Zama: "What?" Kom: "Shit. I'm not entirely sure but I have a hunch. We need to get going. NOW." he walked to his car, Zama locked the house and climbed in after him in the back seat. Kom: "Drive." he commanded the chauffeur. The car went into full force down the road. Zama informed him where to. Then looked at Komander. He looked stressed staring out at the road, his elbow on the window and fist on his chin. Her heart fluttered. Why did he have to be like this? Kom: "Stay away from me." Zama: "What are you thinking?" Kom: "Don't try to understand me Zama." Zama: "I can't. You know how much I care about you." Kom: "he's back." Zama: "Your father?" Kom: "That thing is not my father." Zama: "What are you going to do?" Kom: "You knew he was here, didn't you?" Zama: "How could I have known that?" Kom: "Why are my thoughts blocked Zama?!" Zama: "I didn't know anything." Kom: "You're lying to me." he looked at her. She shuddered. Kom: "Look at me." she refused to. Kom: "Zama." her ears perked up. Kom: "Look at me." Zama: "I can't." Kom: "Wow." he returned to his previous pose. Zama: "Please don't shut me out." he didn't respond. Zama: "Are you going to ignore me and just look out there?" Kom: "These houses and cars aren't lying to me." Zama: "I'm not lying. I swear." Kom: "Then why can't you look me in the eye?" she kept quiet. Kom: "Mxim." She looked at him. He looked back at her. Their gaze held for a while, memories swapping back and forth. Thoughts, feelings,

obstacles. She looked down at her hands. Kom: "I'm sorry it had to be like this." he held her hand. Kom: "Does this happen every time? You really feel this strongly about someone so cruel?" she took back her hand. Kom: "Talk to me." Zama: "I don't want to talk. It doesn't matter. You married me off to your best friend because I wasn't good enough for you." Kom: "I can't love you like he does. I would have hurt you." Zama: "Obviously didn't hurt Miriam so I'm the one too damaged to love." Kom: "This is about being my children's mother?" she looked out the window. Zama: "I told you I don't want to talk." Kom: "I didn't love her. She didn't mean anything to me. You know that. You saw where she was kept. You saw her life. Why would you want that? Being treated less of a human?" Zama: "She still got to touch you. And bore your children." Kom: "I never intended to make her pregnant. It just happened. I'm sorry." she held back her thoughts and stared blankly out the window. Kom: "Now why would you do that? I'm trying to talk to you." Zama: "I said I don't want to talk." Kom: "I know it hurts loving someone like me. But it would hurt ten fold if I were yours to keep." Zama: "Then why didn't you let me decide for myself!!" Kom: "You would've chosen to die for me, I couldn't let that happen. What I did is in the best interest for you and our child." Zama: "You mean Miriam's child." Kom: "You are Spho's mother regardless of who gave birth to her. She is more of you than she is of her biological mother. But I need to know one thing." Zama: "Yes, I knew he was here." Kom: "Why didn't you tell me?" Zama: "You know he would have sent for me if I did." Kom: "So you don't trust that I can protect you." Zama: "Not from your father, NO!! He does not hesitate Komander. Seeing him is....." a tear rolled down her cheek. Kom: "I'm sorry." the car arrived at Lakhe's house, parking by the gate. Zama: "Can you summon your powers to do something useful like opening the gate?" Kom: "Now you're just being spiteful." Zama: "Spho will never let us in." Kom: "Maybe somebody else will. Who's that?" they looked at the front door. Zama: "Luke." Kom: "So why is an old white man living with my kids?" Zama: "He helped Babalo from getting killed in the hospital and he helped Sibulo with his demon possession." Kom: "What is he, some type of God?" he chuckled. Zama: "He works With God. Are you sure you'll be able to stand being in the same space as him?" Kom: "My only concern is Spho." the gate opened. The car drove in and parked. Kom: "He looks vaguely familiar." Zama: "He was in the news a few years ago for burning his house and family to death." Kom: "And I'm the evil one?" he got out the car walking to the door of the house.

I had a severe headache but everyone had to eat something since they were all in a daze. Stella was given a sedative by Robert to sleep since she couldn't stop crying. I brought warm milk to the lounge for Chris, Lulo and

Zimi. My poor kids didn't even know what was going on. Luke: "Spho, you have a visitor." I looked up and saw him. I started boiling immediately. Everyone in the house stared at him too. Probably afraid to speak because of the death spell. I just wanted to slap him. Kom: "So I finally find out that my powers don't work once I've hurt you." I stood up and stared at him with my hands on my hips. Kom: "I'm not here to apologize because I really didn't do anything wrong. I just need to know what happened. Was Sandile summoning my name?" If he thinks I'm going to clue him in, he must be high. Kom: "Lakhe, help me out here. Your brother's life really is in danger now. If I don't help him, you will bury air. You need to tell me what happened and where his body is." Lakhe: "Yes. He was. Uhm....he started hearing and seeing things then tried to kill himself. So I called Siyanda to help." Kom: "Siyanda?" he asked Zama. Zama: "Komfort." Kom: "Oh! Now I can connect the dots. Where's Sandile's body?" Lakhe: "He's sent to the mortuary. What's going on?" Kom: "It wasn't me. And it wasn't Siyanda. You have to believe me for this to work." Lakhe: "I believe you." Kom: "We need to get his body out of there and back here." Me: "You want to bring a dead body into my house where there's my kids?" Kom: "What happened to Miriam was not an accident. It is supposed to happen to Sandile too." Me: "That's not a question I asked." Kom: "Sandile is not fully dead. Yet. He seems dead to everyone else. My father uses this moment to steal souls. The body mysteriously disappears during the night and never found again. I need to find him before he does. He needs to be awake before midnight." Me: "Okay." Kom: "Please trust me." Me: "Its not like I have a choice." Kom: "Fine. Lakhe, let's go." Lakhe: "erh....Sibu-" Kom: "I'm taking you. We don't have much time." he marched out the house. Lakhe followed him out and they drove to the mortuary. I looked at my mother. Zama: "I'm sorry Spho." Me: "If he can help...I don't see why you should be sorry. My question is why did his father appear in my house without permission and do this. Is he some kind of shape shifter? How disgusting." Chris: "Mommy what's a shape shifter?" Me: "Something you shouldn't worry about right now sweetie. Eat your biscuit." Rob: "Why should we trust him? Is he really going to bring me back my son?" Zama: "Yes he will. You need to believe this." Luke: "Maybe we should pra-" Zama: "No. You need to wait until Tyrone is back otherwise you'll be blocking him." we all waited quietly for almost 3 hours. It was dark outside already. I just put Chris, Lulo and Zimi down for their bedtime after an eventful bath. All 3 of them were fast asleep. I made sure the windows were locked and said a short prayer. Me: "Dear Father Almighty, I bring to you Your young children this evening. May you protect them during their peaceful sleep and Your angels guard them throughout the night. Let no evil come anywhere near them in Jesus' name, Amen." I dimmed the light and walked out the door. Lakhe and Tyrone carried the body in a gurney

covered with the white sheet. Sibú: "What in the world do you think you're doing!" Kom: "I need an empty space, Lakhe." Lakhe: "Luke Can we use your station?" Luke: "By all means. Come this way." they followed him down the second passage. Sibú: "Spho how do you allow this? They're about to perform an exorcism in Your house with children sleeping inside it." Me: "Its not an exorcism. Sibú this is to help Sandile. We have to at least try." Sibú: "I know but what if.....what if he nudges the situation along." he whispered. Sibú: "Sandile tried to kill him and injured his right hand man. Why would he want to help him Spho?" Me: "Then you'll have to go there and make sure." Sibú: "He tried to kill me once." Really? I'm so not doing this right now. Me: "For Sands." Sibú: "Fine." he followed down the passage.

It was a quarter to midnight. Komander has set up his candles. Lakhe and Sibú stood in a far corner. Luke had left the room already. Kom: "You really don't have to be afraid of me. I'm not a monster." Lakhe: "How do you wake people from the dead." Kom: "Buza kulo undibalekayo." Lakhe gasped. Lakhe: "He speaks Xhosa?" he asked Sibú. Sibú: "First time I hear it." Kom: "I speak everything. Ask Sibú your question. He knows me more than anyone else." Lakhe: "Well?" he looked at his brother in law. Sibú: "How you gonn stand there and lie? I don't know you." Kom: "I don't lie." he walked around the gurney on the floor. Kom: "I told Spho the truth. She knows you knew who I was. She's not that impressed." Sibú: "You're trying to turn me against my sister." Kom: "You're doing a great job doing that yourself." he stopped and looked at Sandile's face. Kom: "By the way your grandpa is a real piece of work. My real job is putting out his fires." he squatted down and touched Sandile's chest. Sibú: "Why do you hate each other so much?" Kom: "I don't hate him. And he can't love. Just the way he's built." Sibú: "But you're like him." Kom: "Only because I don't how to be like anyone else." Lakhe: "You guys look the same?" Kom: "Deadly alike. But he smiles more." Lakhe: "And he can change into whoever he wants?" Kom: "No. He can only change to people he has a link to. Like your brother in law." Lakhe looked at Sibú perplexed. Lakhe: "What the fuck? How the hell am I supposed to know who you are now!!" Kom: "Can we please refrain from profanity. That's the original Sibú, the shifter doesn't last long. Which is why Siyanda vanished." he stood up again. Lakhe: "How are you linked?" he asked Sibú. Sibú: "Why don't you ask your new best friend?" Kom: "My boy, I'm done nursing your little attitude now. You've about had the last of my patience. I did everything in my power to save you! I even risked my own life for you! Do you know how much sacrifices I made to make sure you lived this long! And here I am still making your life much more bearable than mine ever was!! Boy if you don't get rid of that

smart mouth." the room was silent. Komander looked back at Sandile. Kom: "What was he trying to do to you?" he whispered at him then stopped, looking up at Lakhe. Kom: "Come here." Lakhe: "I'll be fine over here." Kom: "Come. Here." Lakhe took a hesitant step forward followed by another one until he stood about a meter away. Kom: "Talk." Lakhe: "About what?" Kom: "You have something on your mind and I want you to spit it out." Lakhe: "I just....I wanted to say sorry for the misjudgment. I really thought you were as bad as they write about you in the papers." Kom: "They weren't lying. I am as bad. I can choose not to be when I'm in the mood." Lakhe: "Oh." Kom: "Well?" Lakhe: "I know you have better things to do. I'm sorry for our mistake. Summoning you was meant to be pretense to sway Sphe's decision. I wanted to make her hate you because I didn't want you in our lives." Kom: "You've succeeded." Lakhe: "No I haven't. She hates me instead. Sphe has a very big, generous, kind and golden heart. No matter how bad you are, you have a place in it. I'm convinced she'd even forgive your dad and invite him over for a braai. She's a great cook by the way. Me on the other hand, won't be so lucky. Sandile is like her first baby. I was an idiot and still am." Kom: "I'm glad I didn't have to say it." he looked at Siby. Kom: "How long are you planning on being mad at me wena?" Siby looked away from him. Kom: "he used to do that when he was 3. Its adorable. I'll bribe him with chocolate wafers later." he sat down. Lakhe: "Can I ask why you're working against your father when you're exactly like him?" Kom: "We might be the same but I love my kids. I would never trade their happiness for anything. Not even their best friends souls." Lakhe pulled a chair. Kom: "Don't even try and think you're going to analyze me." Lakhe: "You had a best friend your father killed?" Kom: "We're not talking about this and I've never had friends anyway." Lakhe: "So you grew up alone. How did you grow up to be.....well, what you are. Nobody knows about the first K, and everybody knows but still doesn't really know you. If I'm the first to say it, you're a master at your job. I honestly don't know how you do it. People fear your name. They've never seen your face. Then when they do its like omg." Kom: "Keep quiet. Its almost time." he smiled, checking Sandile's temperature again. Kom: "Its hard, by the way. The only time I feel warmth is when I see Lele and Popy's faces." Lakhe: "Lele? Ha! I'm so calling him that." Kom: "he hates that name." he looked at Siby. Kom: "Sandile will be asking for you, why are you standing there alone as though you have no dad?" Siby: "I don't have a dad." Kom: "Fine then. Move back Lakhe." Lakhe obeyed. Komander held Sandile's chest, closing his eyes. The candles lost their fire as a gust of wind swirled around. Darkness loomed around them. Lakhe stared at a pair of white eyes open in the dark where Komander was seated. He was humming. Kom: "Idcirco praecipio tibi ut excitare. In aura spiritus, et incipit vivere." he hissed. A gasp of air filled the room.....

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Komander switched on the lights. Lakhe and Sibü stood in the corner far away. Kom: "Really. It wasn't even two minutes." Lakhe: "Your eyes turned white." Sandile shifted in his spot. Kom: "Now he's sleeping." Lakhe: "Can I wake him?" Kom: "Wait for it." Sandile woke up and looked around. His eyes darting from Komander to Lakhe. Kom: "Nobody likes sleeping while they're cold. My work here is done. He needs to stay very hydrated for the next few days." he collected his candles. Lakhe: "Hey mans. Uvuka ek'feni fondin. Look at you." Sands: "Are you high?" he yawned. Kom: "He does not remember a thing." Sands: "Why was I dreaming about you?" Kom: "It was not me, I cannot possibly explain this again." Sands: "I'm not stupid, I saw you in my dream pulling me to some circle with your friends." Lakhe: "Mans, he saved your life. Its his dad that did this to you, not him." Sands: "Why would his dad look like his identical twin?" Lakhe: "You need rest. We'll talk about this in the morning. Can you walk?" Sands: "No Lakhe, I can't. The fuck it look like? And why am I naked?" Sibü: "Here's a towel." Sands: "Yall better explain what the fuck is going on." Komander headed for the door. Lakhe: "Thank you Mr.....uhm, I really don't know what to call you." Kom: "You already nicknamed me Tyrone." Lakhe: "oh yeah...well, this was amazing. I can't begin to express how grateful I am you brought my brother back. How can I ever repay you?" Kom: "Just take care of my son and daughter." Lakhe: "Definitely. Without a doubt...uhm, well, you're going to be a grand dad. It would be cool if you stuck around." Kom: "That won't be such a good idea. I've been here too long. That's probably how my father tracked me down. You have to protect Spho at all costs. That baby means more to our bloodline than any other life that ever existed." he moved closer to him. Kom: "Protect it with all you have." Lakhe: "But....your father, what if he finds out-" Kom: "Then you make sure he doesn't." Sibü scoffed. Kom: "Lele knows how to avoid him." Sibü: "Don't involve me in your shenanigans." Kom: "Your grandfather is using you to hate me. Love is a sign of weakness according to him. Unfortunately for him, you can use what he taught you to your advantage. You can feel him when he's coming. Don't ignore the feeling. Do not give in, stay cold and direct." Sibü: "This is YOUR job. You can't keep running away from an old man, he's your dad! You're supposed to protect your kids too! Why must I now do your job?" Kom: "So you don't want me to leave?" Sibü: "I don't care what you do! Leave me out of it." he stormed out. Lakhe: "He doesn't want you to leave." Kom: "I have to. He probably has to need me to finally accept me. Its best I just go." Lakhe: "And what happens when we need you? How will we find you?" Kom: "I have a cell phone. Its not 1922." Lakhe: "Of course." Sandile coughed.

Sands: "When yall done with your bromance, can one of you help me up."
Kom: "Still as spicy as ever. I have to go. Luke wants his room back." Lakhe:
"Okay. Masambe mfo." he helped Sandile up.

I was waiting in the lounge quietly. Komander walked out the passage. Everyone looked up at him. Kom: "He's okay." Rob: "Okay as in alive?" Kom: "Yes. Okay as in alive." Robert jumped up, squealing, Komander stepped back. Kom: "Please don't touch me. Its okay." Rob: "Thank you so much!" Kom: "Its nothing really." he looked at me. Me: "You're expecting another thank you now?" Kom: "No. I just want to say I'm sorry." Me: "I thought you were not here to apologize." Kom: "I'm only apologizing for coming into your life and being a disruption. If I just stayed away, none of this would have happened. I'm sorry that my bad luck affected you and your family." Well, goodbye to trying to stay angry. I felt sorry for him now. Me: "You're not bad luck nor are you a disruption. You didn't intentionally cause all of this and thank you for helping Sandile." Kom: "Nothing brings me greater delight. I should get going." Me: "Okay." he walked out with umama. I looked at them, strolling to his car. They had a vibe I didn't like. I stood by the door with my hands on my hips. Me: "You're really going to drive this late at night?" Zama: "Its okay hone-" Me: "No Mama." Kom: "Is she always this strict?" Zama: "Yes." Me: "I can hear you." Kom: "We have a sober and well rested driver." Me: "I wonder how you getting out that gate." I walked back in the house in time to see Lakhe holding Sandile up. Robert was beyond ecstatic. He hugged him tight. My eyes were a little watery. I wanted to hug him and smack him too for scaring me like that but I had to give his parents a chance. I needed to let Stella know what was going on. Now I wish I never disturbed her in the first place, but in a way it worked out perfectly because I was too afraid to come home and hear her cry, instead I went to my mom's place. There I saw Komander whom I yelled at. Then came here. If he hadn't been there or felt guilty Sandile's body would've vanished and his soul taken. Sibulele: "You can't seriously be this nice. I refuse to believe it. He bewitched you." Me: "Sibu, I'm 7 months pregnant. Tired. Emotional. And hungry. I can only deal with one problem per week." Sibulele: "Then let him out the house. Make him leave." Me: "I'm not letting them drive after midnight." Sibulele: "Okay, So your dad who has never experienced a family before, who's only life method is to kill, is now going to sleep in a house full of innocent souls. Basically a dream come true for him. You might as well have invited an anaconda in the house." Me: "Why do you hate him?" Sibulele: "Who doesn't hate him? Who!" Me: "Sibulele I can't do this with you right now. Okay?" he stared at me with glossy eyes. God please. Me: "He's never going to take your place in my heart. No one ever will. I'll always

have time for you. He won't even be here long. Its just a few hours and that's it. Please?" he nodded. Me: "Then tomorrow, you and I are going somewhere and leaving them all behind. We haven't had a trip together." Sibu: "Fine." Me: "Let me wake Mam'Stella and then fix the rooms." Sibu: "I'll fix the rooms with Vicky." he walked away. Why does everyone always have to make me feel bad about being nice? Its not like they didn't know how I am. Stella was fast asleep in her bed. I wonder if its best to let her sleep or wake her. Maybe its best she slept till morning. Sandile was also not going to be awake for long anyway. I walked out the room, back to the lounge. Me: "Didn't you guys say, you had a driver?" Kom: "Yes." Me: "Well....where is he?" Kom: "He'll sleep in the car. He doesn't mind.." Me: "With a house this big? Absolutely not." Kom: "Trust me, he prefers being in the car." Me: "Not until he hears about a bed and blanket." Zama: "Spho...let it be." Me: "Fine, but get him a blanket. I'll warm up a plate." I went to the kitchen. Zama: "You'll get used to it." Kom: "I don't think I can." Zama: "Spho loves taking care of people. Its a miracle how she didn't become a doctor like her d...I mean like Khaya." Kom: "Khaya is her dad, he raised her. Its okay." I came back with a warm plate. Me: "I remember asking for a blanket?" Lakhe: "I'll get it." Me: "Ina mama." I gave her the plate. Me: "This plate is for the driver, give it to Lakhe when he takes the blanket to him. Vicky will show you your room, Bhuti, Lakhe will show you yours." I went to the lounge. Me: "Tata, its time for bed." Rob: "Yes ma'am." Me: "I'll wake mama Stella in the morning, someone will need to explain to her thoroughly and patiently what happened. We don't need her to have a heart attack when she wakes up to see her son alive and well." Rob: "I agree." Me: "Come Sandile. Time for bed sir. Why are you always nude?" Sands: "Its what I do." Kom: "Stop...." everyone in the house froze to position. Me: "What is it?" I whispered. Kom: "The incident happened inside the house?" Me: "Yes." Kom: "Where?" Me: "In his room." Kom: "Then its still there. He can't sleep in that room. I need to be in it." Lakhe: "He'll sleep in mine. I have an air mattress he'll use." Sibu: "Uhm.....I don't think its only in the room...." Kom: "You can see him?" Sibu nodded. Sands: "Can someone please tell me what the fuck's going on before I wet myself?" Kom: "Lakhe, put down the blanket. Nobody goes outside." he stood by the door and whistled. His driver opened the car door, stepping out. He stood beside the car like a robot. Lol. I watched him walk up to his boss. They whispered back and forth to each other then Komander looked back at us. Kom: "This is Kompany. My security and driver. He'll be taking care of the house inside." Me: "By himself?" Kom: "He's very able." Me: "Is he able to take off his mask?" Kom: "No." he closed the door. Kom: "My father is a very dangerous entity that stops at nothing. He is very skilled at manipulation. At times during the night, you'll be feeling very hot. Almost like in hell, don't you dare open the window. Sibulele can channel his

grandpa's energy. He is the only one that can sense when he's near. So my son, you won't be able to sleep tonight." Sibú: "I wasn't planning to." Kom: "Lakhe, all the kids, and the weaker links in your room. I trust that its big enough." Sands: "Hehake Bhut Kom'de La Kom. Who are the weaker links now? Are you talking about me?" Kom: "Yes I'm talking about you. The weaker links are the dude in the wheelchair, Spho because she's pregnant, Vicky and Zama. Robert, you'll have to protect your wife. Sleep right next to her. Don't even go pee." Dumí: "I don't have a name now, I'm the dude in the wheelchair?" Komander looked at his son. Kom: "Sibú?" Sibú: "he's coming." Sands: "We're all gonna die?!" Komander looked at Kompany and instructed him. Kom: "Lakhe, the kids." Masilakhe walked to the room where the kids were sleeping collecting them with his wife. Me: "Where's Luke?" Lakhe: "I'll find him. Stay here." he checked the windows and sliding door were locked then walked out. I pumped up the mattress then put a fitted sheet on it plus two blankets. Sandile limped in carrying a bottle of 2l still water and snacks. Sands: "Spho." Me: "Hey." he dropped his items and hugged me. Sands: "Thank you so much for saving me." Me: "It wasn't me. But you're welcome." Sands: "My body is in so much pain. Do you have pain killers?" Me: "Unfortunately not. We can't have you sedated at this point." Sands: "But it hurts." Me: "I know sweetie." he got into bed with his packet of chips. Lakhe was so gonna freak out. Lmao. I carried on with two more mattresses for my mom and Vicky. Meanwhile in the lounge, Komander was standing beside Sibú. Kompany roaming about. Kom: "Is he close?" Sibú: "Yes....its getting blurry." Kom: "You're scared. You can't be scared. Look him in the eye." Sibú: "I can't. He's blocking me-" Kom: "Sibulele, you have to try!!" Sibú: "Then you do it! I didn't ask for this!" Kom: "I know you can do it. You need to believe you can. Okay? Believe." Lakhe: "I can't find Luke." Kom: "What do you mean you can't find Luke? He was here a minute ago. Does nobody listen to my instructions when I say don't leave the house?" a strong gust of wind hit the walls of the house. Sibú: "He's here." Kom: "FUCK!!" Boogie started barking from under the table. Kom: "take him to the bedroom, Zama. Vicky as well. Lakhe you too." Lakhe: "I want to help." Kom: "Your kind of help is what a pebble can do to a mountain. Absolutely futile. You need to be safe. Go Sibulele." another strong gust smashed against one side. Sibú: "He is going to kill you!" Kom: "He is yet to try."

#129

Lakhe and Sibú walked in the bedroom. They stood nervously for a few seconds and then finally sat down. I was sitting on top of the bed, rubbing my

stomach. It seems as though my little angel found this to be the exact right time to have a soccer world cup inside my belly. No matter how much I sang, and pleaded. He/She was probably having the time of their life kicking me. So I decided to carry on singing to distract myself. Me: "I wanna know your heart, understand your mind. Open up my heart, I wanna love you. Draw me closer to where you are, I wanna give you the love, that you deserve. I wanna know your heart, Lord. I wanna know your mind. Open up my heart, I wanna learn of you, Jesus. Draw me closer to where you are, I wanna give you the love, that you deserve. I wanna love you more.... I wanna love you more, Jesus Christ, Lord and King...." I sang. Sands: "Don't stop." I looked at him. Was he awake? He looked to be in a deep sleep. Me: "You're awake?" silence. That was weird. Maybe he was having a bad dream. Me: "I wanna know your likes, I wanna know your heart. I wanna understand, you deep inside. I wanna satisfy, you in my life. How you operate, reveal to me... I wanna love you more, Jesus Christ, Lord and King...." I covered up Chris in bed, he kept moving around. Zama: "You should get some sleep honey." Lakhe: "Your mom is right Sphe." I put Zimi's arm back by her side. I started hearing Joan Osborne's song in my head. Obviously I'd start singing. These two little demons would have to be strong shame. Me: "If God had a face, what would it look like and would you want to see? If seeing meant that you would have to believe. In things like heaven and in Jesus and the Saints and all the prophets. And yeah, yeah, God is Great. Yeah, Yeah, God is Good. Yeah, Yeah, yeah yeah, what if God was one of us? Just a slob like one of us? Just a stranger on the bus, tryna make his way home. Tryna make his way home, back up to heaven all alone." I looked up at them. Me: "Xaninesthukthezi kuthen ningalali nina?" Lakhe: "We're worried about you." Me: "Well, you're worried about the wrong person." I went to the air mattress where Dumi was sleeping and covered his legs properly. I need to remind him to start his physio again. Ever since Rebecca left he had given up entirely and that wasn't allowed. Me: "Way maker, miracle worker, promise keeper, light in the darkness, My God, that is who You are." I got back on the bed. Me: "You are here, moving in our midst. I worship you. I worship you..... You are here, working in this place, I worship you. I worship you. Way maker, Miracle worker, Promise Keeper, Light in the darkness. My God that is who you are. You are here, turning lives around. I worship you, I worship you. You are here and you're mending every heart. I worship you, I worship you." have you ever sang a song and felt it resonate deeply in your soul? Only God can do it. That's because he's a Way Maker. A Miracle Worker And a Promise Keeper. My light in the darkness. No matter how strong that Komander senior thinks he is. Nobody comes above God. We'll see if his so called powers can withstand the pressures of the Holy Ghost. Sands: "hmm..." he moved around in his spot

on the bed. He was still asleep. I knew this because Sandile would never spend that much time with his eyes closed without making a silly comment. Which meant he was having a nightmare. Sibulele: "He's having a bad dream." he confirmed. Me: "Does that mean....." Sibulele: "Yes. He's inside the house now." They just walked in here and kept quiet. Yazi, I'm not even gonna say nothing. Me: "My Way maker. We look to you for protection. Place Your mighty hand on Sandile and remove all evil spirits disturbing his dreams. Fight for Your son God. Rebuke all demonic power that has come to remove him from His family. From You God. We give you the Praise Oh God. Nobody can deliver us from our problems like You would, My God. You are our Healer, our Deliverer and our Savior. Protect us Promise Keeper. We need our Miracle Worker Dear Lord. I give you all the Glory, all the worship. I only Depend on you, Almighty God. I give you my everything. And everything that I am is You Oh God! Draw us nearer to Your kingdom God. Draw us nearer to Your Glory. We bow before Your name. Even though we don't deserve Your grace and mercy, you give it to us God. That is because You are our Promise Keeper. Your children are depending on You oh God. Bring your angels to block and barricade our spaces with your love and protection. I lift my hands in praise. Pour everlasting faith in our hearts Lord. Bathe us in the sacred blood of Your son Jesus Christ. When the enemies see us, they should see you. When evil tries to attack us, let it shy away and fear you. When the angels protects us, even though they might fall, the evil will still drop their weapons and elude us. Sweep our house with Your love Dear God. Protect our family El Shaddai. Shake and reject all harm coming to our family Almighty. I bow down to you, Alpha and Omega. Only You are God." the door opened. I opened my eyes and looked around. Sibulele was about to walk out. Me: "Where do you think you're going?" I whispered. Sibulele: "I need to face him and help Luke." Me: "Sibulele." I warned. Sibulele: "I have to. Its the only way." he tip toed out the room.

Komander stood in the lounge with Kompany. "Well, well, well..." the house went dark. "If its not my first born and his little body guard. Which one is this? Anyway.....the little rock of angels you set up outside is not doing that great. Might want to call an ambulance." Kom: "What do you want Father." Father: "Hmmm.....Let's see. First of all, my son. Second of all, my grandson, third and most important of all, the soul you just stole from me. Don't you know that's rude?" Kom: "That soul isn't yours. And he's a human being!" Father: "Of course it is. Don't be ridiculous." he finally appeared. Kom: "Why do you always have to follow me around?" Father: "Just making sure my puppy is safe. You seem to be getting weaker. Did you impregnate someone again? You can't be

serious. Every time you have sexual intercourse you MUST reproduce?" Kom: "I'm not going to do this with you. You need to leave. There's nothing for you here." Father: "I smell....pregnancy. Why do you always hide your kids? I barely know the first two. I have rights to my grandkids, you know." Kom: "Not to my children. You tried to kill my son." Father: "If I wanted to kill him, he'd be dead. I was introducing him to our life. He's stronger now, thanks to me. He knows who he is. Where's your daughter, I can't seem to find her. Never have. How the hell does she remain hidden? Have you some sort of block around her? What did you do?" Kom: "Nothing. I don't know where she is." Father: "You're a bad liar. Plus You're going to be a dad again. Must be exciting." Kom: "Something you have no experience in, obviously." Father: "I have tons of experience. I raised you. Look how you turned out. Successful, feared, respected. Its a pity you're looking uglier than usual." Kom: "Thank you." Father: "So Where's that son of yours?" Kom: "I don't know." Father: "I know he's in here. I don't want to have to drag him out. We had a great time together. Until you ruined it. Why do you hate fun? Ever since you were small, you were so uptight." Kom: "He's a child, Father. You have me, what do you need him for?" Father: "I want both of you. Is that so wrong? Imagine the 3 Komanders. The world would never see it coming." Kom: "The world has enough Komanders and you need to leave." Father: "Not without the soul you stole from me." Kom: "Fath-" Father: "Yeah, you're definitely weaker. Whoever keeps having your babies must hate you. And who the hell is in this house!!" Kom: "I'm asking you one more time to leave." Father: "I'm not going anywhere. We'll be standing on ashes before I let it go." Kom: "Fine." he closed his eyes. Father: "You're challenging your own father?" Kom: "No. I'm ignoring you." Father: "What?" Kom: "I'm not going to fight you anymore. No matter what you do, I don't care about you and I don't want you in my life." Father: "You have completely lost your mind. Do you realize who I am to you?" Kom: "Yes. A nobody." His father growled. Kom: "Oh....I'm sorry, did that hurt?" Father: "I see you're testing me." Komander watched his form change into his son. "Dad...." Kom: "That's really low." "Dad just let me go...I want to be with grandpa. Please." Kom: "Father I'm not an idiot. I saw you change. How dumb do you think I am?" the form changed from Sibü to Khaya. Then back to the Father. Father: "He's mine too now." Komander stared at him watching the form changing back to Sibü. "I love you dad. You just have to let us go." Kom: "I am going to hurt you." he hissed. Sibü: "I am your son... Your first born child..." the voice played around in his head. His son's voice. Sibü: "Let us go dad..." Komander grabbed his necked wringing it to a deadly choke. Kom: "You Are Not My Son!!" the form changed back to his father, who pushed him with such a gravely force, he felt his back connect with the wall. Father: "Give me what's mine." he commanded. Kom: "You'd have to kill me first." Father:

"Say no more." Kompany stood in front of Komander. Father: "Really? And what can you possibly do? Drive me away, Mr chauffeur?" he cackled. Komander pulled himself up. Father: "Tell your bus boy to get out my way." Kom: "Kompany, move." Father: "Gaining some strength now? Nice. I haven't had a good fight in forever." he moved closer. Luke walked in carrying his Bible bashing it over his head. Father: "What the hell do you think you're doing?" Luke: "In the name of Jesus Christ, I rebuke your demonic energy! I bring holy ghost fire unto you!!!!" Father: "What's happening." Kom: "LUKE!!" Luke continued praying. Luke: "God has taken over from you!! His power supersedes everything you think you are! We plead with you Almighty God bring this house into shape!! Spit out this evil and bring down its power to kneel before you." the father looked at him. Father: "So you clearly don't know who I am." the house started shaking. Father: "You call me evil." a whistling wind threw open all windows. Father: "You order your God to send me on my knees." crispy growls and breaths of icy air whirled around them. Father: "You don't call unto God like that. You'd have to ask my permission first." his eyes flared up. Father: "Of which you didn't." Luke's skin dried near ash as he struggled to breath. He fell on his knees, gasping and throwing himself on the floor. His body shook and twisted. Father: "Your friends need to learn some resp-" Sibulele stepped out the passage and looked at him. Father: "What are you doing?" Sibulele stared at him. Father: "Stop it!!" Sibulele stepped closer. Kom: "Sibulele." Sibulele looked at Komander. Kom: "I think Father is ready to leave now." Father: "I will be back. For You." he stared at Sibulele dead in the eye. Sibulele's eyes flared as he smiled. Sibulele: "I will wait." the father turned and in a swift move, disappeared out the house. Kom: "Why did you risk your life like that Sibulele!" Sibulele: "He was going to kill you and everyone in this house. You told me not to be scared. I can't only channel his energy but I can hold it too." Kom: "I've never been so proud. You know you're his number one enemy right now?" Sibulele: "and there's nothing he can do about it." Kom: "Yet. We need to find you ways to be improve what you know and your abilities. Your grandfather will stop at nothing now that he knows what you can do." he looked down at Luke's body. Kom: "Why is it nobody hears me when I say stay away. I mean seriously. How difficult is it to just listen and obey." Sibulele: "Is he going to be okay?" Kom: "You guys tire me. He'll be fine." he picked up Luke's body and set him on the couch. Sibulele: "What am I?" Kom: "You're a Komander, son." Sibulele: "Luke and Patrick summoned the demons out of me. How is it possible that I can intimidate my grandfather?" Kom: "The demons Father put in you were to keep you in place. They punished you and changed you painfully. Which is what he wanted. Not only does he drag the angel of death everywhere he goes but he owns it. Which is why he wants you by his side. He knows what you're capable of. What you have is in our bloodline. All

of us have a different set. Yours is the channeling of energy." Sibü: "What's Spho's?" Kom: "I'm not sure. I haven't figured hers out yet." Sibü: "Is that normal?" Kom: "No. A father must know each and every skill set of their offspring. That's why my father knows all my weak spots and how to attack me. I just can't get through to her." Sibü: "You want me to?" Kom: "No. That's my job. Besides, You'd never see it. My only concern is that child she's carrying." Sibü: "Why?" Kom: "No one has ever been able to kill Father." Sibü: "Ookay." Kom: "But the blood of that baby can." Sibü: "NO!!!" Kom: "Listen-" Sibü: "I knew you were cruel but to kill a baby? You have officially reached a new low!" Kom: "That baby can't be killed. Under normal circumstances, she would've had a miscarriage by now. There's a reason why her first two pregnancies weren't successful." Sibü: "I'm still waiting to hear your explanation in as to WHY you need his blood!" Kom: "That baby is a King." Sibü: "How can a baby be a king?" Kom: "Watch his birth."

Friday morning, I was up before everyone. I went to Stella's bedroom and knocked a bit on the door. All I heard was muffled voices. I knocked again because I really needed to talk to her. Was she okay? I started panicking. I tried knocking for the last time with no response except a painful groan. She was hurt? Oh God no. I opened the door and walked in. To my horror, I halted at the door. OH. MY. GOD. Rob: "Spho..." Stella: "You didn't lock?" I stepped out the room and shut the door. I needed to wash my eyes with bleach! Why didn't they at least respond with 'Busy'. After all the events of the last day, I was concerned for everyone's safety especially after last night but nooo, I just had to walk in on my mother-in-law positioned in the most fire arch and my father in law pumping hard behind her. How was I now going to look at them with seeing Stella's incredibly firm ass in the air. Can I swap memories? This wasn't fair. Lakhe: "Hi baby." Me: "hmm..." I rushed to the kitchen. Lakhe sniffed his vest and under arms. Lakhe: "Is it my breath?" he followed to the kitchen. I took a bottle of water. I couldn't stay here at all. Lakhe: "Babe." I rushed out to my room. I don't know why I was running from him either but he was responsible somehow. In the passage I bumped into my other dad. Komander. My heart was pounding in my chest. Kom: "Hey." Me: "hmm..." I went past him to my bedroom. I got into the shower quick then I left for my closet where Lakhe was waiting for me with a leg crossed over the other. Lakhe: "What happened?" My eyes darted around. Lakhe: "You need to talk to me." he pulled me onto his lap and I sat down covering my face. Lakhe: "You're beautiful just the way you are baby. I love you more each day." Me: "Stop lying. And its not that anyway." Lakhe: "Okay, because that's all I had." he untied my gown. Lakhe: "Tell me what's wrong." Me: "I

walked in on your parents." Lakhe: "They'll still sleeping?" Me: "They were having sex. Doggy style." I whispered in his ear. He burst in laughter. Me: "Its not funny! And don't you dare tell anyone!" Lakhe: "Why are YOU embarrassed? Its not like you did anything wrong. This is your house." Me: "I can't get it out my head." Lakhe: "People have sex. Its a way of life." Me: "Does this mean they're back together? But they're divorced? They're gonna marry again? What happens next?" Lakhe: "Stay out of it. This isn't our business." Me: "I wouldn't dare stay anywhere in it. I don't even wanna talk about it." Lakhe: "So where you going?" Me: "I'm taking the kids to school then breakfast alone at Mugg n Bean." Lakhe: "No, you're having breakfast here. The kids are not going to school today. We need to bond as a family." Me: "How will I look at them now?" Lakhe: "Like you always do. Just without clothes." Me: "Lakhe!" he laughed. Lakhe: "What? Its funny." he took off my gown. Me: "Erh...no Mr. After everything that's happened, I need to make sure everyone is okay." Chris walked in the closet. Me: "See?" I tied back my gown. Chris: "I'm ready." Me: "For what sweetie?" Chris: "School...." Me: "Oh, today will be a family day in doors okay. You'll go on Monday." Chris: "Oh no ... I can't afford to miss today mommy. I'll fall behind." Lakhe: "What's happening today?" Chris: "Nothing." Lakhe: "Then you're not going." Chris: "Its Julie's birthday today and she's my friend. I promised her I'll be there." Lakhe: "You have a girlfriend there buddy?" I smacked his arm. Chris: "Don't be silly dad. I did say Friend. Now can we go?" Me: "Wait...who dressed you?" Chris: "Uncle Sandile." Me: "What?" Chris: "He wanted juice, I told him I'd get it if he dressed me and he did." Lakhe: "He didn't hurt you?" Chris: "Why would he hurt me?" This was one super weird relationship. Me: "I'm gonna get dressed honey. We'll leave soon." he walked out the room to the lounge where Sandile was sitting and held out his hand. Sands: "Is she leaving?" Chris: "Yes. Give me my money." Sands: "What money." Chris: "Uncle Sandile you promised!!" Sands: "I don't know what you're on about." Chris: "I am going to make you hurt Uncle Sandile." Sands: "Try." Chris pulled his leg. Sands: "Ouch." he changed the channel. Kom: "I heard you promise him money." he sat down. Sands: "I promised him fame." Chris: "Uncle Sandile!!!!!!!!!!!" he screamed. Lakhe: "Yintoni Sandile man!!!!!!!!!" he yelled from the bedroom. Chris attacked Sandile with full force. Sands: "I feel like I'm being slapped by a butterfly." he pushed Chris to the floor and pinned him down with his foot. Chris was hysterical, crying and screaming. Sands: "Your parents can't hear you. Scream louder." Chris stopped and closed his eyes. Sands: "Chrissie? What's wrong with you?" Kom: "He was having a panic attack." Sands: "what!! And you're just sitting there saying nothing!!" he picked up Chris' body. Kom: "What was I supposed to say?" Sands: "Shit!!! Spho is gonna kill me!! Chris? Please wake up boy. Here's your money right here. Just wake please." he

looked at Komander. Sands: "Don't just sit there!!! Do something!" Kom: "Like call the police?" Chris giggled uncontrollably. Sands: "Oh.....okay." Chris: "My cheque please." Sands: "What you know about a cheque?" Chris: "For starters, I know that you owe me one." Sandile took out a R20 note. Sands: "Here." Chris: "No, I want the purple one." he gave it back and took R100. Sands: "Some expensive ass child." he mumbled. Me: "Chris, let's go angel. Where is Lulo and Zimi." Sands: "Sibu will take them with their dad. Will you be a lamb and stop by the hotel? Check if it hasn't burnt to the ground in the past 24 hours." Me: "Yes, sure." Sands: "You're a star." Me: "I know. Come Chris. Let's go." he grabbed his bag and rushed out to the car. I followed after him. Kom: "Why did you pay a 4 year old to get your sister out of the house???" Sands: "That's a 4 year old thug. Anyway, its a surprise." Kom: "I don't like surprises. Spit it out." Sands: "You're not gonna bully me Mr Kom'sachets. I'm not your friend." Robert came into the lounge with Stella. Stella: "Ohhh honey!!!!!! I thought your father lied!" she ran to Sandile, hugging him. Sands: "not too tight ma." Stella: "Are you okay sweetheart?" Sands: "I'm fine." Stella: "They told me you'd died. It was awful!!!" Sands: "Mom. Calm down. I'm alive. I don't have much time no-" Stella: "NO!!!!!!!" she cried. Sands: "I'm planning a baby shower for Spho before she comes back, that's why I don't have time. Can everybody please be calm?" Stella: "Oh that's wonderful!! We can get-" Sands: "I've already called a designer to fix this place up in 30 minutes. Spho will be held up at the hotel for about an hour or so. The caterers are on their way." Stella: "When on earth did you plan this?" Sands: "Before I died." Stella: "That's Not funny. Uhm.....how is Spho?" Sands: "Fine." Stella: "She didn't seem.....uhm, upset?" Sands: "No, why?" Stella: "No Reason! I'll go and get ready. What's the theme?" Sands: "There is no theme mama. Dad, go. The designer is here." he stood up. Sands: "Hayi ke ndiyow'hambaze estoepin, I KNOW he was sitting there a second ago. Where the hell is Komander!!"

#130

Sandile walked out the back and looked around. Sands: "Where is he!" Lakhe: "Who?" he walked in the lounge wearing his watch. Sands: "Your father in law. He was sitting right there and poof!" he sat back down. Lakhe: "Poof? What's poof?" Sands: "He's gone. Just vanished! Without a word." Lakhe: "What did he look like?" Sands: "Hehake bhuti. Really? He looked like water ke. He was H2o. Of course he looked exactly the same way he was looking yesterday!" Lakhe went to Sibu's room. Lakhe: "Where's your dad?" Sibu: "He left a while ago. Said he would be back in an hour, why?" Lakhe: "Shit! I think your grandfather was here." Sibu: "Why do you think that?" he wore his blazer.

Lakhe: "Because Sandile was sitting with who he thought was your dad a few minutes ago and whatever it is has disappeared." Sibú: "Yep. That was definitely grandpa." he fixed his tie. Lakhe: "What do we do now!" Sibú: "I need to know what exactly he said or heard. Uphi uSandile?" Lakhe: "Lounge." they walked to the lounge where they found Sandile and another lady talking. Lakhe: "Who's this?" Sands: "My designer. Hi mans, how did you sleep?" Sibú: "No time, What did that thing say?" Sands: "What thing?" Sibú: "Uthi ubuhlel naban kanti?" Sands: "Oh... Him. Well, I was just chilling with Chris and he sat down. He just asked why I wanted my sister out of the house and I told him I'm planning a surprise baby shower." Sibú: "Did Sphe say where she was going?" Sands: "Yeah, she said she'd drop Chris off at school then head over to my hotel." Sibú: "That's where he's gone to." Lakhe: "Let me try her phone." Sibú: "I'm going to the hotel, you go to Chris' school." he rushed out. Sands: "What's going on?" Lakhe took his keys and left. Sands: "I guess that's okay too. Anyway Jessica," he turned to the designer. Sands: "We should start with the decor right outside by the pool area. I want you to be as efficient as possible." Jess: "Your theme is light yellow and white right?" Sands: "Yes. We don't know the gender of the baby. So..." Jess: "Okay. I'll bring the team in. Is she allergic to flowers? I'd like to put floating dahlias in the pool." Sands: "If its in the pool it shouldn't be a problem. She's not allergic." Jess: "Let me get to work then." she called her team in. Dumí: "Sandile." Sands: "Hi Dumzet. How did you sleep?" Dumí: "Okay I guess. Where is Sibú? He's supposed to drive me to work and the kids to their mother's place." Sands: "I'll take you." Dumí: "The kids. I'm late Sandile I can't do that." Sands: "I'll drop them off after you." Dumí stared at him. Dumí: "Where's Sibú?" Sands: "You don't want me to go to Zingi unsupervised, do you?" Dumí: "It makes me uncomfortable, yes." Sands: "Sibú left already." Dumí: "Now what do I do?" Sands: "I can drive. And you can trust me." Dumí: "I don't know Sandile." Sands: "Dumisani we're friends, come the fuck on." Dumí: "Sandile you slept with my wife. That's not something I can just forget." Sands: "That was before we became friends!! I didn't even care about her so called husband because all I knew was that he was cheating on her too. I'm sorry Dumí. if I'd known you then like I do now I would never have done it." Dumí: "Still Sandile. Look at you. Even if I wasn't paralyzed You'd still look better than I ever could. I can't take that risk man. You can give Zingi things I barely can and knowing that on its own is difficult for me to accept." Rob: "What are you two arguing about?" Sands: "We're not arguing tata. Dumí, Zintle and Fez will be here any minute, they'll take the kids to Zingi. How about that?" Dumí: "Thank you, but I don't trust just anyone with my kids. I'll wait for Sibú." Sands: "You will be late for work." Dumí: "Its fine." he rolled to the kitchen. Rob: "What's up with you two?" Sands: "Nothing. I just...." he sniffed around. Sands: "Are you wearing cologne?" Rob: "No...Yes....Is it too much?"

Sands: "This is Versace. You stole this didn't you?" Rob: "I can afford Versace."
Sands: "I don't doubt that. What I do doubt is you knowing where to buy it."
Rob: "I found it in Lakhe's secret cabinet. He's never used it. Can you believe it?" Sands: "What I can't believe is that I'm finally snitching on you to Lakhe."
he laughed out loud. Sands: "He's gonna be so pissed. I cannot wait!" Rob:
"Mxim. Should've stuck to only one child." he walked to the kitchen. The
caterers arrived with the food. Sands: "Finally! You can set up in the dining
room. I need to find Luke." he went to Luke's room and knocked on the door.
Luke: "come in." Sandile stepped inside. Sands: "Hey Lukie. How did you
sleep?" Luke: "Not that good. I almost died last night and he saved me."
Sands: "Who? God?" Luke: "No, Komander. His father is just something else."
Sands: "You couldn't even pray?" Luke: "He struck me while I was praying."
Sands: "Woahh... that is intense man." Luke: "I need to fast for a few days. I
think my connection with God is a little broken. I need to restore my faith."
Sands: "Okay, I gets you man. I'll let the family know. Will you need anything?"
Luke: "No, I'll just be drinking water." Sands: "No offense Luke but you're an old
man with frail health, aren't you like 80? You can't afford to be missing meals."
Luke: "I'll be okay Sandile. Your concern is appreciated." Sands: "At least eat
once a day." Luke: "I'll be fine." Sands: "I'll bring you a fruit. End of discussion.
God is a reasonable man. He can understand." Luke: "If you insist." Sands:
"and I'm going to watch you eat it." Luke: "I see you're your determined self
today. Okay fine, I'll eat it. With you watching. As creepy as it sounds." Sands:
"Creepy is my middle name. Now I'm having a baby shower for Spho on the
other side. You'll welcome to join us, bring Jesus if he's gonna feel lonely. I'll
see you later." Luke laughed. Luke: "God was probably in a good mood while
creating you. I'll see you later." Sands: "You know it." he walked out the room.
Stella: "Darling, I can't seem to find my son- oh there he is." Sands: "What is it
now?" Stella: "I need Spho." Sands: "She'll be back soon. Why do you need
her?" Stella: "I need her advice." Sands: "I can help." Stella: "No offense honey,
but Spho is a smart, learned woman. Those are the three key points you need
to qualify. And I also need someone responsible, transparent and not
judgmental. She checks all the boxes." Sands: "Oh. Haike." he shrugged. Rob:
"How's Luke?" Sands: "Jolly as a bird. Where's my baby?" Rob: "Playing with the
ducks." Sands: "Its time for his bath. Mama, please keep an eye on things
here." Rob: "You spoil that dog too much." Dumi: "You haven't seen how he
feeds him." Rob: "I saw it and its really disgusting. Sandile that is a dog not a
baby." Sands: "I hear what you're saying but I don't really care dad. He's still
my baby. Speaking of which, Where's Your baby?" Rob: "She's at a friend's
place. Kirsten. With blond hair. Lives in Blue Water Bay with her single mom
and two cats." Sands: "How did you" Rob: "You think I'm letting my child run
wild? Say it." Sands: "I didn't say anything." Rob: "Good." Sandile went to fetch

Boogie outside. Rob: "Baby..." Stella: "Erhh... No." Rob: "No to what? I was just about to ask what you want for breakfast." Stella: "Robert, what we did this morning does not mean we're back to calling each other pet names or dating. You have a girlfriend, I have a boyfriend. That's that. We just needed comfort." Rob: "I know. I was just being nice. So Stella, what do you want for breakfast?" Stella: "I'll have muesli with yogurt. Thank you." Robert went to the kitchen. Sandile came in carrying a muddy paws Boogie. Sands: "Say hi to granny." Stella: "I am Not a granny." Sands: "Chris calls you makhulu. That means, granny. I'll be in the bathroom with Boogile. Fez and Zintle will be here any minute. Tell them to help out. I'll be done soon." he walked to his bedroom.

I parked at Chris' pre school and checked him once again. We got out the car and I walked him in. Stacy: "Ma'am..." Me: "Hi Stacy." I gave Chris his bag. Me: "Bye sweetie. Enjoy okay?" Chris: "Bye mommy. See you soon." he walked in. Stacy: "I'd like to have a word?" Again? Me: "is everything okay?" Stacy: "Generally yes but the school headmaster has asked me to remind you about the child psychologist. She has recommended a few you can call." Me: "Why are you rushing this." Stacy: "If we find out sooner we can discuss putting Chris in a higher class suiting his abilities." Me: "Okay, I hear you but regardless of what the psychologist may say. I'm not changing Chris' class." Stacy: "But we-" Me: "Thanks bye." I walked to my car. Sibiu was standing by my car. Me: "Hey you. What's up." Sibiu: "Nothing much. Missing you." I giggled. Me: "We live together. Or, did you come cash in on my promise of spending time with you today?" Sibiu: "Yes. That." Me: "Hmm...Okay, so what do you want to do?" Sibiu: "Maybe drive out the city, go to a secluded game reserve. We can watch animals and eat." Me: "Definitely!! That sounds amazing. First, I have to start at the hotel and do a quick 10 minute check up then you and I are out this place. Deal?" Sibiu: "Do you have to go to the hotel now?" Me: "Yes. Sandile asked. You know how he gets. Besides, our phones won't be on during our trip so I want to get responsibilities out of the way." Sibiu: "Oh. That makes sense. Plus I already told your husband we have a day planned. You won't have to tell him twice." Me: "Great. Follow me in your car. We'll drop it off at the hotel." I got in the car and started driving then off to the hotel. I checked my rear view mirror about 5 minutes later and couldn't see Sibiu's car. Well, he already knows the way anyway. The hotel came up finally. I was already tired of driving. Sibiu would have to drive to the reserve. I parked my car and got out, walking into the hotel. Sibiu: "There you are!!" Me: "That was quick. I didn't even notice you overtook me." Sibiu: "What are you on about?" Me: "When did you change your clothes? Look, I won't be long. Give me just ten

minutes." Sibú: "What do you mean I changed my clothes? You haven't seen me this morning." Me: "Sibulele, I'm pregnant not stupid. You're going to have to drive by the way, I'm tired." Sibú: "What are you talking about!" Me: "Our game reserve trip. Remember we met at Chris' pre school and you told me you came to cash in on my promise? I won't be long. Hang tight." I went to the office behind reception. After speaking to the manager something started nagging my brain. Why was Sibulele so confused when I literally spoke to him about 10 minutes ago? After the brief meeting with the hotel manager I walked out to Sibú. He looked worried. Me: "Sibú, are you okay?" Sibú: "No... Grandpa visited the house in the form of your dad. We think he might have followed you. So I came straight here, Lakhe went to Chris' school." Me: "So.....you didn't go anywhere near Chris' school?" Sibú: "No. I didn't." Me: "Lakhe went there instead?" Sibú: "Yes." Me: "Oh Dear God, Sibulele!! I spoke to you at that school! We were planning a trip to a secluded game reserve out the city!!" Sibú: "Grandpa can change himself into a number of people. What you saw wasn't me, it was him." Me: "That means.....he has Lakhe."

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Sibú: "I need to use the bathroom for a second. Which way is it again?" I directed him and he left. I stood by the reception waiting. Was it even real? Sibú had to be kidding. How can a whole human change himself? That can't be right. If it was possible, I'd be Beyonce right about now. No living person created by God has the ability to change him or herself by command- Oh shit. Of course he can. He's the actual commander. Then he's clearly not human. He's a spirit!! I started panicking immediately. This spirit had my husband! I took my phone and called him. Lakhe: "Baby?" he answered. Me: "Honey is that you? Really?" Lakhe: "Of course its me. Who else would it be?" Any criminal and spirit can say that! Me: "When did I find out I was pregnant?" Lakhe: "first or current baby?" Me: "current." Lakhe: "The day before our wedding. We decided to skip the city and went to Jbay. Why?" Me: "What name are we deciding for our child." Lakhe: "Last time I checked it was Silakhile. What's going on baby? Where are you?" Me: "I'm at the hotel. Sibú just told me what happened." I whispered. Lakhe: "You mean Sibú standing right next to me?" I froze. Me: "Oh no. He's there?? Sibú is here!!" Lakhe: "Give him the phone." Me: "He asked for the bathroom." Lakhe: "Listen to me, get in your car right now Sphe. Drive straight home. Don't wait for him. GO." I took my keys and rushed to the car without a thought. I started it and drove off instantly. I sped my car straight home, my heart pounding in my chest. Hee I

wonder if a traffic cop stopped me what would I say? Sorry sir I'm being haunted by a ghost? Hayi thethelela Yesu. I arrived at the gate and opened it ndangena. Parking my car and jumping off. Sands: "You're back!! So soon. I was expecting you in about an hour. Trevor was supposed to delay you." Me: "He tried but I had to attend to Sibuhle." Sands: "You mean Sibuhle that's inside the house?" Me: "WHAT!!!" Sands: "I'm kidding. He's not here. He did call though, he said he's coming. How about we go say hi to the ducks. They miss you." Me: "No I feel like lying down right now." Sands: "You're deliberately avoiding spending time with me. I've tried so hard Spho. All I ask is just 10 minutes of your time." now I felt bad. Me: "Okay. Let's visit the ducks then." we walked on the paving to the duck penthouse. Me: "I always want to spend time with you. Its just always busy here." Sands: "I know." Me: "so, tell me... How's things." Sands: "Things are okay." Me: "How did you sleep?" Sands: "Finally somebody asks back. I was going to send a group email. I had the weirdest dream." Me: "Is it sexual?" Sands: "No." he laughed. Me: "Then you can proceed." Sands: "Well.... At first. I was in a really dark place. Like an old house. I tried searching for a way out but couldn't find one. In each of the rooms, it was just empty. No windows, nothing. Finally I bumped into someone. I couldn't see her face. She had a really angelic voice telling me to follow her so I did. Along the way she disappeared again then I heard whispers. I couldn't breath. It felt like the place she'd brought me in had no oxygen. I felt like I was dying to be honest. It got a little more audible and I heard singing then I breathed a full breath of air. I felt my eyes opening to sunshine. I was standing right here. The singing voice I heard was you." Me: "I thought you'd be having a nightmare. I was singing and praying at the time. You said to me 'Don't stop.' So I didn't." Sands: "Thank you. Not just for this but for everything. Carrying a whole family can't be easy. I only take care of Boogile and I can barely keep it together. You're my superhuman." he hugged me. Me: "You're gonna make me cry." Lakhe: Spho!!" I heard his voice from a distance. Sands: "Masilakhe cannot stand to see me happy!!" I went back to the driveway. Me: "Honey?" Lakhe: "I've been looking all over. Where were you?" Me: "At the duck palace. With Sandile." Sands: "Hi." he waved. Lakhe: "We need to go inside. Come here Sandile." Sands: "Wait!" he ran to us. Lakhe: "What now." Sands: "I need to blindfold Spho." Lakhe: "That's not gonna happen." Sands: "Okay at least close her eyes. I have a surprise for her inside the house." Me: "Okay. Hold my hands both of you." they held my hands up the stairs and into the house. Sands: "Welcome to motherhood." I opened my eyes. Me: "Sandile!!" Sands: "You like it?" Me: "I love it!! Its soo beautiful! You guys!" Zintle: "Hey you..." Me: "This is amazing!" I looked at Sandile. Me: "You did this?" Sands: "Yes. Payback to what you did for me." Me: "This is so sweet of you. Thank you." I hugged him. Zintle carried out the tray to the back. Sands: "The program is out the

back. We have food, bearing gifts as well. Cake. Oh there you are." he looked behind me. Komander had walked in carrying a white paper bag. Kom: "What?" Sands: "You were sitting here and then disappeared." Kom: "I don't disappear." Lakhe stood in front of me. Lakhe: "You're not welcome in my house." Kom: "Excuse me?" Lakhe: "I did not stutter." Sands: "What's happening? Just yesterday you were best friends." Lakhe: "I don't know who he is. He could be the father or the son." Sands: "Or the unholy spirit?" I held in a giggle. Me: "Sandile really?" Sands: "It was right there." Kom: "What are you talking about? I left here about two hours ago when I realized Sandile was planning a shower for Spho and I didn't have a gift so I needed to go buy her something. I told Sibulele where I was going and Zama. Luke knows too." Lakhe: "I can't take that risk. Your father was here, as you." Kom: "My father never appears as me, he IS me. I can't help looking like him." Sands: "You tryna tell me I was chilling with your father?" Kom: "Chilling? My father? What? Can one of you thoroughly explain what is going on." Sandile held up his hand. Kom: "Yes Sandile." Sands: "he sat down on this couch and I was playing with Chris. He was really stiff. Now that I realize it, no emotion in his voice at all. Unlike you. You're like a cocktail of emotions. Always bursting about. Think you tasting strawberry? Nope that's mango!" Kom: "Can you continue with the story!!" Sands: "See? Sour guava. Anyway, he asked why I was paying Chris to keep Spho out the house and I told him it was a surprise." Lakhe: "You paid a four year old child?" Sands: "That is not a child. He is a gangster that stole my money." Me: "How much did you pay him?" Sands: "I gave him R20 but he gave it back and took the purple one. Even faking a heart attack. I feel robbed. Anyway, he said he doesn't like surprises and I should spit it out. I told him under no uncertain terms will I be bullied by his ugl'ass. Then my parents came and I was forced to tell the truth. That's when he disappeared." Kom: "Where is Sibulele?" Lakhe: "He's on his way." Kom: "I hate to tell you this but every time Father is inside here, Sibulele is around." Lakhe: "Spho, where did you meet Sibulele?" Me: "At Chris' school. He was waiting by my car when I came out the building. He said he missed me and came to cash in on my promise to spend time with him. He suggested a secluded game reserve to watch animals and eat. Then I asked him to follow me to the hotel so we could leave his car there and leave with mine. I drove off, I didn't see him in my rear view. When I got to the hotel. He was there." Sands: "WOW!! Unreal!!" Kom: "What did he say at the hotel?" Me: "I was kind of in a rush to get the meeting done with the manager. When I finally got to Sibulele, he was confused about the whole game reserve thing even after I refreshed his memory. This is when he told me that I could've been speaking to a spirit him and not him. Then he asked for a bathroom." Sands: "Is Chris safe? Since it knows where he is right now and unprotected?" Kom: "Yes. Chris

isn't in our bloodline so my Father won't be invested in him." Sands: "But what if he uses him as bait to lure Spho close?" Kom: "I hate to admit this but he doesn't play dirty like that. It wouldn't be a challenge for him. He finds thrill in chasing the impossible. Besides, he hates having to take care of someone else especially kids. Too much work. Too much crying. He gets irritated very easily." Sands: "I don't care. I'm going to fetch the child." Lakhe: "Bhuti, you said Sibulele is always around when his grandpa arrives. What do you mean?" Kom: "I mean, Sibulele has the power to channel him. He can feel when he is coming. Last night was an indication. So if he can feel him, why didn't he say anything when he came as Siyanda a few days ago or as me this morning?" Sands: "You're saying he's working for him?" Kom: "Possibly. We wouldn't be able to know until the real Sibulele comes home." Sands: "Well fucked are we then." he took his keys and left the house. Lakhe's phone rang. It was a facetime from Stacy, Chris' teacher. He answered. Lakhe: "Hi Stace." Stacy: "Hi, your son asked me to dial your face. Here he is." she gave him the phone. Lakhe: "Chris?" Chris: "Hi daddy." Lakhe: "What's going on?" Chris: "Nothing. Teacher Stacy was showing me the face phone." Lakhe: "Oh okay. So you thought You'd try it out?" Chris: "Yes. See my class. I wanna show you my desk." Lakhe: "hebethuna lomntana. Chris, Uncle Sandile is coming to fetch you just now okay?" Chris: "Uncle Sibz was here too. I told him I don't wanna go. He was upset." I felt ice freeze over my spine. Me: "Can your father change into Sandile?" Kom: "No." Me: "Sweetie, you'll have to leave with Uncle Sandile okay?" Chris: "I guess. Look at my drawing. I did this today." Lakhe: "It looks beautiful. What is it?" Chris: "Stacy with devil ears. She tried to punish me for something I didn't even do." Lakhe: "but she's letting you use her phone." Chris: "After she saw the drawing what choice did she have? Nobody wants devil ears. Here's Julie, say hi dad." Julie: "Hi dad." Chris: "Not you." Julie: "You forgot to use your voice commas, Chris." Chris: "You're right. Sorry. Dad, Say Hi." Lakhe: "Hi Julie." Julie: "Hi Chris' dad." Lakhe: "Happy Birthday." Julie: "Its tomorrow but thanks." Lakhe: "Are you having a party?" Julie: "No. My mom will be back next week." Lakhe: "Where is she?" Julie: "America." Stacy: "Facetime time is over guys." Julie: "You know you can do better than that." Stacy: "Phone time then." Chris: "Bye dad. See you now." Lakhe: "Bye. Give Stacy the phone." the frizzled teacher appeared on the screen. She had such a hard life. One Chris was bad but two? Julie is actually worse than Chris. Lol. Lakhe: "Stacy my brother is coming to fetch him we have a family eme-" Stacy: "Thank God. I'll pack his things." Lakhe: "Is everything okay?" Stacy: "Yes. Its perfect. If one of them isn't here, the other one keeps to themselves all day." shame man. Lakhe: "Would it be okay if you told Julie's parents they can drop her off here for the day after school. You can give them our addre-" Stacy: "I'll call them right now. Thank you so much."

she hung up. Kom: "Yeah she probably has the worst days." Lakhe: "Did you hear that child talking about voice commas? And I thought Chris was smart. What the hell is voice commas?" Kom: "Lucky for you, you're about to find out." Me: "Is it safe to bring another child here especially since the problem we have...." Kom: "I've never seen my father hurt a child. Except me of course. I'll keep him out just in case." Lakhe: "How?" Kom: "I'll build a wall of salus. It will only last 24 hours the only problem is that if you're out, you can't come back." Lakhe: "What is salus?" Kom: "safety." Me: "Uhm...since we have guests, and are expecting a child from another family." Kom: "It will be fine. But once they leave they won't be able to find the house until the full hours are complete." Me: "That is scary." Kom: "Its safe." Lakhe: "And grandpa can't get through it?" Kom: "No, that is my power. Protection. Just doesn't last long. I'm still working on it." Lakhe: "then I'm down." Kom: "Everybody is going to need to be inside the house before I do it." Me: "What do we do about Sibuz?" Kom: "Don't worry about him. He'll be back." Lakhe: "How will we know its him?" Kom: "I will know." Zintle and Fez came back in the house. Fez: "EXCUSE ME. Family time is over thurr guys, what happened to manne.....Oh Dear Lord, who is this? Hello. My name is Feziwe." Komander stared at me. I couldn't help it. I was dissolving to the floor in laughter. Kom: "Hi." Zintle: "I'm Zee, Fez go look for Sandile while I show our guest around?" Fez: "What's Sandile?" Lakhe: "YOUR MAN!!! Move!!!" Kom: "Sandile is gay?" he whispered to me. Me: "No." I giggled. Kom: "Now I'm officially confused." Zintle: "Bhut Lakhe is this your friend from work?" Lakhe: "Your salad is burning." Zintle: "I don't hav-" Lakhe: "Bhuti, iza ngapha. We have some meat to braai. Put the present over there. Have you been to a baby shower before?" Kom: "Yes I've been to plenty, I even threw myself one just this morning." Lakhe: "Sometimes a simple no." Kom: "Where in the world would I have been invited to a baby shower? Nobody wants to associate themselves with me." Fez: "I want to associate myself, heart and soul with you." Kom: "Oh." Lakhe: "Let me show you how to braai meat then." Kom: "What's that?" Lakhe: "Just follow." they went to the back yard. Fez: "OH MY GOODNESS. Spho, who the hell is that!!" Me: "Tyrone." Zintle: "Spho he is gorgeous. He is unearthly. Celestial beauty. He needs to be framed." Fez: "I found him first." Zintle: "We walked in the room the exact same time. He is so my type. You have Sandile, please don't be selfish." Fez: "Sandile is my best friend not my man. You can't just come in here and salsa in my moments. I like Tyrone. We have a connection." Zintle: "Spho? Did you see a connection?" Me: "I'm hungry first. Can someone make me food please? I wanna lie down by the pool." Fez: "I'll make you food sweetie." Zintle: "I'll get you something to drink in case the food chokes you." Me: "Guys, please. Bhuti Tyrone is not on the market. He already has his hands full." Zintle: "I don't mind being part time." Fez: "As usual." Zintle: "Still going to lick him." I walked to the

back yard and relaxed in one of the pool chairs. Dumi's kids were playing in the garden. I watched them while basking in the sun. Dumi was probably working in his room. I saw Fez carrying a beer walking to the braai area. Fez: "Hi, I thought I'd get you a beverage." Kom: "I don't drink." Fez: "Oh.. Would you like some water?" Kom: "No." Lakhe: "I'll take that. Thanks Fez." he took the beer. Fez: "If you need anything, just give me a sexy roar. I'll be there." he cat walked away. I just laughed out. Just seeing him walk was enough but I would've killed to hear what he said. Why is Fez like this? Lakhe: "If you want to fit in, you might want a sip of a beverage. That's the social protocol for gatherings. Especially because this is a woman event therefore, we have to work as slaves to keep all of them happy. Alcohol helps." Kom: "I can get people to help. I have a lot of workers." Lakhe: "No. This is a family gathering. No workers allowed. You want to be part of a black family, you pretend to work." Kom: "How?" Lakhe: "You stand at the braai stand and flip meat all day. Its not hard. Also when someone calls you for a task, you tell them you're making meat. Nobody wants burnt meat. The braai area, a beer in your hand. Safest place ever. Hold a fork to really sell it." Kom: "Like this?" Lakhe: "Yes. You're a natural." Kom: "Because of Satan and his fork?" Lakhe laughed. Lakhe: "I thought this looked familiar." Kom: "Funny." he put his arm down. Kom: "So...tell me. Why did you marry my daughter." Lakhe: "I am in love with her." Kom: "Okay, now tell me the real reason you got married." Lakhe: "That is the real reason." Kom: "The other real reason." Lakhe: "I don't know what you're talking about." Kom: "You are scared she would leave you when she finds out you're a murderer." he whispered. Kom: "I know. I know everything." Lakhe swallowed. Kom: "I also know, not only are you a seasoned murderer, because you've got the spice but you're a serial murderer. You don't let anybody else clean up your messes, that's what I like about you. You're not afraid of getting your hands dirty." Lakhe looked around. Spho was on the other end of the pool with her shades on, enjoying the sun totally oblivious to this conversation that was slowly ending his life. Kom: "She doesn't know you have your own burial site. Where you hide bodies, that are never found. The 12th sin. With 12 foot graves." Lakhe: "How...did you..." Kom: "You shot two of my workers. Then killed the witness. Tell me how the hell did you find her in the first pl.....ohhh. Sibulele. He's such an asset." Lakhe: "I didn't mean to shoot them, they wanted to kill me. I wasn't at the harbor to mess around. I was getting my merchandise from Sepua." Kom: "So instead of explaining yourself and the mix-up. You decided, nooo, it'll be much more fun to blow brains out. I understand." Lakhe: "I'm sorry." Kom: "No, you're not. You owe me two shooters." Lakhe: "I only have five people left." Kom: "That is not my problem. You have cost me." Lakhe: "I'll find you someo-" Kom: "I don't want just someone. I want you." Lakhe: "I'm not going to work for you." Kom: "Nobody

said anything about working for me." Lakhe: "Then what do you want from me!" Kom: "I told you, shooters." Lakhe: "I am not going to quit my day job to come shoot for you." Kom: "You're being ridiculous. Nobody asked you to quit. You have assets. Sandile, a great driver. Right hand man. Good enough shooter. Sibulele, can trace just about anything from anywhere within minutes. Sergio, he's good at following instructions. Who else...." Lakhe: "Bull Cloak." Kom: "What does he do?" Lakhe: "Manages the rest and divides the merch." Kom: "You said you had five." Lakhe: "Kyle. Same as Sergio." Kom: "So none of them shoot as good as you." Lakhe: "Its not their job to shoot." Kom: "I see. Well. I still need two." Lakhe: "Fine. You have me. When do you want me?" Kom: "You'd rather protect your workers and sacrifice yourself?" Lakhe: "They didn't do anything wrong." Kom: "Okay. You'll meet me tomorrow night at the harbor, 6pm. Don't be late."

Sandile arrived from the pre school with Chris. Sands: "You guys started without me?" Fez: "Not yet. We're getting Spho something to eat." he fixed Sandile's shirt. Fez: "This is what you're wearing? The theme is yellow and white Sandile." Sands: "I don't own yellow. I only have one white shirt." Fez: "then wear it and jeans." Sands: "Which shoes?" Fez: "I don't know which shoes you own." Sands: "Look in my closet for a nice pair of shoes. I'm coming." Fez walked in the house. Sandile stood next to his brother. Sands: "What's wrong?" Lakhe: "Tyrone knows everything Sandile. Says I owe him two shooters." Sands: "I can't say I'm surprised. What did you say." Lakhe: "He doesn't want me to find him anyone. He wants me!" Sands: "You can't work for him bhuti." Lakhe: "What other choice do I have? I can't give any of the guys to him. Working for Tyrone is a death wish. They do not deserve that." Sands: "And you do? Why don't you threaten you'll tell Spho if he doesn't leave you alone?" Lakhe: "and he'll tell her all about me too." Sands: "So what now." Lakhe: "I have to meet with him tomorrow night. He probably has someone he wants me to take care of." Sands: "Bhuti you can't work for him! He is not human. He has demons. This guy dances with evil. You can't do this." Lakhe: "Then what do I do? Risk losing my wife and kids?" Sands: "Maybe that's what he wants you to think. He doesn't want to hurt Spho. You don't want to hurt Spho. Neither of you will tell her anything because both of you scared of her." Lakhe: "Khaya needs to wake up Sandile. Soon." Sands: "By the looks of things, he is awake just not responsive." Lakhe: "Then make him respond!! You're the one that put him in a coma. Go talk to him and say you're sorry!" Sands: "but I'm not sorry-" Lakhe: "Oh but you're gonna be if you don't get your ass out of here!" Sands: "I'll go tomorrow. I planned this shower for Spho and I want to see her enjoy it." Lakhe: "Fine."

Komander came to sit next to me. I was ready to take a nap. Me: "Hey. Finally tired of pretending you're busy?" Kom: "Its tedious. I can't be engulfed with those fumes all day long." Me: "hmmm okay." Kom: "I'm sorry about what I've put you and your family through." Me: "Don't worry about it. Everyone is happy and enjoying themselves." Kom: "Spho....I'm not what you want me to be. I mean, I've tried but I can't." Me: "And what's that?" Kom: "A father you can be proud of. I'm set in my ways. The only thing that's saving you is that small reservation of love I felt when I first saw you. I can't be a father. I wouldn't know where to begin." Me: "I hear you." I looked up at the sky hiding how disappointed I was to hear him say this but what did I expect? A ruthless psychopathic killer, criminal and drug overlord to be my dad? Even though unicorns don't exist but they're gorgeous creatures. Just thinking about them is beautiful. Mystical. Something I wanted him to be for me. A real live unicorn. Kom: "This isn't your fault. You're an amazing, wonderful human being. You attract everything that's bad and turn it into good. You're magic Spho. Everyone around you is automatically drawn to your goodness and wants to stay by you." Me: "Except you." I sat up. Kom: "I'm incapable of doing good." I stood up. Kom: "Please don't go. I don't want this to be the way we leave things." Me: "You've already decided Komander." a flash of lightening cracked through the sky. He looked up at the clear blue sky. I walked to the house. Kom: "Only Queens Give Birth To Kings." he whispered. Kom: "She'sno, it can't be."

#132

During the morning, I just didn't feel like talking to anyone anymore so I locked myself in the bedroom. As childish as it sounded. I was seriously upset and for good reason. Seemingly, I had no dad. Khaya was never waking up from that coma and Komander was uncomfortable with being a father. So that was it. I was fatherless now. At least I had Rob. I soon became hungry. My bar fridge in the room was near empty so I had to go out. I got up from bed and made my way to the kitchen. Stella: "I've been looking for you." Oh crap. Images. Memories. Doggy style. Why me? Me: "What do you need ma?" Stella: "I want to talk to you." Me: "About what." I dished up some food for myself. Stella: "What you saw. This morning. See, Rob and I-" Me: "Its okay ma. Really." Stella: "No it isn't. We should have locked. Actually we shouldn't have had sex at all. I was still upset over Sandile and he was there, comforting me. One thing led to another. He didn't even have the audacity to tell me my son was fine until after he was done. Unreal. But I wanted to

ease your mind, There's nothing going on between Rob and I. That was the last of it. Actually, that's what I wanted to discuss. Uhm.....I have absolutely no feelings for him whatsoever. I am so sure that I don't ever want to go back to him." Me: "I hate to ask but....is it the..." Stella: "The sex? No. That was wonderful. Its not the sex. Its just him. He makes me a bit sick." Me: "Uhm...I'm sorry to hear that." Stella: "Do you think its normal?" Me: "I'm actually not that experienced in that area, given my lack of exposure. I don't know what to tell you." Stella: "You've had sex before, apart from Lakhe, right?" Someone make this conversation go away please. Me: "Well yes." Stella: " Doesn't your ex make you sick." Me: "I don't really think about my ex. I never have." Stella: "What about right now?" Me: "Mama, I'm going to tell you this. If you're still affected by your ex in anyway. Even if you get sick, get excited, get irritated, you're simply not fully over him. Whatever a man of your past does should not concern you. You may not love him, or want him but you're still hung on him. Its not a bad thing ma. Especially because You've been together for that many years. Sooner or later it will wear off, you will forget and won't even be affected by his existence. It starts with forgiveness." Stella: "In order for me not to get affected, I have to forgive him." Me: "and forgive yourself too." Stella: "I didn't do anything wrong." Me: "That's what you think." Stella: "How do I forgive him when he acts the way he acts. Sometimes your advice Spho. Come on, I need a quick fix." Me: "There is no quick fix to permanent peace. You need to go through the motions." Stella: "What do I do about Vuyani?" Me: "Do you like him? Or you're just entertained by him?" Stella: "I like him." Me: "Does he like you?" Stella: "Yes. He said so." Me: "You can't always listen to words ma. Don't ignore actions." I started eating. Stella: "So now must I tell him about what I did?" Me: "I can't tell you what to do." Stella: "If you were me, what would you do?" Me: "Mama, you're your own person. What I would do is totally irrelevant. Just listen to your heart." Stella: "Okay." Sandile walked in the kitchen. Sands: "Spho, we need you outside. Come." I followed him out the kitchen with my plate. Just then Sibulele walked in the house. He looked a little lost. Sibulele: "You asked me to come home." Me: "No I didn't." Sibulele: "Really?" Me: "Yeah. I didn't." Sibulele: "Oh." Komander grabbed him, dragging him to the bedroom. I tried to follow but Sandile held me back. Sands: "That's between father and son. We need you out back." Me: "he can't just drag him like that!" Sands: "He gave birth to him so yes he can. Come on."

In Sibulele's bedroom, Komander closed the door and locked it. Kom: "Why would you do such a thing? How could you go work for him!" Sibulele: "What are you talking about-" Kom: "I know you're working for father!! Why!!" Sibulele: "I. Am. Not." Kom: "Sibulele I swear on life and death if you don't start speaking the

truth!" Sibulele: "I don't know what you want from me." Kom: "What did he say to you? I know he met Spho. So what did he say?" Sibulele: "He didn't tell me anything, I swear. He was just fine." Kom: "And what else." Sibulele: "He wants the baby." Kom: "Did he say why?" Sibulele: "No. He didn't." Kom: "You're going to give him the baby?" Sibulele swallowed. Kom: "Give it to him." Sibulele: "Spho would never forgive me." Kom: "Yes she will. Trust me." Sibulele: "I can't trust you!!" Kom: "Really? The same way You've been deceiving your family hiding behind the shadows knowing fully well that you're working for the same thing that is hurting them. You killed your own mother for him." Sibulele: "I didn't kill Miriam!" Kom: "Oh but you led him in to do it." Sibulele: "Don't try and act all holy here. You're just as evil as him. Just because you gave Sandile back his life doesn't make you a saint. Your feeding time is close and you'll be just as you were. Don't come and fix your mistakes with me. I am my father's son." Kom: "I never wanted this life for you." Sibulele: "And you think I did?" Kom: "When are you going to stop fighting me Sibulele? He is going to hurt you so badly. You can't live the way I grew up. He will hurt you." Sibulele: "My grandfather will never hurt me." Kom: "And what about Spho? Don't you think this will hurt her?" Sibulele: "All of a sudden you care? Its nice that you choose when and when not to participate, daddy. Have you even tried to figure out Spho? What power she might have.....or are you scared she has nothing because she's just a girl." Kom: "I'd take that back if I were you." Sibulele: "Or what? You're gonna hit me? Your precious little princess is normal unfortunately. The Komander bloodline only runs through males. She has nothing. Grandpa told me everything. So you can stop lying to protect her feelings." Kom: "Then why would he want Spho's baby. Did he tell you that." Sibulele: "We need to keep the bloodline for the next generation. That baby is a boy." Kom: "Your grandpa is feeding you lies to keep you in place and you're gobbling it all up." Sibulele: "Then you tell me the truth!" Kom: "So that you can go run your mouth to the enemy? How stupid do I look Sibulele?" Sibulele: "You don't know a thing. You're just jealous because my grandfather chose me to be his successor. You. Weren't. Strong. Enough." Kom: "Being strong is knowing when to fight and not being dictated to. Sibulele I love you with all my might, but if you want to side with your grandfather, you will end up next to your mother and plenty more. I'm not going to stop you." he walked to the door. Kom: "And a friendly reminder, if you touch a hair on that baby. You will turn to dust. I've warned you." he walked out the room.

Late afternoon, we got to sit indoors. Lakhe was still packing up out back. I was ready to open my gifts. A buzz from the gate distracted us. Me: "Who is that now?" Sands: "its a white BMW. Does any one of you know this car." Me:

"Nope." he answered the phone. Sands: "Hello." "Hi, this is Kevin, Julie's uncle. I was asked to come fetch her?" Sands: "What do you mean? Julie isn't here." Kevin: "That's weird. Her dad was called by the school, asking permission for her to go to a friend's house after school and she came here." Sands: "Man, I went to fetch Chris personally at school. I was told, we'd get a call when her parents agreed and I told the teacher if they needed transportation I'd be available. Nobody called. Wait, let me open the gate." he pressed a button and the gate opened. Me: "What's going on?" Sands: "Julie is missing." Me: "What?!" Kevin was a big guy, obviously plays rugby. His face tomato red looking very angry as he marched in. Kevin: "Look here, I don't know what games you're playing, but I want my niece!!" I walked to him. Me: "Sir, we didn't fetch Julie. There's no reason we'd lie about that. There's kids here, we just wanted her to enjoy a day before her birthday because her mom is in America." Kevin: "Her mom is not in America! She died! I need to know where my child is. Please!!" I was panicking too now. Me: "Sandile, bring me some water and sugar." he disappeared to the kitchen. Me: "Kevin, we need to call the police." Kevin: "This isn't funny guys. This child is the only person I have left. I can't lose her. Please. Give her back!!" Sibu: "We don't have her Kevin." Kevin: "Why would the teacher say she's here then!! She's the one that gave me this address!!" Me: "I'm calling the police." I took my phone. Sibu took it from my hand. Sibu: "Kevin. We don't have your child. Get out." Me: "Sibulele!!" Sibu: "What? We're not babysitters. We have our own children and our own problems!! None of them involve a white girl. GET OUT." I grabbed my phone from his hand. Kevin: "What the hell did you just say!!" he stood up. Sandile came in with the water. Lakhe entered the house from the back yard. Lakhe: "What's going on now? Who's this?" Me: "This is Julie's uncle, Kevin." Lakhe: "Oh okay, you came to drop her off?" Kevin: "What the hell do you mean, I came to fetch her!!!!" Lakhe: "Stacy never called me back though. I assumed Julie's parents said no. She never got here." Kevin: "Stacy gave me this address and told me Julie is here!!" Sibu: "Do you see a Julie?" Me: "Shut up!!" Lakhe: "Stacy can't say things like that. Who fetched Julie if she's here? My brother went to fetch Chris and spoke to Stacy telling her to call him once Julie's parents have confirmed. She hasn't called." he dialed Stacy's number. Lakhe: "Don't worry, we'll find her." Kevin: "I need her back... Please." Lakhe: "Hi Stacy. Where about are you?Good, stay there. I'm on my way." he hung up. Lakhe: "Kevin, Sandile. In the car. Spho, call the police, tell them to meet us at the preschool. Stacy is gonna tell us who took this child." Sibu: "If Julie's mom is dead, and her dad isn't the one picking her up. What if he is the one that took her?" Kevin: "Listen here, you son of bitch-" Sands: "Okay that's enough. Kevin, Let's go." they walked out to the car. Me: "What is wrong with you?" Sibu: "Why must something be wrong with me when I defend our family after

being accused of kidnap? You saw how he walked in here huffing and puffing!" Me: "I would be breathing fire if Chris had gone missing instead. That is a normal reaction as a parent when you find out your child is gone!!" Sibü: "How do we know she's gone for real? What if she's just" I stared coldly at him. My finger tips were tingling with anger. He stepped back. Sibü: "Tata..." Komander crossed a leg over the other and turned a page over on his newspaper. Me: "Get out of my sight." I hissed. Sibü went to his room. Rob: "What." he whispered. Fez: "Uhm....Does anyone else need a glass or bottle refill? Where do you guys keep the wine?" Zintle: "Make it two." Stella: "I'll fetch it." she hurried down to the cellar. I sat down on the couch talking to the police on my phone. After I was done, Stella came with a tray of wine. Me: "Ma, we can't have this much. Only one bottle. The police are going to come here to look for a child, they can't find tipsy people. It'll be hard to believe." Kom: "The police need a warrant to search this house and that will take at least a day. Which by then, and that's if Julie was abducted....she'd probably be in Asia." I stared at him in disbelief. How could he relax like this! Me: "How can you sit there and not do anything!! Did you take Julie? Is this your work!" Kom: "I don't abduct children." Me: "I don't believe you!" Kom: "Seriously? I've been sitting here all day." Me: "You could have sent people. What did you do to the child? She's only four! Please have a heart!" Kom: "I don't abduct kids. I only help with adoption. I don't know what happened to Julie. I promise." Me: "but you can find her." Kom: "I've never abducted a child. I wouldn't even know what to do with a child let alone where to find one." Me: "but your Father does." Kom: "What benefit does he get from child abduction? He doesn't have that time." Me: "You're going to let a child suffer. Probably, sold as a slave somewhere to some sick perverts. You're going to sit there and not do a thing? Again." he sighed. Kom: "What do you want me to do?" Me: "Find her!" he folded his newspaper and stood up. Kom: "Sibulele!!" he yelled. Me: "I don't want to see him." Kom: "I know. But if you want to find Julie, you'll need Sibulele." Me: "So he knows where she is." Kom: "No...but have you forgotten what he can do?" Me: "I'm not apologizing." Kom: "How is he supposed to help?" Me: "I shouldn't have to beg to save a child's life. Where the hell do you people come from? Don't you know its wrong on every single level to steal a child? Please don't make me push you out of my kids' lives." Kom: "I wasn't saying its right." Sibü appeared from the passage. Kom: "Spho." Me: "I'm sorry..." Kom: "and..." Me: "I need you to find Julie." Sibü: "I don't feel like it." I looked at Komander. Me: "See?" Kom: "Sibulele. You're not a parent. Please understand that Spho is reacting because she has a child to take care of too. You have to be thoughtful of her feelings." Sibü: "What about my feelings?" Kom: "Right now, the issue at hand is finding Julie. Feelings aside." Sibü: "Spho can find the child. Since she's good with everythin-" Fez: "Hewethu

Sbulele gakhangele umntana lo man! Kuthen funeke silencane nawe on something so important! Siyaz'thand iimpundu kodwa hayi noko. Hebethuna ooSibu." he took a sip of his wine. Fez: "Sukundijamela Sibulele. Find the child." Sibulele: "I will not be dictated to by a-" Fez: "I'm dictating to you right now!! The fact that you don't want to find a missing child proves you're less of a man than me. Go ahead and insult me!! Ok'salayo, FIND THE CHILD bhut' sylon!" Sibulele: "Ungak'linge undiqhel amasimba andingo Sandile mna uyeva Fezile?" Fez: "Oh what you gonn do? Beat me? Ingathi ulicingo? Square the fuck up. Nigga!" Sibulele: "You'll find the child yourselves!" Fez: "Zintle, khathethe nalendodana yakho yase wisile ingathi nje izokhula amaphiko ibhabhe. Thetha naye mntase khaya." Zintle: "Fez nawe yeka uthukisa. Sibulele, please. Please help us find Julie. Uyava she's only four. You know how cruel the world we live in is. Please bhuti." Sibulele: "Ask her dad to look for her! How am I supposed to know where she is." fuck this. I took my keys and walked out the house. Kom: "You couldn't just swallow your pride and look for the girl?" Sibulele: "How do you know she's lost to begin with!!" Kom: "Then where is she?" Sibulele: "Ask. Her. Dad." Fez: "If her dad knew where the hell she is. Would he have sent Kevin on a wild goose chase? Unless you're hiding Julie in your room. Hoping to raise her in secret as your child." Sibulele: "Mxim. I don't have time for this." he walked back to his room. Kom: "Where is this preschool?" Stella: "I wouldn't know. Google the address." Kom: "Tell Zama when she's back from the hospital I'll be back late. Kompany will call her with the details. I have a bad feeling about this kid." Rob: "You mean, like your 'father' bad as Spho said?" Kom: "No. I don't know how many times I must explain that my father doesn't have time for kids. More especially those he's not related to in any way. There's some bit of premature panic from his uncle. He's too sure that the child is missing. I need to find her father." he walked out.....

#133

I arrived at the preschool, seeing three cars parked outside. I locked my car and walked inside. Stacy was with Lakhe, Sandile and Kevin. Me: "Stacy, where is Julie." Stacy: "I...uhh...." Me: "I'm gonna ask you one more time and the next time won't be by words. You better open your mouth and TALK. We bring kids here to be well taken care of and you decide to just hand them over to anyone like sacks of potato, Stacy who did you give the child to?" she broke down crying. Lakhe: "Baby, wait a second.." Me: "For what!!" I screamed. Lakhe: "She's scared.." Me: "She'll wet her pants if she doesn't start talking then." I looked back at her. She hid her face in her sweater, shivering like a wet dog. Another bolt of lightening flashed outside followed by a loud

roar of thunder. A storm was brewing for the day. A gust of wind smashed the door closed, ricketing the windows in their frames. Me: "Stacy..." I hissed. Me: "Staaaacccyy.." I sang her name. Me: "Where is she Stacy?" Sands: "think I need to pee." he whispered. Stacy: "I wasn't watching okay?! I forgot! I was in the back fixing the toilet station. Then I cleaned up. The kids were running around, playing outside. I didn't see her. I just assumed Chris' uncle came back for her and took her too. I'm sorry." Kevin: "So you lied to cover your ass!!!! Damn it woman, where is she!!!" Stacy: "I don't know.." she whimpered. Stacy: "There's a camera outside-" Me: "Bring the footage then, Stacy." she jumped up and scrambled through her laptop for a few minutes, wiping her face with the back of her hand. She gave me her laptop. The footage was starting at 13:06pm. There was about 9 kids running around like crazy chickens. Kevin: "She's the one with pink ribbon piggy tails." she was wearing a lilac dress written in white letters Naartjie. White sneakers on her little feet and white socks. She looked so adorable. I looked at her sitting by herself, looking extremely bored. I fast forwarded the video a bit until 10 minutes later where she got up. I stopped and pressed play. She was walking to the gate. Then stood there. None of the other kids were paying attention. Well, obviously because they're just kids with nothing on their minds except bubbles and butterflies and cake. Who knows what goes on in toddlers heads. In a swift move, a hand reached in and swooped the girl up covering her mouth. I paused, looking at Kevin. Me: "Is that her dad?" he just stared at the screen. Kevin: "no...that's not him." Me: "Do you know who it is?" Kevin: "No. I don't." I could see in his eyes, he was panicking. Kevin: "She was kidnapped." he confirmed. Kevin: "my baby girl..." Me: "Kevin where is your brother?" Kevin: "What are you talking about? I don't have a brother!" Sands: "You said you're the uncle." Kevin: "Yes. I'm her uncle. This is my sister's daughter. My sis died a few weeks ago. She had breast cancer. Julie's father hasn't been able to tell her because she doesn't want his child to grow up with the fear of diseases or some stupid explanation he came up with. So he lied to her to keep her from asking why her mom isn't coming back." Me: "Julie is expecting her mother next week. What then?" Kevin: "I need to find her first. Please help me Spho. I cannot lose another person I love so soon. Please." Lakhe: "We'll help you man. No child or parent deserves to go through this." someone knocked on the door while I copied the video footage to the laptop and sent it to my phone. I needed it in case the police took the video and left us lingering. I did not trust them to take this seriously. It just so happened, it was them knocking. Sandile opened the door letting them in. They introduced themselves and went on with their investigation, questioning Stacy. I put down the laptop and stood outside staring at the spot Julie was sitting on. I went to stand there and looked at the gate taking

slow steps. Retracing the child's movement. I stood in her spot at the gate and I saw it right then. I felt it. There he was. Standing there. I could trust him. He stood at the gate, smiling. "Hi Julie. How are you?" he asked. Oh God... He was calling me Julie. I was in her mind experiencing her trauma. "Come here Julie. I want to take you out. I'm a friend of your dad's. You can trust me." I stood still as rock. He grabbed me once, covering my mouth and face then it was dark. Lakhe: "Baby?? Can you hear me?" I looked back at him. What. The. Fuck. Was. That. Lakhe: "Spho. Its raining full on! Why are you standing in the rain??" Sands: "What's happening over there!" he yelled from the door. Lakhe: "Come. Let's go inside." Me: "Lakhe. We're never seeing that child again." Lakhe: "Of course we are. Come." he pulled me inside the classroom. Sands: "Spho!" I was dripping wet. I didn't even realize when it started raining. Why did I leave the classroom in the first place? Me: "I'm going home." Sands: "I'll drive you." Lakhe: "I'm staying here with Kevin. I'll see you guys later." Sandile and I walked out to my car. Luckily I had a small fleece in my boot that I wrapped around me while he drove us home. Sands: "You need a hot bubble bath when you get home to get rid of this cold. I'll borrow you my tub pillow and make you hot cocoa." I nodded. Sands: "Need help with your hair?" Me: "What could you possibly do with my hair?" Sands: "You're right. Hopefully Fez and Zee are still at home. They'll blow dry it for you. You need to rest." Me: "I saw his face. I sniffed his cologne." he looked at me. Sands: "What?" Me: "The guy who stole Julie." Sands: "You know him?" Me: "No, I've never seen him in my life." Sands: "Where did you see him and most important of all, how did you smell him?" Me: "I don't know how to explain this. I felt like I was Julie, I went to where she was sitting and walked her footsteps to the gate. I saw him standing there. He came to me and said Hi Julie. How are you." Sands: "Oh shit. You had a vision? What else did he say?" Me: "He said to come to him. He wanted to take her out. He said he's a friend of her dad's. That she can trust him. Then he grabbed her." Sands: "Damn Spho. That is pretty deep. You know what? Once you're done with your bath and drink your hot cocoa and dressed warmer than a cuddly bear. We're going to look for this jerk and hurt him." Me: "You mean, look for him and bring Julie back." Sands: "Yes. And hurt him." Me: "You're going to help me?" Sands: "Definitely Spho. I will not sit and do nothing. This thing needs to be taught a lesson." Me: "Thank you Sands." he drove quietly until we reached home.

Inside the house, I went straight to my bathroom to bath. Sandile walked in the house just as Komander's car pulled into the driveway. He came into the house as well. Stella: "Did you find her?" Sands: "No. It turns out, she was kidnapped. Someone grabbed her." Stella: "No!! The poor little girl!" Kom: "Is

Spho okay?" Sands: "No. Where's Fez and Zee?" Rob: "Taking care of the kids in the playroom." Sands: "Spho says she saw the kidnapper." Kom: "When." Sands: "While we were there. She walked out the classroom to the place the girl was sitting and retraced her steps to the gate. She had a vision." Kom: "Where is she now?" Sands: "She's taking a bath. Did you find Julie's father." Kom: "Yes." Sands: "Where is he?" Kom: "In my boot." Sands: "You're joking?" Kom: "I don't joke." Sands: "Get him out!! This is not the time. He needs to come answer for his daughter!" Kom: "Kengoku ungxolela nton." Sands: "I am frustrated!" Kom: "So?" Sands: "I can't do this with you." he walked to the car and opened the boot. A man was tied hands together and feet the same with tape on his mouth as well. Sandile pulled him out and untied his feet. Sands: "March." he pushed him toward the house. Inside he sat him down, ripping off the tape. Sands: "What's your name." the man looked up at him. "I'm Dave. Who are you? What do you want from me? Why am I here?" Sands: "Geez Dave, all I asked for was a name. And there you go preparing for an oral presentation." Dave: "You grabbed me from the parking lot!" Sands: "Did you know your daughter is missing Dave?" Dave: "What? That's impossible. Her uncle went to fetch her at a friend's house." Sands: "Yep. I met Kevin. He was here. He came looking for Julie and we told him she wasn't here. We just came from the school now and saw the footage of someone grabbing Julie from the gate." Dave's face went pale. Dave: "Is this some kind of sick joke?" Sands: "I don't joke about kids Dave." Dave: "Get these things off of me!!" he wiggled his hands trying to get free. Rob untied him. Dave: "Someone took my only child? From school? Where are the police!! I want to see this footage." Sands: "Dave. I need to ask. Is there anyone, who'd want to hurt your family?" Dave: "No!!" Sands: "I have reason to believe, Julie knows the person who took her. She walked to that gate willingly. Being called by him. As if she's seen him before, Is Julie naturally friendly or....?" Dave: "No!! She's not!! I want to see this footage!!! Take me to that school! I want to see it!!" he paced up and down. Dave: "No... This can't be happening. No. I cannot lose my daughter!!!" Sands: "Dave, are you in any kind of shady dealings? Why would someone just target your child specifically." Dave: "I'm not in any shady dealings! I never have been! I don't know why someone would target my Julie!!" Kom: "I believe you." I was done with my bath and could hear yelling from the lounge. After getting dressed in black leggings and a white sweater plus thick warm socks. I wore my boots and took to the lounge. Me: "David." he looked at me. Dave: "How do you know my name?" Me: "I don't know." Dave: "Is this some kind of crazy house? Is this a prank? Because its not fucking funny! Kevin if that's you playing this, I'm done with you!!!" he yelled. Kom: "Spho... Sandile says you saw the kidnapper." Me: "I did. I remember his smell too." Kom: "Okay. Can you describe him?" Me: "It will

be better if you see the footage." I took out my phone, and connected it to the TV. I fast forwarded to Julie sitting in her spot then pressed play. The video played. Same scene. Julie standing and walking to the gate. The man I saw walking to the gate. The little chat and his big hands grabbing the little girl. Dave gasped. Tears rolling down his red cheeks. Sands: "Do you know who that is Dave?" David shook his head. Dave: "I've never seen that person! What does he want with my child! Do you know him!!" he asked me. I shook my head. Me: "but I'll find him David." he sunk into the couch with his head buried in his hands. Rob: "I'm calling a private investigator." he took out his phone went to the kitchen. Sibulele came out his room. Sibulele: "Did you find her?" nobody answered him. I brought Dave some water. Sands: "We haven't found her yet. We only have footage that confirms she's been abducted. This is her dad." Sibulele: "Oh....uhm, I'm sorry." Me: "Because your sorry is going to make it all okay." Sibulele: "I assumed her dad fetched her. Nobody thinks straight kidnap Spho!" Me: "No, you're the only one that doesn't think straight kidnap. I don't know what candy land you live in where people just go missing and everyone assumes they're fine." Sibulele: "that's not fair-" Kom: "Can you both just be quiet? This won't help." The gate buzzed. Sandile opened. Me: "Sandile, how about we start with checking for more footage in the buildings around the creche? I'm sure they all have outside cameras. That way we can probably see the make of the car this person was driving." Dave: "What do I do?" Me: "You sit there and be a parent David." Sands: "Keep your phone on at all times in case the kidnappers call asking for a ransom." Dave: "I'm not even rich. Your lounge and kitchen combined is the size of my whole house. Why would they target me?" Kom: "Maybe its not about money. Spho, once you get a number plate, send it. The quicker, the better. I'll shut this whole province down if I have to. That child comes home unharmed, TONIGHT." Me: "Yes sir." Babalo and Hlumi walk in. Babalo: "Evening guys. I know we're late but we got tied up at work. I hope we didn't miss everything." Hlumi: "Here's your gift from us Spho." Kom: "It was my baby shower." Me: "Thank you so much guys..." Babalo stared at Komander who stared back at him. The air around him crispy cold. Sibulele: "Is.....everything okay?" neither of them responded. Sandile pulled me back. Sibulele: "Tata..." Komander walked to the door. Me: "Where are you going?" Kom: "Home." Me: "What about Julie?" Kom: "You'll send me the plate numbers and his picture. I'll work from there." Me: "Is this about the hospital incident? You were the one strangling Babalo in the psych ward?" Kom: "No. That wasn't me." he walked out. I looked at Babalo. Me: "What is it?" Babalo: "Who is that guy?" Sands: "After you stared at him like the last piece of fried chicken, you're asking us? How are we supposed to know who he is? Maybe he's the mailman. Do you know him?" Babalo: "I've never seen him in my life. Yet I feel like I've known him forever."

Sands: "hayi ke sikhwele taxi enye because nam andimazi." Babalo: "He makes me uncomfortable Spho." he stood next to me. Babalo: "Who is he?" And that's what I wondered looking back at Babalo himself who had mysteriously appeared in our lives months ago. Who is he?

#134

Sandile and I were out in the preschool street. Indeed there were two other cameras facing the school. Unfortunately one of them wasn't working. We were now waiting for the second one to load. Sitting in a small cramped office with a pink faced chubby man with white hair. "You know all my kids went to this school. All four of them. It is absurd how something like this could happen. How did nobody see anything?" he asks. Sands: "Really crazy." I wasn't in the mood to talk. My mind was on Julie. Finding her. Bringing her back. Hopefully unharmed. "Here you go. I saved one for the police." Me: "Thank you sir." we walked out to my car and sat inside, watching the video. It was a little blurry. Sands: "Can you make out the plates?" Me: "No." a white Benz parked in the lot. I couldn't make out the plate names. The man got out the car and looked directly at the camera then continued to the school gate. Sands: "Do you think he did this on purpose? You saw him stare at the camera right?" Me: "Yes." I rewind a bit and pressed pause. Sands: "And?" Me: "Its him." I shot a picture of the screen and sent it to Komander as well as the car. Me: "start the car." Sandile pressed start. Me: "I'm seeing something. I need motion. Just drive." I put on the seat belt and relaxed in my seat with my eyes closed. He drove the car. There were two voices, screaming at each other and I couldn't figure out what they were saying. Something about stupidity. Then a name. Saurus. Who was Saurus? Then gun shots. I jumped in my seat. Sands: "What? What is it?" he stopped the car. Sands: "Did you see her?" Me: "How is this possible? That I can see in another dimension? Another space?" Sands: "I think its pretty cool. Your father has all kinds of demons. Maybe some good ones too and they rubbed off on you." I looked out the window. Me: "I need to know who Saurus is. Someone got shot. Two guys were arguing about Saurus, and I heard a gunshot." Sands: "That Saurus name sounds familiar." my phone buzzed. A message. Kom: "Sent an alert out. Is there anything else?" Me: "Where are you?" Kom: "My house. I told you I'm going home." Me: "You don't have a house here. So where." he sent me an address. I gave it to Sandile and he drove. Sands: "Who's address is this?" Me: "Tyrone." Sands: "You're taking me to his house?" Me: "You're the one driving." Sands: "Spho I am a wanted man by his demons. They will swallow me alive!!" Me: "You've been around him for days and only now you're worried?" Sands:

"This is his house!" all the while he was still driving. Me: "Sandile let me try again maybe this time I can get a location." I closed my eyes. Sands: "Try and locate my ancestors too, introduce me while you still can because I do not see myself surviving past an hour." I ignored him, focusing on receiving a connection. It wasn't happening. I kept getting blank. Why did I think I could do this again? I'm no Wonder Woman. I don't have powers. I just saw this dude's face because I was watching the video footage. I'm not special. Sands: "Here we are. You okay?" Me: "Yes. Just can't see anything." Sands: "Maybe you need to be angry to see." he did have a point but I wasn't in the mood. I looked at the almost normal house in front of us. I got out the car, followed by Sandile up to the gate. It opened. Two dudes stood on the inside of those high walls. They looked like statues. Same mask Kompany had, they had as well. The door opened and we went into the beautiful ordinary house. Me: "I thought you didn't have a house." Kom: "Problem is you don't ask, you simply assume. Which is a disease you and your brother need to get rid of." Me: "I have a few questions." Sands: "What's that burning smell?" Kom: "probably my food." Sands: "Is it human flesh? It smells human fleshy." Kom: "Why did you bring him here?" Me: "He insisted." Kom: "Sit. You want some juice?" Me: "I'm fine." Sands: "same." we sat down. Me: "I am confused." Kom: "about the things you see?" Me: "Yes." Kom: "You have a special gift. You have an eye on the top of your head that sees. With proper training, you have the ability to see as you wish. On command." Me: "I don't want an eye on my head. That is just creepy. Make it go away. Please." Kom: "I can't. Not even your grandpa can remove this from you. Which is why he ran when he saw you." Me: "he didn't run." Kom: "He didn't follow you either. He saw who you are. And he hasn't come back since. We'd be drowning in him right now. He sent Sibulele to you instead." Me: "Why would he send Sibulele?" Kom: "He'd rather lose a weaker version of him than his actual self. Father cares about nobody and nothing. He has the ability of making you comfortable in his protection until he needs a sacrifice. Unfortunately that is what Sibulele is to him." Me: "What else can I do?" Kom: "A lot of damage. Not just seeing. Unimaginable strength. The universe responds to you. You dictate what needs to be done." Me: "And Sibulele?" Kom: "He is more similar to me. Just that his grandpa has limited him." Me: "Why then is mine so dangerous." Kom: "Because you're not pure evil. Spho, I wish I had more answers. All I know is, after being with you these few days, I know you're not like us. Nothing like us at all. It is so fascinating to watch. The way you put things together and take care of everyone. You are dominated by your goodness, your kindness and purity. That is where the danger lies. I'm not sure how but I think father knows. He sent Sibulele to steal the baby once its born. Its not to hurt you, its to anger you. He wants the darkness to grow in you so that he can control you." Me:

"Why would he send Sibulele and not do it himself?" Kom: "I told you Sibulele is his sacrifice." Me: "You think I'd kill my brother?" Kom: "You could but because of the person you are, you won't." Sands: "Is there a membership form I can fill in or an admission fee I need to pay to be able to join your family activities." Komander stared at him. Sands: "Never mind." Me: "So I'm a Komander now." Kom: "No. You're Spho. You don't let this define you. Yes, it's going to be an inconvenience at times, other times it will be great. But you live your life regardless." Me: "I would think you'd encourage me to embrace the name." Kom: "My father forced it on me. I never had a choice. I grew up sopainfully. I can't even feel pain anymore. I have these tattoos covering scars I got from daily beatings. I was trained with demons. Ate with them. Killed with them. And when I thought I would die..." he smiled. Kom: "He brought me back to life. Holding me up with my spinal cord and vowed to never let me break unless I was in his hands. I would never do that to you. Or Sibulele. I don't know what kind of animal could look at an infant they've created and feel hatred." Sands: "Maybe it's the only love he knows." Kom: "Tell me what you saw." he leaned back on the couch. Me: "Nothing. I just heard voices. Two men arguing. I couldn't hear exactly about what but I heard one say Saurus. Then a gun shot." Kom: "So Saurus took the child." Me: "Who's Saurus?" Kom: "Saurus is a drug dealer. Works above Fernandez. He's been knocking on my door for a while." he whistled and one of his statues walked to him. Kom: "Find me Saurus." the guard nodded and walked off. Sands: "Is he human?" he whispered. Kom: "No." Sands: "I had a hunch." he moved closer. Kom: "Why are you scared?" Sands: "I'm not scared. I'm just trying to be comfortable." he looked around. Sands: "but why do you have non human beings roaming about?" Kom: "Nobody else was hiring and he needed the job. Plus I like things I don't have to have a conversation with." Sands: "So I...oh...I get it." he kept quiet. Me: "How do you know Babalo." Kom: "I was wondering when you'd get to that." Me: "Hopefully, you'll tell me the truth." Kom: "I've never seen Babalo. I don't know who he is." Me: "and that stare?" Kom: "That's something that usually happens when our blood connects." Sands: "Heee, how did potato-head Babalo get an application form though? He's dumber than me." Me: "If your blood connects to his, and mine doesn't....?" Kom: "You probably thought you hated him and wanted to strangle him to death. That's the connection." Me: "So...he's what, a brother?" Kom: "I don't think so. I'm the only child. You and Sibulele are my only as well. Perhaps a cousin." Me: "wouldn't he had been able to fight off whatever it was strangling him in the psych ward if he was a Komander." Kom: "Until you know who you are, your strength is dormant. He probably doesn't know." Me: "Aren't you curious to know who he is?" Kom: "No. The less people involved, the better. Father is building an army. If Sibulele is to have kids, that's him

multiplied. He probably already knows about Babalo seeing that he tried to kill him once, which means his days are numbered. He might drop dead any minute." Me: "And you won't do anything?!" Kom: "He's better off dead than alive." Me: "How long are you going to keep avoiding your father?" Kom: "Its safer." Me: "For you. Everyone else is suffering. You can't let innocent people die for nothing. And why would he want to kill Babalo? Why not recruit him?" Komander looked at the floor. Kom: "You're right. There's something Babalo has that he needs to get rid of." Sands: "What could that be." Kom: "I have no idea but I'm going to figure it out." I looked at him, he looked at me. The guard walked back in and a grouchy deeply unnatural voice spoke: "I found him, boss." Already? He is so efficient, I need him in my house. Kom: "How long will it take till he gets here?" Guard: "34 minutes and 22 seconds sir." Kom: "Good. You can prepare." The guard walked off. Kom: "You two might want to get going." Sands: "Awww. I thought I had screen time." Kom: "You want to see real live demons?" Sands: "Spho let's go. Its late and I'm trying to work some sleep tonight." Komander chuckled. Kom: "I'll send them to come tuck you in." Sands: "Spho!!" Me: "Khamyeke man tat- I mean bhuti." I stood up. Kom: "It was nice of you to come visit. Even under the circumstances. It kind of feels nice to have someone want to come find you and talk." he stood up. Kom: "but I need you to leave and never come back here." his voice had completely changed, rattling the furniture out of place. His eyes were ablaze and I wondered where it all went wrong. Kom: "L e a v e." he growled. Sandile grabbed my arm and dragged me out. My mind had just gone blank again. Only when he drove away I got my consciousness back. Me: "Its the guard." Sands: "What?" Me: "The guard is preparing him to be in full demon mode when Saurus arrives that's why the sudden change." Sands: "Ooooh Thank God! I thought I pissed him off or something. Pheww." and he's wild if he thinks I'm never coming back.

Back at home, Dave was talking to the police in a separate room, answering questions and giving his statement. Everyone else was in the lounge. It was just before 7pm. Lakhe came home. I'd just walked in with Sandile as well. Sands: "I still owe you hot cocoa." Me: "No. Can I just have water please." Sands: "Sure." I sat down. Rob: "any news?" Me: "No." Sandile gave me water then left for his bedroom. Me: "Babalo can I talk to you?" Babalo: "uhm...sure." he followed me to the movie room. We sat down side by side. Balo: "What's wrong?" Me: "Can you tell me more about yourself?" Balo: "Is it about that guy that was here?" Me: "No. Its not." Balo: "Okay. Well you know most about me. I work-" Me: "No, I want to know about your childhood. Your parents." Balo: "I grew up pretty normal I guess. Middle class family. My mother was a nurse.

Dad, a teacher. What exactly do you want to know?" Me: "You're not adopted?" Balo: "No. Why would you think that?" Me: "Your parents are still alive?" Balo: "Yeah. My mother is in a home though. Dad is at his house. What's going on Spho?" Me: "Babaloo, you trust me right?" Balo: "I do." Me: "When I have all the answers, I'll tell you everything I swear. I just need you back inside this house temporarily." Balo: "We don't want to crowd your house Spho. Your family is here." Me: "That's why I need you close. I'll ask someone to fetch your things." Balo: "Alright. I'll let Hlumi know." meanwhile outside the door, Sibul listens and cursed under his breath. He walked to his room, closing the door behind him. He closed the curtains and stood in the center of his room, summoning energy. A humming vibrated around him. Sibul: "Father, we have a problem." "What is it now." a voice responded. Sibul: "Spho found Babaloo. He's under her protection." "How could you let that happen?" Sibul: "I don't think they know. She just moved him here." "Good, then you'll kill him. Tonight. You don't come back to me until his heart is pumping on your hands."

Saurus was led into the Komander house by a maid dressed in black. He stared at her hips as they swayed side to side. She led him to a simple room and sat him down. She: "The boss will be with you shortly." she walked out. He waited a while. Within a few minutes he was agitated. Saurus: "How exactly long is shortly?" he yelled. The guard appeared before him. Saurus: "What the fuck!!!!" he jumped up. Guard: "You were saying?" Saurus: "You just appeared out of thin-fucking-air. What the fuck are you man!!" Guard: "What I am, is of no concern. Do you want water or juice?" Saurus: "I was called here for a meeting! What the hell is this!" Guard: "He'll be with you shortly." Saurus: "How long is shortly?! Fuck that, I don't want to be here. Just cancel it!!" Guard: "I unfortunately can not." Saurus: "What the fuck do you...." the guard disappeared. Saurus: "Ohhhh fuck. What level of hell is this? Where am I? You can't just fucking disappear man!!!!!" he screamed pulling at the locked door. His heart stopped at the sound of a slithery hiss. From the corner of his eye, he saw the large snake crawling toward him. Saurus: "H E E L L L L P P P P!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" he screamed. Saurus: "PLEASE HELP ME!!!!!!!!!!" he cried. Guard: "In hell, nobody can you scream." he appeared behind him. Saurus looked around. Saurus: "Man, You've got to help me!! There was a snake here. It was huge!" Guard: "The one around your neck?" Saurus felt the thick moist crawling on his shoulders and his bladder gave up. Guard: "When you're ready to cooperate, I can remove him. For now, I'll let you two get acquainted." Saurus: "I'm ready!!! Please!!! I am ready to cooperate!!!!" Guard: "That's disappointing. I thought I had some leg time to do a bit of exercise.

Okay then." he removed the serpent, and let it on the floor where it disappeared. Saurus: "Where am I? What am I doing here?" Guard: "How do you walk out your house not knowing where you're going? Ought to be much more careful than that. I would have just gotten acquainted with the snake if I were you. You'll need a friend, following what's next." Saurus: "What? My guy, I have money. Name your price. Please let me out." Guard: "Close your eyes." Saurus: "Why?" the house lights shut down. Everything was dark. Saurus: "Bro, please...." hushed whispers surrounded him. His skin felt a cold icy breeze then abnormal warmth and then.....severe heat. His skin felt as though it was alight, his flesh melting off. Saurus: "pllleeaassee!!!!" he screamed flailing his body around. After he'd fell to the ground, burning in agonizing pain, the flames wore off. His body lifted off the floor. Saurus screamed louder, kicking and ripping his clothes off. A full force threw him at the wall. His connect, crushing bones and breaking him internally. He fell to the ground with a thud. Barely able to move. Barely alive. Komander stood above him. Kom: "Where is Julie." his tone a quake sound. Saurus: "I don't..... know..... who Julie..... is." he breathed. Kom: "I'm asking you one more time." Saurus: "I swear!!" Komander watched him as Saurus' body twisted backward. Kom: "Remember." Saurus could barely breathe let alone talk. Kom: "She's only four." Saurus: "Dave Scott.....owes.....money." Kom: "So you took his little girl." Saurus: "No. Not me. I'm..... just..... hired." Kom: "By who." Saurus: "I don't.... know.... Just knowwhere he.....lives." Kom: "Good. Where." the guard gave him a pen and pencil. Saurus: "Here. ." he took the pen and wrote down an address. Kom: "Extrahet illum pedibus. Eodemque tempore inferno absumere decrevi." Saurus: "Ple-" several hands grabbed his ankles and swooped him up in the air. Saurus: "NO!!!!!!!" he sobbed. Saurus: "Please!!!!!! Let me go!!!!!" Kom: "If I don't find what I'm looking for, I'll set you alight for weeks. I have details ready for you. Hungry mouths to feed." Saurus: "Please man, I didn't do anything wrong!!" Kom: "Yes, you did." the room was engulfed in large flames and dancing figures. Kom: "Welcome home."

#135

Komander was driven by Kompany to the address given to him by Saurus. It was a medium house, painted grey with high walls and an aluminum gate. Komander walked in without a knock. A group of men were playing cards in the lounge. One of them looked up and saw him. "How did you get in?" everyone looked up. "Who's this?" another asked. Kom: "I'm here for the girl." the first one stood up. "There's no girl here." Kom: "You are?" "Peter." Kom: "Okay, Peter. Saurus sent me here." Peter: "There's no girl here." whispers

surrounded the room and a cold icy breeze. Peter: "what the fuck is that?" all the windows of the house flew open all at once. The group of men jumped up to their feet. Kom: "I warned you once. Where. Is. The. Girl." Peter: "Aqua. Where is she?" Aqua: "Man I just got here!" a strong grip held Peter's neck. Peter: "What the fuck is on my neck!" he choked. Kom: "Your worst nightmare." Peter looked down and saw black smoke tightening around his neck. Kom: "Look around you Peter." Peter stared at his friends who had seemingly frozen in time. Kom: "All I have to do, is snap. And they all drop dead. Just tell me where Dave Scott's daughter is and I'll let you be. You can trust me." Pete: "okay...." he could barely breath. Kom: "So where is she." Peter: "Down the hall." Kom: "You're a smart man Peter." he removed the smoke. Peter: "What are you?" he rubbed his neck. Kom: "Idcirco praecipio tibi ut stabit." Peter felt something grabbing his legs and swinging him in the air. He screamed his lungs out, kicking about. Kom: "Nobody can hear you Peter. This is your own private hell." Pete: "I didn't do anything wrong man!! I swear!!" he sobbed. Kom: "aww. Poor Pete." he stretched out his hands. Kom: "You were at the wrong place at the exact right time Peter. Who instructed you to take this child." Peter: "A guy named Lenny. Please let me go!!" Kom: "Lenny who??" he brought him closer and held Pete's neck. Pete: "Lenny Sombero. Dave does his business books and he was supposed to do some fraud thing but he refused and got Lenny mad. He threatened to report him to the cops so Lenny wanted to teach him a lesson." Kom: "by kidnapping his daughter?" Pete: "Yes." Kom: "She's just four." Peter swallowed. Kom: "Do you know what I do to pedophiles Peter?" Pete: "but I'm not a pedophile. I didn't touch the girl. She's a baby!" Kom: "That's not what I asked Peter." Pete: "No. I don't know what you do to pedophiles. Please, let me free." he begged. Kom: "Do you want to know?" Pete: "No!!" Kom: "The fact that you're here. Tells me, you support pedophiles. Real men settle scores with each other. Not by hurting little girls, Peter." Pete: "Yes sir." Kom: "Where do I find Lenny." Pete: "He's in his house. Up in Millpark." he told him the address. Kom: "Fancy." he dropped him. Peter rubbed his neck again. Pete: "I'm sorry." Komander walked down the hall to the locked room and removed the door. Julie was sitting in the corner alone. Kom: "hi Julie." she looked at him. Kom: "I'm Chris' grandpa. He's your best friend from school right?" Julie: "How did you know?" Kom: "He told me about you and that your favorite color is purple." Julie: "Its actually Lilac. I keep correcting him, he just doesn't listen." Komander smiled. Kom: "I agree. Do you want to go see him? Your dad is waiting for you too." Julie: "Why am I here??" Kom: "Some man was trying to hurt your father. It doesn't matter now." Julie: "and you won't hurt me?" Kom: "absolutely not. Here. This is a magic wand. When someone tries to hurt you, you use it." he gave it to her. Julie: "Its just a stick." he touched the end of it and it sparkled. She smiled.

Julie: "Where did you get it?" Kom: "I picked it up next to the rainbow." Julie: "You do know I'm not an idiot right?" Kom: "I know." Julie: "Okay." she got up. Kom: "Promise me you'll keep your eyes closed until we get to the car." Julie: "and how exactly am I to walk with my eyes closed Grandpa Chris?" Kom: "I'll carry you. Julie?" Julie: "hm?" Kom: "Did those men hurt you or anything?" Julie: "Not really." Kom: "Not really how?" Julie: "There was one who touched my leg but the other one punched him in the face and he stopped." Kom: "Okay. Let's go. Eyes closed, wave your magic wand." he picked her up and carried her out whistling for Kompany. Kom: "Hold her. She's asleep. I need to finish here." he gave her the child and walked back in the house. Kom: "Extrahet illum pedibus. Eodemque tempore inferno absumere decrevi." he whispered. All doors and windows shut closed. Huge flames appeared all around the house. The group of men gained consciousness, when realizing what was happening they started to panic. Peter: "I thought you said I could trust you!!" Kom: "How do you go about trusting demons." Aqua: "a dem....fuck man, what the hell did you do!!!!" he screamed. Peter: "he just appeared!!!" he looked at Komander. Peter: "wait....you're going to kill us?" Kom: "No, Pete. You're going to kill each other. I'm just here to watch." Aqua: "You're sick!! Why would you think I'd kill my friend for!! Tell him Pete." Kom: "He can't hear you." he looked at Pete, who had a demonic look on his face. Aqua: "Peter, I am your brother!!!" Kom: "This will go much faster if you just give in." he whispered. Aqua: "You're fucking sick!!!! What are you!!!! Why would you do this!!!!" Kom: "Peter." Pete grunted. Kom: "Attack." Peter jumped at Aqua biting a huge chunk off his cheek off. Aqua screamed trying to push him off. Peter held him down eating off his face. The other three stared in complete horror. Aqua's screams finally died down with his last breath. Kom: "Good boy." the three remaining took steps back. One of them spoke up. "I swear I can and will do anything you want sir. I'll work for you. Please!!!" Komander stared at the blue mark on his face. Kom: "Peter." Pete turned to him with blood all over his face and a chunk of flesh hanging from his mouth. "Man please!!!!" he cried. Kom: "Attack." Peter pounced and grabbed the second man ripping his chest open and held his heart. The man stopped breathing instantly. Peter squeezed and giggled. The blood dissipated from the organ in blurps. The other remaining of the two threw up on the floor. The heart exploded in Peter's hand. Kom: "Peter." Pete turned to him and closed his eyes. Komander looked at the remaining two. Kom: "What's your names." "Matt." "Warren." Kom: "Matt and Warren. Remaining with Pete." Pete's eyes opened. Kom: "Ready?" all the flames died down. He walked out the door. Kom: "Attack."

The police had left our house and everyone was in a daze waiting anxiously. There was Komander's car at the gate. I opened and they drove in. I waited by the door. He climbed out the car carrying Julie. Me: "Oh Thank God!!" I sighed in relief. Dave stood up when Komander walked in the house. Dave: "My baby!!" Julie: "Daddy!!" she jumped to him and hugged tight. Dave: "Thank you so much...." Kom: "Your client Lenny seems to be mad at you for refusing to do fraud." Dave: "He Did this!!?? I didn't get this far by being dishonest and fraudulent!" Kom: "I believe you Dave. Don't worry about him. Focus on your daughter." Dave: "How can I ever repay you?" Kom: "Tell her the truth David. About her mother. She's a smart kid. She will understand." Dave nodded. Dave: "Are you okay my baby?" he sat down and assessed her. I walked over to Komander who was standing at the door. Me: "Thank you." Kom: "I should've been there to protect you while growing up. I did you wrong and I'll never forgive myself. I should've faced father too. I can't keep hiding you and running from him." Me: "You really did the best you could. Its done now. Do you do hugs?" Kom: "No. Sorry." Me: "Okay." Kom: "Watch out for your brother. He's up to no good today. Protect Babalo. At all times." Me: "How?" he pulled me outside the house. Kom: "You touch him. Your skin must touch his, and say this 'Defendat spiritus est' three times. Inhale around his head. Exhale on his closed bedroom window from the inside. Once he's gone to sleep, On his closed door, you exhale again. Nothing will touch him." Me: "Okay." Kom: "I'll find the connection he has to us soon. I promise. I have to go now, got more errands to run." Me: "Okay. I'll see you soon." he got in his car. I went into the house. Me: "Julie, are you hungry sweetie?" Julie: "Yes. I am." Me: "I'll make you something to eat quick? You want to say hi to Chris?" Julie: "Sure." I called Chris to the lounge for her and I went to dish up in the kitchen. David came in while I was busy. Dave: "Spho thank you so much for giving me back my life. I'll do anything to repay you. Please." Me: "I'll hold you to that. For now, just take care of her. Tell her about her mom." Dave: "I don't know how to." Me: "David she needs to grieve her mother. She will be okay." Dave: "I guess so." I gave him the warm plate. Dave: "We're really grateful Spho. To you and your family. And that guy...uhm, your security." that being Komander. Me: "Uhm...its a pleasure." he went to feed his daughter. Kevin arrived after 15 minutes. Kev: "Hey..." he hugged them both. Which.....was kind of odd. He checked Julie too. Like her dad did. Sandile looked at me and I too looked back. Kev: "She's okay." Dave: "Yeah." Kevin went up to Lakhe. Kev: "Thank you so much Lakhe." Lakhe: "That way." he pointed to me. Kevin came and hugged me. Kev: "Thank you. For everything. I am forever in your debt." Me: "You're welcome Kevin." after Julie finished eating they got ready to leave. They said their thank you's again and left with their little girl. Sandile stood next to me with his arms crossed. Fez stood next to him with his

hands on his hips. Sands: "Is it me or are they gay?" Fez: "They gay." Me: "You guys." Lakhe came back from putting Chris to bed. Lakhe: "What now." Rob: "There was definitely a vibe there." Me: "They're brothers." Sands: "In law and they hugged like society ladies." Fez: "that's offensive Sandile. I don't hug like a society lady." Sands: "I wasn't talking about you. I'm talking about Adam and Steve over there. What are the chances that they fucking?" Stella: "Sandile!!" Babalo: "Pretty damn good. I don't even hug my friends. That's just wrong." we all looked at Lakhe. Lakhe: "What?" Sands: "You spent time with one of them. You know something. Did he say anything?" Lakhe: "he was just worried. Nothing else." Me: "Babe." Sands: "Yeah babe. Tell the truth." Lakhe: "I'm not going to be part of this gossip. Its time for bed." we all stared at him. Lakhe: "Fine. He was just a little bit panicky, called Dave like a million times, yelling at him and telling him to pick up his phone because and I quote 'OUR daughter is missing.'" Sands: "I called it." Dumi: "Good one Sands." I needed to get Babalo alone. I showed him their room. Hlumi had quickly gone to fetch their clothes probably on her way back now. I held his arm and he looked at me questionably. He moved a step closer. Babalo: "what's going on?" Me: "close your eyes." Babalo: "As exciting as this is, but we're in your husband's house with his family members. Anyone could walk in on us." he whispered. Me: "Close. Your. Eyes. And stop being nasty. I don't want you." Babalo: "Oh. My bad." he closed his eyes. Me: "Defendat spiritus est. Defendat spiritus est. Defendat spiritus est." I inhaled his scent around his head and he opened his eyes. Balo: "What is that for?" Me: "Protection." Balo: "As weird as that is, it feels kinda good." I went to the closed window and exhaled. Balo: "Protection from what." Me: "People that might want to kill you. I have to do this at the door as well when you sleep, which means you can't go back out." Balo: "We won't have to. We have a bathroom in here and a small bar fridge." Me: "Keep her inside here. No matter what you hear, don't open." Balo: "Done." I nodded and walked out. Hlumi came in with two bags. Hlumi: "Hey Spho." Me: "Hi Hlumz. I was just showing Balo your bedroom. Do you need anything?" Hlumi: "oh no, I'm too tired. I'm turning in." Me: "Alright. I'll see you in the morning. Got everything you need in here?" Balo: "Yes Spho, goodnight." I closed their door and did as instructed then walked to the lounge. Fez, Zintle, Sands, Rob and Stella were still there. Me: "You guys staying over?" Fez: "Yes. Sandile just challenged me to a game of Fifa. I might be a gay man but I'm actually offended so I need to beat his ass." Zee: "I was promised a movie." Rob was looking at Stella with gloomy eyes. I wonder utata uyazaz ba akafunwa phof. Stella: "I need to go exfoliate. I might have grown wrinkles from this missing child saga." Rob: "You want some tea?" Stella: "Please." Rob went to the kitchen while Stella went to her bathroom. Sands: "Okay ladies. Follow daddy." Me: "I'm going to bed. Sandile you'll give them a place to

crash. Goodnight guys." Sands: "Yes ma'am." Zee: "Night boo." I went to my bedroom and flopped on the bed. Lakhe: "Tired?" Me: "Yes." he undressed and massaged me. Starting with my feet. Then came to my belly, chatting to his baby. He ended up falling asleep before me. I was ready to doze off as well but my eyes shot open, it was too convenient for everyone to fall asleep at the same time. I stood up and got dressed, walking out the room. Sibulele was standing in the passage trying to open a door. I stood behind him. Me: "What are you doing." he turned and looked at me with a malicious look in his eyes. Sibulele: "What did you do." Me: "Nothing. You might wanna get to bed. You're wasting your time here." Sibulele: "You don't tell me what to do!" he tried the door again. Crashes of thunder burst in the sky. A shock of lightning illuminated inside the house. I looked at his hand and watched it crack and twist to an abnormal angle. He screamed out loud holding on to the wall with his shoulder. Me: "Next time, that might be your neck." I walked back to bed....

#136

Sibulele dragged himself into the building his grandfather resides in. He found him in the lounge, by his cult table teaching a baby spirit how to fly. Sibulele: "tata..." he breathed. Father: "What." he continued without so much as a glance. Sibulele: "She broke my hand. It feels like my whole body." his grandfather set his spirit down to sleep. He turned to look at him. Father: "What happened?" Sibulele: "I didn't know she could do this. I made sure they were all sleeping. She appeared out of nowhere and twisted my hand." Father: "Let me see?" Sibulele showed him the cracked hand. Father: "Your sister did this?" Sibulele: "Yes. Or maybe its my dad? He changed to her?" Father: "Probably." he touched the hand, breaking it back to its original form. Sibulele screamed in agony. Father: "Its okay.. You'll be fine." Sibulele dissolved to the floor in excruciating pain. The Father picked him up and held both his cheeks looking into his eyes. Father: "You're stronger than this. Okay? You'll be fine in a short little while. Hold it together." Sibulele: "Okay." Father: "Good boy. You're gonna sleep here tonight. They don't deserve you, my boy. They don't see what a treasure you are. I'll take care of you. You'll be okay." Sibulele: "You told me Spho doesn't have any powers. That she's just a girl. And it doesn't run in their blood like ours." Father: "That's true. Komanders are not women. They never will be. You are the first born. The son. The only one. There's a reason why it happened like this. Its your father who appeared as Spho to confuse you and make you hate your sister because he's embarrassed for her." Sibulele: "Why is he embarrassed." Father: "His mother was a whore, son. Your mother

too. And she gave birth to another whore. That's what the women are here. Nothing else. Don't let that blind you though. They may be whores but they give birth to Komanders regardless. Therefore you need to be close to your sister. So that you're in the delivery room when she gives birth. She won't be able to raise that child." Sibulele: "Okay." Father: "That's my baby boy. Now you go rest for now okay? I have to finish up some work. I'll check on you in the morning and juice you up so we prevent what happened tonight in the future." he kissed his forehead. Sibulele: "Okay." Father: "Go on." Sibulele walked to the sleeping quarters on the other side. "What are you doing to my son?" Komander appeared behind his father. Father: "I should've known you'd butt in. Sibulele is my son now. Excuse me." he pushed him aside. Komander: "What are you doing to him? You've never held me like that before." Father: "So this is you being jealous-" Komander: "I don't care!!!!!" he roared. Komander: "That is MY son!! You do not get to coddle him and turn him weak!!!" Father: "Sibulele is not weak. He's obedient. Something you never were." he resumed to his work. Komander: "Father I know you're trying to hurt me using him." Father: "How important do you think you are in my life for me to go through such lengths JUST to hurt you. Like I said, Sibulele is MY son now. No part of me wants to hurt him. We have fun. He's funny. Loving. Trusting. Such adorable qualities for a little boy. You never gave me none of that. I'm old, I need to feel loved." Komander: "YOU'RE NOT HUMAN!!!!!" Father: "Only you would point that out. Now you see why I prefer Sibulele?" Komander: "I need to know what happened to my mother." the father stopped his work. Father: "She died." Komander: "what was she... A whore too? I think you're lying." Father: "Yes she was a whore. Just like your baby mama. Its a damn shame whores don't live long." Komander: "My mother was not a whore. You kidnapped her and kept her to give birth to me." Father: "No I did not. She came to ME. And decided to stay. Like a whore does." he continued with his work. Komander: "And Babalo." The father turned to him and flared in anger. Father: "You give me Babalo!!!!!" Komander: "You're not getting him until you tell me about mother." Father: "Komander I will end you!!!! You and that family!!!! I will end you!!!!!" Komander smiled. Komander: "Oh my. This must be really good. Babalo has something you want. He's one of us, isn't he?" Father: "He is your mother's son. A complete error!" Komander: "What!" Father: "I will find him and I will kill him. I won't stop until I do. And that little whore of yours." Komander: "What. Do. You. Mean? He's my brother? How could.....HOW!!!!....." Father: "It doesn't matter now. Point is, if Babalo knows what he is. He'll obviously kill you. There can be only one Komander successor. Usually its the first born son but then you're weak." Komander: "I'll show you weak." he walked out.

I woke up in the middle of the night after a restless fit. I sat up, hearing the gate ringing. checking my time while getting up wondering who had the complete nerve to come buzzing at someone's gate at 2 in the morning. I stared at the camera in my lounge. Black Audi Q7. Of course. Him. I opened the gate and the car drove in. To my surprise, Kompany wasn't with him. He was driving himself. For a second I would've thought he probably couldn't drive. I opened the door. Me: "Where's Kompany?" Kom: "He's off today. Its Saturday." Me: "isn't he like a demon or something?" Kom: "They charge overtime too and I'm not about to be ripped off by an entity." I laughed. Me: "So what brings you here at 2am with demon jokes on standby." Kom: "I went to see Father." Me: "That must have been fun." we sat down. Kom: "Barely. He treats Sibulele like an injured puppy." Me: "I'm confused." Kom: "He coddles him, heals him, kisses on the forehead, says kind encouraging words. You know I had to learn how to heal my own broken bones, caused by him by the way. He never dared touch me in an endearing way, always broke me instead." Me: "I'm sorry." Kom: "He's going to hurt him so bad Spho. Worse than I thought. I cannot even imagine how it could feel to think someone loves you and then suddenly they turn on you in the worst possible way." Me: "Its gonna sting. So you're trying to tell me you can't sleep because of your father's seemingly weird tactics?" Kom: "I don't sleep but I have to admit I am a bit troubled. See Spho this is why I didn't want you two near me. Now on top of Komodity lying in a hospital coma, I have to do all work myself and still worry about and protect you two. Seriously, I do not know how single mothers do it but I am tired. I need my life back." Me: "Now that your little cubs are with you, you can't take it back. You'll have to get used to it." Kom: "Anyway, as if I don't have enough on my plate. Father tells me, Babalo is my brother." Me: "WHAT!!!" Kom: "My head is already spinning Spho, you might want to keep it down." Me: "How is he your brother?" Kom: "The only person who would be able to tell me the truth is my mother. Father never will, he really wants Babalo dead." Me: "How many other siblings has he never told you about?" Kom: "This is the only one. Spho I need you to ask her." Me: "Who?" Kom: "Your grandmother." Me: "How?" Kom: "I think you may be able to connect to her." Me: "Why me? Because I'm a woman? That's sexist you know." Kom: "No. Because I think the reason why father doesn't want to face you is because..." Me: "Because what?" Kom: "Because you're her doppleganger." I laughed out loud for a full minute then stopped when I realized he was serious. Me: "You're joking right?" Kom: "I don't joke. Its the only explanation. I just need to know why because I know my mother wasn't a demon. Why did she become reborn as you? My daughter." my heart sunk to my knees. Me: "So I'm like your mother's identical twin." Kom: "Pregnant with me. Yes." Christ. If this was not creepy, I don't know what was. I am my

grandmother, pregnant with my father? How is that even possible? Kom: "We have to try. I've never seen my mother. Ever. But I need to know why father is running from her or you." Me: "How do we go about this?" Kom: "There's a spell you can try. Repeat after me-" Me: "I'm not going to do a spell!! I'm pregnant." Kom: "Spho, we need to know. This will not harm the baby!" Me: "How about asking Babalo's parents? Maybe they know what happened." Kom: "Those aren't his real parents. They are going to lie. Spho we don't have much time." Me: "Fine." he stood up and started his chanting, scaring me to the death. Why me! I closed my eyes and repeated after him laying on the couch. I was in a whirlwind of light. Soft breeze. Pure positive energy. My chest rose up in an arch form. "My son." Kom: "Mother." Mother: "You've put together the puzzle." Kom: "You...you're...." Mother: "Yes. I am here." Kom: "Why do you look exactly like my daughter?" Mother: "You mean, why does your daughter look exactly like me? You want to know the truth. Well, I met your father disguising himself as a good man. I was a full born again Christian. He was sweet, impossibly generous, dangerously gorgeous. Just overall perfect and I married him. Unbeknownst to me, he was what he is. He locked me underground the building right on our wedding night and used me to make you. When I gave birth to you nine months later, he snatched you right out of me and away from my sight. I wept for you every night. He never cared. For 14 years he locked me under there. The 14th year I fell pregnant for the 8th time. Every pregnancy after yours resulted in a miscarriage. Until the 8th. When I reached 7 months into my pregnancy I gained so much strength. I could stand, kick and jump. I managed to escape. I ran to Lillian's house and I gave birth to him. My last born son. Lillian took him to hospital and I told her to leave me. Unfortunately, your father found me and dragged me back to hell. I knew..... I wasn't going to make it to sun rise so with my last breath, I cursed him. I cursed his blood. I said to him, I will come back in the form of his kin. And give birth to a King that will kill him." Kom: "So Spho was born, as you." Mother: "Yes. With a heart as pure as gold but with grave danger. My mistake was to love and forgive your father. That's why he's running now. His time has come." Kom: "How will the baby kill him?" Mother: "On Komand. Your job is to train Babalo to be as mentally and physically strong as you. Train Spho after she gives birth. She will need a lot of strength to raise this King." Kom: "What about my son?" Mother: "His life is in danger. Don't let him go. Pull him out of that abysmal pit of pain he's thrown himself into. This is no time to teach him a lesson. Get him out. Now." Kom: "Yes ma'am." Mother: "Every child I should've given birth to is protecting you and that family. All your brothers' spirits keep you stronger and more powerful." Kom: "Thank you Mother." Mother: "I love you my child. You need to learn to let others love you." Kom: "What is my name Mother?" Mother: "Kadir. It means

powerful." he smiled. Kom: "Thank you." Mother: "My spirit is wearing heavy for Spho now. Thank you my child. And Good luck." she disappeared. I opened my eyes to the dark room. I had a blasting headache and I felt tired. Kom: "I'm sorry about that." Me: "Your father is a real piece of work." I sat up. Me: "Damn. 8 miscarriages?" Kom: "I hate him so much." Me: "We can't focus on that right now. You heard her." Kom: "My mother was a good person. He did what he did out of greed and pure cruelty." Me: "but why would he choose a God-fearing woman to mother his kids? Was he testing God?" Kom: "Clearly. And he failed." he smiled. Kom: "You look just like her. Extremely beautiful. Soft hearted and kind. You inherited her good qualities." Me: "You had to have those qualities first to pass them on to me. You know you're a big teddy bear hiding under all that black polyester and cotton." Kom: "I wish I was. Wake Babalo." Me: "Now?" Kom: "Yes." Me: "Maybe we should wait till mor-" Kom: "I will wake him involuntarily if you not up to it." I jumped up and made a way to Babalo's room. I walked in and stood by his side whispering in his ear. He turned and looked at me in his sleep. Balo: "Spho?" he asked sleepily. Me: "come. I need to see you." he got up and out of bed, to my horror, Butt Naked. I hurried out of there while he slipped on shorts. We met again in the passage. Balo: "I knew you wanted me. Honestly this playing hard to get, waking me up in the morning game is exciting but I'm tired man. Can't we schedule in a time?" Me: "I don't want you." Balo: "then why are we standing in the dark alone? Admit it baby... I find pregnant women incredibly sexy. And I've always had a bit of a thing for you. My dreams.....always involve you.. And Hlumi of course. Shit, I think I just made myse-" Me: "Will you be quiet?" Balo: "We talk about it. Hlumi and I. She knows... Kinda likes it too." Kom: "Okay that's disgusting!" Balo: "What the f....." he almost jumped out his skin. I could not help but laugh. Balo: "What are you doing here!" he hissed. Kom: "Did I just ruin your sex dream? Welcome to the Rest of your life when every time you dream about my daughter, I will appear. Every. Damn. Time." Balo: "You're fucking serious?" Kom: "Try me." Balo: "Why is he here?" he asked me. Kom: "To invade your dreams." Balo: "I'm not talking to you." Kom: "Clearly. Have you ever heard of Komander?" Balo: "That psycho criminal without a face? Who hasn't? And I don't wanna talk about a psychopath in the middle of the night man. What the hell." Kom: "You're looking at him." Balo: "Man, get the fuck out of here with your lying ass. I don't have time for this. Spho, when you need me-" Me: "He's not lying." Babalo looked at Komander and chuckled. Balo: "This is the time when everyone jumps out of their hiding spot and says 'Sike' right? I'm waiting." Komander took off his scarf and polo neck jersey with vest. Babalo stared at him, petrified. Balo: "Oh hell nah...." he fainted. I sat down and buried my face into a pillow, laughing my lungs out. Wait till Sandile hears this piece. God, I couldn't breath. Kom: "Spho

stop laughing. This isn't funny." he kneeled next to his brother. I never really liked the guy. Watching him faint had to be my high light for the year. But him saying 'oh hell nah.' broke my fucking funny bone. After a long while I finally calmed down and Babalo regained his consciousness. Balo: "What the fuck was that." he stood up again. Kom: "are you okay?" Balo: "hell." he fainted again. I fell down with him laughing out loud this time. Kom: "You are such a child. Get up from there and help me wake him." I dragged myself up. Why was I the only one awake in this household in the middle of the night khona? Kom: "Pull yourself together." Me: "Nawe nxiba. Who wouldn't faint staring at your body? Come on." I went to fetch some water for Babalo. When I was back, Babalo was up again, Komander dressed, sitting on the couch. Me: "You okay Balo?" he nodded and drank the water. Balo: "You know..." he breathed. Balo: "If you didn't like me back, you didn't have to go call a serial killer for me and wake me to my death in the middle of the night. Certainly not This one. You could've just told me straight Spho. I never intended to make you uncomfortable, I swear. Please, forgive me." Me: "I don't care that you like me." Kom: "I do." Me: "He has something to tell you and you might want to sit down. I don't think its wise to take another fall to your head now." he sat close to me. Kom: "I'm not here to hurt you." Balo: "They say nobody who sees you lives to tell the tale. That's why nobody knows what you look like. So I am very sure I'm dying tonight. Just do it quick okay? And let my wife move on with her life. She must find happiness when she's done grieving." Kom: "Are you done with your verbal will?" Balo: "Also tell my mother I love her." Kom: "You will tell her yourself. Babalo, I called you here to let you know, your parents aren't your real parents. You were born by a Komander and his wife who has passed." Balo: "That's not True. I am not your son." Kom: "No you're not. You're my brother." Balo: "No, my brother is Skhumbuzo. And you are NOT Skhumbuzo." Kom: "Unfortunately its true. Our mother gave birth to you, at Lillian's house. Lillian took you to hospital leaving our mother behind but unfortunately our father found her and took her with him. Lillian raised you as her own. Now that Father has found you, he wants to kill you. This is the spirit that was strangling you in hospital. The spirit that took over your house next door." Balo: "This isn't happening... Its not true!!! Its lies!!!!" Me: "Babalo, I know its a lot to take in-" Balo: "A lot is an understatement Spho!!!! Why would my so called real father want to kill me!" Kom: "because he's an evil spirit. There's a lot of good in you he wants to destroy." Balo: "An evil spirit? Out of all things, I'm fathered by an evil spirit?" Kom: "At least he didn't raise you. Babalo, our mother wants me to train you. Mentally and physically. We need to improve your powers." Balo: "Powers? What powers?" Kom: "This is going to take all day." he rolled his eyes. Kom: "You're either going to accept this and train or you don't accept and die a horrible death within days. You also

cannot let anyone know about this because, yes, you will die a horrible inevitable death. You need to make a choice." Balo: "I don't believe this! I need proof." Kom: "What kind of proof? You want to see your father? A little heads up, he'll kill you on sight." Balo: "Of course not!!! I need proof I'm your brother. I'm not just going to take your word for it! And I'm certainly not going anywhere with you." Me: "Do you trust me then?" Balo: "You brought me a serial killer." Me: "He's been here this whole time and not harmed anyone. He's my biological father Babalo. He just wants to help. Just a few hours ago, Sibulele was trying to break into your room to kill you." Balo: "What!!" Me: "I managed to stop him but we need you to have your own strength to fight." Balo: "Why does Sibulele want to kill me? Aren't I his uncle!?" Kom: "You are. Sibulele is working with his grandfather. Taking orders from him." Balo: "Bro, I need an Espresso for this shit." he rubbed his eyes. Balo: "what powers is this? Like some Powerpuff girl shit or what?" Kom: "What?" Me: "Not like Powerpuff. My goodness, no. Sibulele can attract energy and hold it. Controls electricity and sleep." Kom: "He's going to have a lot worse now that he's sleeping in his grandpa's building. We need to move fast." Me: "I, am not sure about me. I can control thunder and lightening with my temper I guess." Kom: "Everything you have is hidden because of the baby, once you give birth, your powers will be more defined and obviously come to light." Balo: "so...Komander is not one person but a family?" Kom: "Yes." Balo: "And I am the last born son." Kom: "Yes." Balo: "What do I do now?" he looked at Komander. Kom: "You're going to bed and will fall asleep instantly. You'll wake up tomorrow morning with no recollection of what has happened this hour." Balo: "Yes. I will." he stood up and walked to his room. Me: "You hypnotized him? Really?" Kom: "What other choice do I have? I need to find a way to prove to him that we're brothers. If I'd let him go with his free mind he'd run wild in the streets telling everyone. Let me get going." Me: "Why do you always test me at this time of night, when you know you're not leaving. Especially because today you don't even have a driver." Kom: "I don't like overstaying my welcome. I'm fine. I can drive." Me: "I won't sleep knowing I let you leave at 3 in the morning." Kom: "What could possibly happen to me when I collectively own all demons and death itself?" Me: "True. True." Kom: "Will you borrow me your husband tomorrow evening?" Me: "Of course. As long as you bring him back without a scratch or you'll lose your deposit." he smiled. Kom: "My deposit being you? Smart. Its nice to know the only thing you inherited from your grandfather is his humor." Me: "I'll pretend its mine only." Kom: "Good." Me: "Drive safely." Kom: "I always do. Go to bed." after letting him out, I went to bed, crawling in next to my husband. He turned around and pulled me into his arms while in his deep sleep. Me: "Hey you." no reply. Just slow breathing. He wouldn't be awake until sun rise. Damn you Sibulele.

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I woke up again a little after 6 in the morning. Me: "baby." he opened his eyes. Lakhe: "Yeah." Me: "Tried waking you up." Lakhe: "I was knocked out. Must have been really tired. What's up?" he yawned. Me: "You know how my father is Komander right." I whispered. Lakhe: "oh oh....what did I do?" Me: "Nothing. We haven't spoken in a while, me and you. Haven't caught up on our lives and a lot happened in mine. I want to know about yours too." Lakhe: "You're right. You start." Me: "Well, I found out that I have powers, which was kinda weird. Until I did something." Lakhe: "I kind of figured you were special. Ever since I met you-" Me: "Stop that. This is serious." Lakhe: "Come on. How many guys get to use that line and actually mean it? Anyway, carry on." Me: "Well, Koman- my dad asked me to keep Babalo safe. He instructed me on how to secure his life while asleep and I did that. Last night after we'd all gone to sleep, I woke up and went out the passage. I found Siby trying to open the door." Lakhe: "Why?" Me: "He is ordered by grandpa to kill Babalo. So I broke his hand." Lakhe: "What!!!" Me: "He'll be fine." Lakhe: "How did you break a grown man's hand Sphe?" Me: "I uhm...kind of twisted it.....with my mind." Lakhe: "No. This is no time for games. What did you do!" Me: "I just pictured it and it happened Lakhe. I was angry. I couldn't control myself-" Lakhe: "Is this the sort of thing I must expect now? You'll just think of stabbing me and knives will fly in my direction?" Me: "Don't be ridiculous. Nothing of that sort. I'm not a witch." Lakhe: "What's the difference?" I was a bit offended by that. Me: "I just have special powers okay? That's all." I sat up trying to get out of bed. Lakhe: "Baby..." he held my arm. Me: "Let go of me." Lakhe: "I didn't mean that. I'm just a little freaked out. This was not how I expected our life to turn out. I just wanted to marry a gorgeous lady, get her pregnant, fall deeper in love with her everyday, then we divorce when we are 60. I'll be a billionaire, and She'll be a billionaire. I get myself a hot young flame and she gets her a Ben 10. A few weeks down the line I realize this flame is burnt out and I miss my intellectual half, so I drive to my ex's mansion, then I make up a sad story to get her to listen to me. While she's still listening, I fuck her, hard and we fall back in love. Then get married for the second time and travel the world together. That's how I imagined our life." Me: "This is creepy because this is actually your parents love story, except you skipped the part where we move into our son's house." Lakhe: "Chris would kick us out on day 2. I don't trust him. Plus I'm hoping this story becomes a reality for them because I cannot stand living with my parents anymore." Me: "Uhm...and your uncle in law." Lakhe: "Dear Lord, is another one of your uncles coming? I think we should charge rent baby. Do they have any idea how much this house

maintenance costs? Don't get me started on that water and electricity bill, it gives me a migraine." Me: "how much is it?" Lakhe: "its R84 000." I gasped in horror. Me: "How did you let that happen?!!" Lakhe: "Me? I only shower twice a day for like 3 minutes each session. The entire house is rigged with electric gadgets. Plus they do laundry everyday for the whole week. We have so many people, they have their own day of laundry and three of them share days. The pools are always heated. There's the kitchen, the playroom, the bar, the computer room that's always on, those aircons all over the house and that damn lounge." Me: "I'm getting your migraine." Lakhe: "You think 10k a month is okay?" Me: "You're gonna charge your family rent?! No!" Lakhe: "Do you know how much I spend on groceries?" Me: "No and I don-" Lakhe: "R17 000. I have to hire a human to do the garden and clean those pools. And another human for the outside facilities, i.e go kart track and tennis court. Vicky goes on spa treatments with my mother and I don't blame her, this house is gigantic Spho. Its like living in a mall except I see the same faces and I have to talk to them." Me: "Then kick them out." Lakhe: "baby you're the one with the super powers. How about making a potion to make them disappear." Me: "You know how offensive that is." Lakhe: "I'm sorry." Me: "Talk to them." Lakhe: "At least if they paid for electricity then. I mean I may be rich but come on. My dad makes more money than me and he's living for free. The security system!!! That costs me R25 000. Every month. I am protecting them, feeding them and bathing them." Me: "I hear you honey. Let me know if you need help with the bills okay?" Lakhe: "I'm 3 years away from being a billionaire. That kind of negative talk offends me." Me: "Well, excuse me High-pockets. I didn't mean to offend." he laughed out loud. Lakhe: "High pockets. I want to be mad but I can't wait use that name on my dad without giving you any credit." Me: "Its what you do." Lakhe: "I missed you." Me: "Oh and my dad was here last night." Lakhe: "I see you're getting more comfortable calling him dad." Me: "Not to his face though. I just freeze." Lakhe: "What did he want?" Me: "He visited his father." Lakhe: "Lucifer?" Me: "Yeah. Anyway, he revealed that Babalo is dad's brother." Lakhe: "You lie!" Me: "absolutely true. So we channeled grandma to tell us the truth and she did." Lakhe: "And you didn't wake me?" Me: "Sibu put you all to sleep. Anyway, it so happens that grandma was a Christian lady. Lucifer, because I'm not about to caall him my grandfather, he kidnapped her after they married kept her underground and used her to breed dad. After his birth, she had like 7 miscarriages but on her 8th pregnancy she regained strength and ran away. She gave birth to Babalo luckily for him he was taken to hospital unluckily for her Lucifer found her and dragged her back to hell. This is when she cursed him." Lakhe: "So Babalo is your uncle?" Me: "Babs my uncle." Lakhe: "my migraine is finally clearing. So does Babalo also have powers?" Me: "Well, I introduced him last

night to Komander and he fainted twice." I giggled. Lakhe: "oh poor thing. I would've peed my pants. Baby, You've heard the stories about Komander. Nobody wants to be near him and rightfully so, you were here when he was fighting with his father. And I hope to God I never experience whatever he did to the people who took Julie. I don't even wanna know. It was bad enough knowing he was a murderer, but knowing he has multiple demons. No." Me: "Anyway, he managed to hypnotize Balo to forget what happened so don't mention-" Lakhe: "I know you're gonna tell Sandile." Me: "He's my best friend. He has to know." Lakhe: "Fine. Only Sandile. But stress it to him not to let anyone else know. I don't want the whole house to panic." Me: "Relax." Lakhe: "Baby..." Me: "I get it. I'll stress it to him." Lakhe: "Good." Me: "Hey you wanna know something even more awkward." Lakhe: "I would've thought we've topped everything off by now." Me: "No, so I wake Babalo up right? And we in the lounge. He thinks I want him." Lakhe: "I could see the confusion there. If Hlumi came to wake me in the middle of the night, I would definitely think she wants me." Me: "he started telling me I'm in his sex dreams and he finds pregnant women hot." Lakhe: "uhm..." Me: "Wait.... Then he says, Hlumi knows he finds me attractive AND she likes it AND they talk about it." Lakhe: "Really?" Me: "Uh huh." Lakhe: "You're like a toddler, telling on everyone. Its so cute. And you're right, very awkward. What kind of marriage is that? What if she pretends to be you in bed to make him cum? What if she let's him call her by your name?" Me: "You just made it worse. I feel like throwing up now." Lakhe: "Do yo think its healthy they do that? I think not. This needs a therapist." Me: "absolutely not!" Lakhe: "Relax. I'm putting the whole family through it. If we're going to live together, we might need family therapy. I get why Nosi stays at her friends place at times. Get this, on my one on one I'm gonn tell the therapist I don't like the way Babalo looks at my wife then the therapist will ask Babalo on his one on one if he has any residual feelings for any member of this household except his wife then he'll confess and they'll fix it. Its fool proof." Me: "Its stupid. Talk to him yourself." Lakhe: "He is a Komander so that's not gonna happen." Me: "Are You scared?" Lakhe: "Nope. I have my own little weapon right beside me." Me: "Good." Lakhe: "babe..." Me: "Yes?" Lakhe: "I've been turned on since I woke up and its not getting any better." Me: "I thought you didn't want to hurt the baby." Lakhe: "I haven't had sex in months and I am losing my mind. The baby will have to understand. I'll explain myself when he arrives." Me: "I don't think I'm in the mood." Lakhe: "I'll just go ask Hlumi and Babalo to help me then-" Me: "That's just disgusting. Oh and he can't dream about me anymore. Dad commanded him to stop or he'll appear in every dream that involves me." Lakhe: "That is so cruel. I am never telling your dad anything." Me: "Its pretty dope. Back to the matter at hand." I reached down to his organ and found his hand there. Me: "You've been

playing with yourself this whole time?" Lakhe: "Playing is a bit harsh. I've been fiddling. Your voice is just something else, woman." Me: "When did you start fiddling?" Lakhe: "when I was talking about the bills." Me: "bills make you horny?" Lakhe: "No. Your mouth does this little O shape when you're surprised and you suck in a little air and it just gets me on immediately." Me: "but-" he kissed me pulling me to him. I wanted him so bad, my clitoris was throbbing. He pulled the panty aside and rubbed on my clit, sending my eyes rolling out of place. He slid down and into my hole moaning a little. Lakhe: "so wet..." he whispered. Me: "please take me daddy." he pulled his finger back out and stuck it in my mouth to suck. Lakhe: "are you gonna cum for me?" Me: "Yes." Lakhe: "Yes who?" Me: "Yes daddy." he took his hand out my mouth and kissed me. His finger lacing my clit again. My whole body was alive and vibrating. He kissed my neck, while his hand swirled under me. I was already near my first climax and I didn't want him to stop. He entered a finger again and a small puddle of squirt splashed out onto his hand. Lakhe: "ooh.....fuck." he kicked off the blankets. Me: "baby please..." I begged. He opened my legs wide, slipping a finger back in. Me: "Lakhe I need..." another finger slipped in, my butt! Me: "Masilakhe..." the slow rhythm was explosive. Lakhe: "loosen it up baby..... Let go...." Me: "No...." his tongue touched my clit and on that first anti clockwise rotation, I folded. My eyes fluttered and twitched. My thighs shaking uncontrollably. Hard throbs of electricity pumping to one small part, until I let go and splashed his face once, twice and finally cringing to a stilled silence. He looked up over my belly. Lakhe: "I think your water broke." Me: "Don't joke like that!" Lakhe: "as much as I'm not joking, I think I can squeeze a round in. We'll move when there's a contraction ne baby?? Help me." I was still heavily turned on. I could give birth at this moment and still be carrying on fucking him. Okay I take that back. Point is, I wanted him inside me still. Well....the actual him, not a duplicate. Am I making sense? I lay on my side and he got behind me. Lakhe: "Let me know when it hurts.." he slipped himself inside and I felt him alright. His bulge filled me immediately and my muscles tightened. Lakhe: "hayi baby..." Me: "I'm gonna cum." Lakhe: "shit, me too." he stroked in and out, caressing my breast. Me: "baby this is so amazing." a wave of new horny came over me. He pumped in and out some more. Lakhe: "I love you...." he groaned. Me: "don't stop daddy..." while pumping he slipped his hand in front and rubbed on my clit. He kissed my shoulder tenderly. Breathing and stroking deeper. I could feel my climax climbing higher. He went faster. Lakhe: "ooh yeesss...." Me: "I'm cuming baby....don't....stop." I listened the sweet sound of a slow perfect orgasm. As he pumped himself into me. His finger rousing my clitoris. A shed of warmth and complete bliss took over and I climaxed. He held my breast again and pushed himself deep inside and breathed out loud. We stayed

there quietly. Me: "you were so amazing." I managed to say. Lakhe: "baby, nothing can compare to you. Pregnancy sex is the best. I cannot believe I missed out on this for so long. I love you. I love our baby. I think I'm feeling emotional now." Me: "Its okay baby. Come here." I hugged him. Lakhe: "I'm hungry." Me: "Okay. My time to get up." I went to the toilet then took a shower right after. I got dressed in a powder blue dress and sandals then made a walk to the kitchen. Only Sandile it seems was up. Me: "hey you." the gate rang. Sands: "hey." I opened the gate from the door. Me: "where are your ladies?" Sands: "Still sleeping. I don't know what happened last night, I just dozed off. Or maybe I was tired. I don't know. Anyway is Lakhe still asleep? My bed is too crowded, I need to finish my sleep." Me: "Zintle and Fez shared your bed with you?" Sands: "I know it sounds creepy but we were all fully dressed except Zintle. She was in shorts and I woke up with her thigh on mine. I had to get out of there." Me: "She's single, you're single." Sands: "She's Zingi's friend." Me: "And Fez's friend who has an actual crush on you." Sands: "Fez is my friend. He doesn't care about that." Me: "he kinda does Sandile. He has real feelings for you. You need to let him know how you feel too so that he doesn't reserve himself for someone who won't love him or even be with him." Sands: "Fine." Komander came in. Kom: "Morning." Sands: "Hello." Me: "Hey." Kom: "We need to move fast. Where is Babalo-" speak of the devil. He was hurrying out his room. Me: "Hey. Where you rushing off to?" Balo: "My dad. He had an accident." Kom: "No. He didn't." Balo: "First of all, I don't know who the fuck you think you are. Get out my way!" Kom: "Lakhe will go check on your dad. You can't leave." Balo: "Why not!!" Me: "You said you would trust me Babalo. I have to keep you safe." Balo: "My father could be dying." Kom: "I can assure you, he isn't." Me: "Please Balo?" Balo: "Fine. But Hlumi will go." Kom: "As long as you're in here." Babalo went to his room. Me: "I thought grandfather didn't play dirty." Kom: "He doesn't. This has Sibulele written all over it." Sands: "Everything has Sibulele written all over it. Where is he anyway?" Me: "with his grandpa." Sands: "urrgh." Me: "I need to tell you something funny but you must promise not to tell." Kom: "Sandile? The worst person you could tell." Sands: "Come on tell me." Me: "Promise first." Sands: "Okay. I promise." Kom: "You can actually show him." Me: "what do you mean?" Kom: "I mean, you can invite him into your memory." Sands: "That's is super cool. Do it Spho." Me: "Is it safe?" Kom: "Yes. Hold him." I held Sandile's hands. Kom: "Spho, clear your mind off everything. Take it back to the exact beginning of the memory you want to share. Make sure you don't let go of him until you're done. Sandile, you won't be able to affect anything in this memory bubble although you will feature in it now. Sit still. Eyes closed. Repeat after me Spho." we closed our eyes. Kom: "[Open internal eyes and see. Breath a memory. Hold the moment and let it be. Latin]" Me: "[repeats.]"

we disappeared back to last night. It was a little colder than I remember. This time Sandile was in the lounge, sitting in his usual spot. I started my memory when I'd just fetched Babalo from his room. *M E M O R Y*: (Balo: "I knew you wanted me. Honestly this playing hard to get, waking me up in the morning game is exciting but I'm tired man. Can't we schedule in a time?" Me: "I don't want you." Balo: "then why are we standing in the dark alone? Admit it baby... I find pregnant women incredibly sexy. And I've always had a bit of a thing for you. My dreams.....always involve you.. And Hlumi of course. Shit, I think I just made myse-" Me: "Will you be quiet?" Balo: "We talk about it. Hlumi and I. She knows... Kinda likes it too." Kom: "Okay that's disgusting!" Balo: "What the f....." he almost jumped out his skin. I could not help but laugh. Balo: "What are you doing here!" he hissed. Kom: "Did I just ruin your sex dream? Welcome to the Rest of your life when every time you dream about my daughter, I will appear. Every. Damn. Time." Balo: "You're fucking serious?" Kom: "Try me." Balo: "Why is he here?" he asked me. Kom: "To invade your dreams." Balo: "I'm not talking to you." Kom: "Clearly. Have you ever heard of Komander?" Balo: "That psycho criminal without a face? Who hasn't? And I don't wanna talk about a psychopath in the middle of the night man. What the hell." Kom: "You're looking at him." Balo: "Man, get the fuck out of here with your lying ass. I don't have time for this. Spho, when you need me-" Me: "He's not lying." Babalo looked at Komander and chuckled. Balo: "This is the time when everyone jumps out of their hiding spot and says 'Sike' right? I'm waiting." Komander took off his scarf and polo neck jersey with vest. Babalo stared at him, petrified. Balo: "Oh hell nah...." he fainted. I sat down and buried my face into a pillow, laughing my lungs out. Wait till Sandile hears this piece. God, I couldn't breath. Kom: "Spho stop laughing. This isn't funny." he kneeled next to his brother. I never really liked the guy. Watching him faint had to be my high light for the year. But him saying 'oh hell nah.' broke my fucking funny bone. After a long while I finally calmed down and Babalo regained his consciousness. Balo: "What the fuck was that." he stood up again. Kom: "are you okay?" Balo: "hell." he fainted again. I fell down with him laughing out loud this time. Kom: "You are such a child. Get up from there and help me wake him." I dragged myself up. Why was I the only one awake in this household in the middle of the night khona? Kom: "Pull yourself together.") Sandile let go of my hand laughing hysterically rolling on the floor. He screamed his lungs out trying to breath. Robert and Stella came running out their rooms. I was wiping the tears off my face. Kom: "The both of you need help." Rob: "What the hell did you do to my son!!!" Kom: "He is having the time of his life." Rob: "HE. CAN'T. BREATH." Sands: "he f.....twi.....God!!!!" he couldn't even finish his sentences. Stella: "what is he saying!!!!" Kom: "Nothing. Sandile, get up." Sands: "Oh hell nah...." he breathed. I dissolved to the floor,

cracking up hard. Lakhe: "What is going- You told him, didn't you?" he walked into the lounge. Stella: "Told him what!" Kom: "Worse. She showed him." Lakhe: "You two are kids. Get up." I sat on the couch with Sandile. Sands: "Mntase. I love you. That was the best present I've ever received. You have managed to beat your own record." Me: "I love you too man. Want scrambled eggs?" Sands: "oh hell nah..." we started laughing all over again. Kom: "never showing you two anything ever again. Lakhe, get dressed and pack a lunch. We have work to do." Lakhe: "I thought only at 6." Kom: "I changed my mind. I've too much work to get through. Spho please keep Babalo indoors at all times." Me: "Done." Kom: "and no you can't revisit the memory portal more than once." Sands: "Aww..." Kom: "Stay away from Sibulele as well. He may not be back for a while but don't approach him first." Me: "Okay." Sands: "what's wrong with Sibulele?" Me: "he's just not himself." Lakhe went to shower and dress. I went to make breakfast with Sandile still giggling. Sands: "This was the coolest prank of all time, why didn't you wake me up?" Kom: "Your friend put you in an abnormal sleep." Sands: "Who? Sibulele?" Kom: "Yes." Sands: "Where are you taking my brother." Kom: "Do you care?" Sands: "No, he's yours now." Kom: "Just get dressed Sandile. We're leaving in 10." Sands: "Nope." Kom: "I'll buy you food." Sands: "I'll fetch my playlist and some sun screen. Bye Spho." Me: "Bye Sands." they eventually left the house. Yazi Sandile could be the most easiest person to kidnap. All you had to do is lure him with food. Food he left me preparing, by the way.

Komander stopped the car in the middle of the abandoned park. Lakhe: "Why are we here." Komander hopped out the cars followed by Lakhe and Sandile munching on his burger. Kom: "This is my graveyard." Sands: "Tell me you're joking." Kom: "I don't joke." Lakhe: "Why are we in your graveyard." Kom: "I want you to train my team." Sands: "Your team of ghosts? Man, I knew you were weird but I need you to revisit the idea of me hanging with you ever again." Kom: "what are you? Scared? You were the one wanting to join. Well here's your application form." Lakhe: "You asked for an application form Sandile? Are you stupid?" Sands: "I was joking. But General Sour Beans over here didn't take the hint." something pushed him against the car. Sands: "What the fuck was that!" Kom: "General Sour Beans' Assistant." Sandile and Lakhe looked at each other. Lakhe: "Sir, we're not experienced in training ghosts." Kom: "And I don't have ghosts. I have humans on a wait list. In need of gun training. Shooting. Reloading. The moment when a singer is singing, their breathing is very important in order to not lose a note or choke. I need that in my shooters. You are their boss now. I want them in tip top shape by Monday morning. Sandile, you teach how to drift. I'm counting on you two to

make my heist team spectacular and obviously undefeated. I want this country shook by the end of the week." he opened his boot and gave them both a large duffel bag. They heard engines roaring closer to their location from a distance. Kom: "Because you know what I'd do to you if it isn't.".....

#138

During the day. The family left one by one. Clearly with better plans than mine. Zintle and Fez also took off. Dumi and his kids were ready to leave as well. Robert said he was going golfing and Stella and Vicky had a spa appointment. Babalo would be the only one left because Hlumi was going to check on his dad. Hlumi: "Dumi do you want a lift?" Dumi: "uhm.. Sure. Spho its okay, Hlumi is taking me." Me: "Oh okay." they left. I was left with Babalo only and I was so not in the mood for him. At least Chris was here but he was taking a nap with Boogie. Balo: "So....everyone is gone. How about a movie?" Me: "No thanks." I cleared the dining table since everyone had just finished eating. Balo: "Spho, why do you do this to yourself? You're a successful woman, beautiful too. Why not hire a maid to clean this house?" Me: "I enjoy cleaning Babalo." Balo: "Nobody enjoys cleaning. Let me help you at least." he helped take the dishes to the kitchen. I took the glasses. Balo: "I admire you." Me: "thanks Babalo. I need you to know I'm very happy with my husband and I don't want you, I never have and I never will." he looked at me smiling. Balo: "Why did you then keep me in this house knowing everyone will be leaving and I'll be left alone with you?" Me: "Babalo, my father will make life very difficult for you." Balo: "Who is the guy that keeps appearing here anyway?" Me: "That is my dad." Balo: "I thought your dad was bhut Khaya." Me: "I'm adopted." Balo: "Oh? I see." the gate rang. Balo: "Why am I here?" Me: "we'll talk." I went to open the gate. A blue BMW M6 convertible drove in. Dr Kusile obviously. Or was it really him? He walked up to the door and knocked. Me: "Its open." I stared at him with my arms folded over my chest. His cheeks turned pink as he tried hiding a smile. Me: "What's so funny." he looked at his feet. Siya: "nothing." Me: "Then why the shy smile?" Siya: "I just..... I hope I'm not crossing the line. Its just that, I've always imagined coming home to an angry pregnant wife. I just wish it would be mine." Balo: "Slow down there, buddy." he stood next to me. Siya: "Did Lakhe get plastic surgery?" Me: "No. This is his friend Babalo. Babalo, this is Siyanda." Siya: "No longer a friend?" Me: "Not after what you did. Besides, how the hell am I to know if its really you!" Siya: "What are you talking about?" Me: "I know about the transitions from one person to the next Komfort. I don't know whether you're working for my dad or grandpa." Siya: "I'm working for you Spho.

Nobody else." Me: "He was here you know, AS YOU. He tried taking Sandile. He's recruited Sibulele and he wants this one dead." Balo: "This one? Who's this one?" Siya: " Fine, tie me to a chair for as long as you want. I have nothing to hide. If its who you think I am, he would not last more than 10 minutes. I have no reason to lie." Balo: "This guy has an identical twin?" Siya: "Yes." Balo: "Okay, I'm back on track. So your twin came as you?" Siya looked at me. Siya: "Yes." Balo: "That's bad ass." Siya: "Spho, You've got to believe me." Me: "Why are you here." Siya: "The last time we saw each other we were on bad terms. I don't want bad blood between us. I don't want you to hate me." Me: "I don't hate you." Siya: "Please let me in." Me: "Fine." Babalo stared at him. Balo: "Does Lakhe know this guy?" Me: "Yes. Babalo can you give us space." Balo: "I'll be in the bedroom." he walked down the passage. Siya: "Bodyguard?" Me: "No." he sat on the arm rest of the couch. Siya: "I'm sorry for keeping such a big secret from you." Me: "I get it. Its okay." Siya: "Still. It killed me not being able to tell you. The fact that I promised you I'd never lie to you..." Me: "Its okay. I swear." I sat opposite him. Siya: "I miss you. Your face. Your smile-" Balo: "Okay. Hold it right there Mr-" Siya: "Its actually, Dr." Balo: "I don't give a shit!" Me: "Babalo. Are you eavesdropping in our conversation?" Balo: "YES! This is my friend's house-" Me: "When it suits you? Babalo, get in your room and mind your own business if you don't want me to tell Lakhe about your inappropriateness." Siya: "What inappropriateness? Is he hitting on you?" he stood up. Me: "Sit." Balo: "Why does he get special treatment? He gets to tell you things and I can't?" Me: "Go to your room Mr." Balo: "its nyectually doctor." he sneered and walked away. Siya: "What is that guy doing here?" honestly, his attack mode kind of made my heart flutter. He stood like one of those moving statues at Komander's gate. Only he was human-like. Me: "Komander was here around 2 this morning. Ever since he first met Balo he got a connection. So he asked father and confirmed he was his brother." I whispered. Siya: "No wonder he's so repulsive. Does he know?" I started giggling. Siya: "what is it?" he smiled. Siya: "Tell me." I told him what happened at 2 am and he laughed. Siya: "You are so cruel. Why would you laugh?" Me: "You're laughing too! Besides, its funny." Siya: "Someone fainting is funny? I'm never letting you near my hospital." Me: "Your work space is probably a goldmine of laughter. Take me there." Siya: "absolutely not. Busy laughing at my patients." Me: "Anyway, he hypno-" Balo walked through the lounge to the kitchen. Siya: "Maybe if we talk outside?" Me: "I'm not leaving him with my child sleeping here." Siya: "How is Chris? Is he adjusting well?" Me: "Yes. Although his teacher wants him to see a psychologist because apparently he's too advanced." Siya: "As long as you explain to him what's going on. Make sure he doesn't feel as if there's something wrong with him. When you're a child and taken to doctors like psychologists other kids tend to make fun of

you, calling you names. Make sure he's okay with going." Balo: "Well aren't you an expert father. Spho, these are the sort of things you need to discuss with your hu-" he held his throat, coughing and choking. Siyanda just stared at him. It took me about a minute to realize, he was the one doing it. Me: "Siyanda! He's dying!" Siya: "Maybe in his next life he'll learn to mind his own." Babalo finally breathed. Why does Sandile always miss the good stuff? Me: "You need water?" Balo: "I'm fine." he walked to his room. Me: "Why did you do that!" Siya: "He annoys me. Especially that he's creeping around you." Me: "Don't worry about Babalo. Siyanda, tell me, how did you get into this?" Siya: "Since I met your dad, bhut Khaya. I remember I was having some financial problems and he helped. Then he asked if I wanted to make myself money instead, I agreed and he had me initiated. In the group, that is." Me: "So you knew what they were about and you still joined." Siya: "Yes." Me: "How did you get to meet, the man himself?" Siya: "It wasn't easy but being Khaya's favorite worked in my advantage. Khaya had left for Cuba and he needed someone taking care of things here. I told him I could do it and I managed to get Rey aboard as well. We did well, then Sir came to visit. It was our first time meeting him. After we walked him through the work we'd done. He gave us tasks. We did well there too. Until Rey got tired. He was fed up. He was scared. He just had Chris and he didn't want to be part of this anymore. I tried talking him out of it. I asked Khaya too. We all tried, eventually Sir got angry and got rid of him. I'm sorry." Me: "It's okay. Why does he call you Komfort?" Siya: "Because I'm a good doctor. That's his words. Apparently my bedside manners are on point." Me: "I agree. So...do you also...have the..." Siya: "The demons?" he sighed. Siya: "Yes. It was the most agonizing 6 weeks I've ever went through in my life. Since I'm not blood, he had to instill them in me and train me with them inside." Me: "I'm so sorry." Siya: "oh well." Me: "and Father..." Siya: "he once tried to recruit me but I stuck to who I know. Best decision I ever made." Me: "I wish you could tell my brother that. He seems to think his grandpa loves him to the moon." Siya: "I can tell you right now, he doesn't. That old man has a wicked way of manipulating the human mind." Me: "I've seen." he held my hand. Siya: "I'm so glad I can talk to you about this. It's refreshing that I'm able to be honest and open to someone about my life." Me: "I'm still married Siyanda." Siya: "Why." Me: "because I love him." Siya: "Does he?" Me: "Yes." Siya: "Spho when you give birth to this child. A lot is going to change. He's going to see an ugly side to you. A dangerous side. Something he will never be able to fight. I get that you love him but trust me when I say this, it's difficult to love our kind. I don't want to scare you, but ask your father, ask your mother. We don't marry outside our circle." Me: "I choose Lakhe. I'm not changing my mind." Siya: "Then he'll have to change for you." Me: "Change what?" he chuckled. Siya: "Spho, you could kill him in his sleep without

touching him. He needs more than natural strength to be your spouse." Me: "You're saying I have the potential of harming my family?" Siya: "Potential, No. Possibility, Yes." I thought about this. Me: "I can't put him through that." Siya: "I know. Its incredibly difficult. Not to mention, he could die while trying. Talk to your dad about it." Me: "I know I'll never hurt Lakhe." Siya: "Okay. If you need anything just tell me." the gate buzzed. Siya: "The boss." I opened the gate. Siyanda stood up and straight. Komander walked in a few seconds later. Kom: "Komfort." Siya: "Sir." Kom: "What brings you by?" Siya: "I came to visit and explain myself to Spho sir." Kom: "That's nice of you. Spho, Where's Babalo?" Me: "In his room. Siya choked him for being his usual annoying self." Kom: "Good one. Call him here." I went to fetch Babalo who was obediently sitting in his room shame. Back in the lounge. Kom: "I know what you're doing." Siyanda looked at the ground. Kom: "Do you want my help?" Siya: "With what Sir?" Kom: "I can see it in your eyes. The way you look at her." Siya: "I don't want anything sir. I'm fine." Kom: "Good. Keep it that way." Siya: "Sir...about Lakhe. Since he married her, he'll have to go through the initiation?" Kom: "Obviously. Just as Komodity decides to wake up and join us. Hopefully soon, Spho's getting more powerful. There's no telling what she can do. What I've noticed is her lack of remorse." Siya: "You're saying she might kill him and feel nothing afterwards?" Kom: "Yes. You need to ensure that Komodity wakes up. We don't have much time." Siya: "Yes sir. I will make sure I do." I came to the lounge with Babalo. Kom: "You want to see your father?" Balo: "Yes." Kom: "Let's go-" Me: "Wait!! What about...you know." Kom: "He'll be safe with me. I need to talk to him without you intervening. Let's go Babalo." Babalo followed him to the car. Me: "Why you smiling?" Siya: "Nothing. I'm just smiling." I nodded. Me: "I was cleaning before you arrived. You can get yourself some juice in the fridge." I opened the gate for the car to drive out. Chris was finally awake. Chris: "Mama." Me: "hi pumpkin." I kissed his cheek. Chris: "Who's this." Me: "This is Dr Kusile. Mommy and daddy's friend." Chris: "Oh... Well who's saving people from dying if you're sitting here?" oohh snap. Siya: "I left people in charge." Chris: "Hmm... I wouldn't want you as my doctor if I'm not even good enough for your presence." Siya: "It is my day off today." Chris: "Of course it is." he went to the kitchen. Siya: "Get him to that doctor ASAP." Me: "because he's schooling you?" Siya: "I...." Chris came back holding a juice box. Chris: "Still lounging I see." Siya: "Let me get back to work then." Chris: "I hope you're not leaving because of me." Siya: "I am." Chris: "I'll let you relax if you take this off." Me: "We're supposed to take you to the hospital on Monday for that arm." Siyanda helped take off the bandages on his arm. Siya: "There." Chris: "Thank you Dr Kusile." he sat down and sipped his juice quietly. Siya: "He is sweet." Me: "As candy. Want some juice?" Siya: "I should probably get going." Me: "Don't be silly. Sit and have some juice." I went to the kitchen to

fetch some juice when I came back Sibulele was standing by the front door. Siya stood and stared at him. No words were spoken. Sibulele looked at me and walked to his room. Siya: "He wouldn't dare hurt you." Me: "Thank you but I can handle Sibulele." I gave him juice. Siya: "You're pregnant Spho. You shouldn't be handling anything, someone must be handling for you. What if you were alone with Chris?" Me: "Can you relax?" Siya: "Fine. But I'm not leaving until your father or Masilakhe and his brother are back here. I'm not taking any chances." Chris: "Dr Superman." he sipped his juice box.....

Sandile sat on the hood of the black Golf 7 GTI. Sands: "This is endless." Lakhe: "You're the one who asked for an application form! Besides, what other choice do you have?" Six men stood before them in a straight line. Silent and still. Lakhe: "Let's start again. This time, no screaming. I'll take three. You take three." Sands: "Fine." Lakhe looked at them. Lakhe: "First three on my left. Follow me." he walked down a narrow path with the bag. Sandile took his three to a parking lot. Lakhe collected cans and placed them on a huge stone. Lakhe: "On your stomachs." they lay down. Each carrying a rifle in their hands. Lakhe: "You walk into your house after a stormy winter's night. You smell the aroma of a warm beef stew and dumplings, your favorite meal. You can't find your wife in the kitchen or the bedroom. When you walk into the lounge. Her body is on the floor. Shot dead. The burglar is jumping out the window. That can is his head. Shoot." they all pulled their triggers and missed. Lakhe: "I finally understand why I'm here. You, get up." One got up. Lakhe: "I need you to snap the fuck out of it. Stand next to that stone with the can on your head." the man looked at him in fear. Lakhe: "Do it. You two, get up and shoot." Him: "Sir please. I'll try harder-" Lakhe: "So you know you're bad shooters? I said go." the man trotted to the spot and placed the can on top of his head. Lakhe: "You two need to look and learn. Stand back." he pointed at the head and pulled the trigger. The can flew off the minute the bullet touched it. Lakhe: "That's what I need from the three of you. I need you to focus, aim and shoot." Them: "Yes sir." Lakhe took out a smaller gun. Lakhe: "Tin can, come back here." he disassembled the gun and lay all its parts in front of them. He explained as he put it back together how its done and what goes where. Lakhe: "From now on, your name is RubberBullet. You're TinCan and you are TombStone. RB, TC and TS." TC: "Yes sir." Lakhe: "RubberBullet. Disassemble." RB took apart the weapon. Lakhe: "Tombstone, assemble." TS put it back together. Lakhe: "TinCan, shoot." TC: "At what sir?" Lakhe: "Help me Lord." he took a can to the stone again. Lakhe: "I want this team to run smoother than a German train schedule. Rubberbullet, Disassemble the weapon." RB took it apart. Lakhe: "Tombstone, assemble." TS

put it back together and handed it to TinCan who shot at the can but missed. Lakhe: "Close enough. Let's try again ladies. Rubberbullet." he watched them perform the cycle until the gun ran out of bullets. Lakhe: "Okay. Now, we learn the reload." he put a full magazine in front of them, showing them how to put it in. Lakhe: "You all know how to use guns, but you need to learn how to do it professionally, efficiently and in the blink of an eye. Now, you're going to do the process one more time, but when the bullets run out, you need to change it without stopping more than 3 seconds. You're working in a team. When Tombstone assembles the weapon, he gives it to Tincan but it will be Rubberbullet's job to have magazine ready to reload should the bullets run out. Am I making sense?" Them: "Yes sir." Lakhe: "Begin." the cycle ran smoothly Tincan managed to hit the can. While Rubberbullet disassembled the weapon, Lakhe replaced the can with two more standing a hand away from each other. He moved away in time as Tincan aimed but froze. Lakhe: "Nobody is ever going to warn you when there's a shoot out. You shoot everything on sight. But remember. Professionally, efficiently and ?" RB: "in the blink of an eye." he shot at his target, missing only one. Lakhe: "Move the process along." Two hours into his training, he gave them a break. Lakhe: "Hydrate. We start something new in 10 minutes." he walked to the other side where Sandile was. RB: "I feel like I'm training to be a ninja." TC: "Basically are. Do you think this guy is the Komander?" TS: "Are you stupid! Don't ever say that out loud." RB: "Yeah man. Also I don't think he'd show himself that easily." TC: "At least I feel like I'm worth something. Out of hundreds of workers, they chose us six. Why do you think that is?" RB: "Not sure. The initial training just to join almost broke me in half." TS: "I know. At least my army training helped me but that was nothing compared to what we went through here." TC: "Either way bro, we need to pass this thing. I'd hate to know what would happen to us if we didn't." TS: "True. I wish us Good luck."

Sandile stood on the sideline and watched the car attempt a donut, the driver kept hitting the brakes. Sands: "Pathetic." Lakhe: "hey. How's it going?" Sands: "If I was teaching Chris, I'd be home by now taking a nap." Lakhe: "I know. It is exhausting. At least my guys made progress." Sands: "You know what I like about these guys? They don't question a thing. They just do as I say. Its such a thrill." Lakhe: "They have a crazy boss they've never met. What were you expecting?" Sands: "True. Heyyyy, granny feet!! Get your ass here right this second!" the car stopped and drove to him then got out the car. Sands: "Why in Satan's name are you using your brakes? Your car can't stop until I tell it to. You can't breath until I tell you to. Do you understand me? Shake your foot." "Uhm...pardon m-" Sands: "Shake it!!!" the guy shook his foot. Sands: "Now you

get in that car. You Vrrr pha it back to your spot and rotate." the guy got into the car and drove off. Sands: "Need to take it easy with these boys you know. Watch this." he set the gun and aimed for the back tyre while the car was spinning. Lakhe: "Sandile you're lunatic, leave them alo-" Sandile pulled the trigger and the bullet pierced through the tyre, bursting it open, sending the car into a spiral, out of control, and crashing into a pole. Sands: "Idiots. You were saying?" Lakhe: "What's wrong with you?" Sands: "I'm bored bhuti. I need some drama!" Lakhe: "You just shot your interns for drama?" Sands: "What other choice do I have? My mother drives better than them!" Lakhe: "Quick alert, your mother doesn't drift. Sandile. Get it together. Look, I'm just as tired. We've been here for hours. Maybe we can make a challenge out of it." Sands: "How." Lakhe: "the next two hours is intense training. Then we have a joint approach where, one of mines partners with one of yours. Yours drifts, mine shoots." Sands: "We only have two cars left now." Lakhe: "We'll make do." Sands: "Fine." he looked at the crashed car. The guys were standing around it. Sands: "Look at those grannies changing their bras. Dear God, Lakhe!! These boys drive me crazy!! How the hell did they join KUG? Its like I'm training camels!" Lakhe: "Talk to your camels. Calm down. Okay?" Sands: "Just so you know, this was not worth McDonald's!" he stomped to the crash scene. Lakhe: "Nothing ever is."

#139

Komander drove his car to the parking lot. Lakhe came to stand by the window as it rolled down. They both watched the first golf 7 drifting in a full circle. Sandile held up his shirt. The second golf 7 joined the spin. The first car opened the sun roof and a member stood out of it aiming while the car was still moving. He shot at the pile of cans stacked on the roof of the crashed car in the far corner then got down in the car, simultaneously the second one opened the passenger window aiming with focus as the cars spun once, twice and on the third pulled the trigger. The bullet whizzed through the tin of cans. Sands: "YES!! YES!! YES Granny feet! That's what I'm talking about." the cars filed out and raced off to the end of the lot where they parked in a single line. Lakhe looked at Komander. Kom: "Its like I'm watching a blockbuster. Good job Masilakhe." Lakhe: "I'm glad you're happy. Still a lot to do but they need to rest after today." Kom: "As you see fit. I just need them ready by Monday." Lakhe: "What's happening Monday?" Kom: "You better look both ways before you cross the line." Lakhe: "My apologies." Kom: "I have to go fetch Babalo from his parent's house. I'll be 30 minutes tops. Then come back for you. They should get going." Lakhe: "Okay." Kom: "What happened

over there?" he pointed at the crashed car. Lakhe: "Sandile shot at them while they were working to scare them and they crashed. I'm sorry about that." Kom: "Don't worry. I was expecting all three to be crashed. Which means you're good at what you do. I'll get a tow truck here. You'll use new cars. I've finalized the budget for at least 12 GTI's." Lakhe: "Doesn't VW get suspicious when you buy a collective of GTI's?" Kom: "What did I say about looking both ways?" Lakhe: "Sorry. I'll let the boys go so long." Kom: "You'll start again tomorrow morning. No excuses." Lakhe: "Erh...I've kind of got a thing in the morning." Kom: "What thing?" Lakhe: "Well, Spho takes me to church on Sundays. And then we have lunch and spend time." Kom: "Do you attend Sunday School?" Lakhe: "No." Kom: "Then its not my problem." he started the car and drove off. Lakhe: "My wife is going to kill me." he walked back to Sandile. Lakhe: "Would you put your shirt back on?" Sands: "How bout no? Did you see the boys perform? I could not have been prouder." Lakhe: "You kept shooting at them for making mistakes." Sands: "And now look at them prosper..." Lakhe: "Just be careful not to hurt anyone okay?" Sands: "What's got your panties in a bunch?" Lakhe: "Your fake dad wants us to start again tomorrow morning." Sands: "but you have church with Spho in the morning. She was very audible, telling you about it. She's going to yell at you and everyone in the house. I'm gonn sleep out tonight." Lakhe: "Komander doesn't care! You've got to take the morning shift." Sands: "So that I miss church? Now you're officially wild and unstable." Lakhe: "Sandile, you do realize that you don't attend church right?" Sands: "Yes but he doesn't know that. I need a day off." Lakhe: "A day off for what? You don't even work! Sandile this is my wife. I haven't spent time with her in a long while. Everything in our lives involves my entire family. I'm just asking for one morning to make her happy and do what she loves. Please." Sands: "If you put it that way, then fine." he looked at the cars. Sands: "So we're going home?" Lakhe: "Yes. You can dismiss the boys." Sandile walked to the parked cars at the end of the lot. After he spoke to them the cars drove off. The tow truck arrived 15 minutes later to fetch the crashed car. Lakhe: "Do you know he has 12 of those just on standby?" Sands: "Why would he need 12 tow trucks on standby?" Lakhe: "No, I mean the cars. Says he finalized the budget for 12 GTI's. Which VW dealership wouldn't raise eyebrows at a collective of 12 cars purchased at the same time by one person?" Sands: "Three options, pick one. A) He ordered 12 people, gave them cash to buy them on his behalf. B) He did not buy them at the same time, and same place. C) He didn't even buy them." Lakhe: "You mean stole?" Sands: "No I mean he borrowed them Lakhe. He's a borrower." Lakhe: "He made it sound so professional. Anyway, none of my business." Sands: "How did he react to the progress he saw?" Lakhe: "he grinned a bit. You know he doesn't smile. He was impressed though. Said it

was like he was watching a blockbuster." Sands: "I was aiming for blu-ray. But okay. At least he's impressed. Feels good, don't it?" Lakhe: "Impressing him? Definitely. Its in my Top 3 favorite moments." Sands: "Here he is." Lakhe: "get dressed. Why are you always naked Sandile?" he buttoned his brother's shirt up. Sands: "You're intimidated by my good looks." Lakhe: "I don't care about how you look with your little baby abs." Sands: "Okay. Wow bhuti." the car stopped in front. Lakhe: "PS, I look way better." he opened the door and climbed in. Lakhe: "Hey Balo." Balo: "Hi." Sandile got in beside Lakhe. Lakhe: "Is everything okay?" Silence. The car drove off. Lakhe and Sandile looked at each other. When they arrived home, finally, after a silent car ride, Sandile jumped off the car before the engine switched off. He walked into the house. Sands: "Spho. Do I have baby abs?" Me: "What?" Lakhe: "Just let it go San-" Sands: "According Mr Bodybuilder Masilakhe Killian Sobukwe, I, Sandile Sands have baby abs. Do I have baby abs?" he lifted his shirt up to show his stomach. Me: "I...uhm..." Where does Sandile store all the food he eats? Lakhe: "Why are you flashing my wife?" Sands: "Spho?" Me: "You don't have baby abs. You look great. I prepared dinner." Sands: "Dr Koosles is here. Hey. How's it going?" Siya: "Hello Sandile. Its going well. How about you?" Sands: "Can't complain. So what you doing here? Trying to steal my brother's wife again?" Me: "Sandile!" Lakhe: "Again? What do you mean again?" Siya: "Yeah, what do you mean again Sandile?" Sands: "I mean, when you.....uhm never mind. Juice? We got orange juice. I freshly squeezed it this morning." Lakhe: "You're going to have to explain yourself-" Sands: "No, I don't." he went to his room. Lakhe: "What does he mean again Spho?" Me: "I'm just as confused as you." he followed his brother. Siya: "Now that they're home, maybe I should go." Me: "Yeah." he stood up. Me: "Goodbye. And thank you for guarding us even though it was unnecessary." Siya: "Its my job to keep you safe Spho." Me: "Since when." Siya: "Since knowing that your brother is doing what he's doing. The nice thing about being right under Sir, is that you may delegate tasks to yourselves when you see impending danger. He doesn't have to tell you to do it, you already know." Me: "I hear you. But I need you to know, I still choose Lakhe." Siya: "I know. And I will respect it from now on." Me: "Truthfully respect it?" Siya: "Truthfully respect it." I nodded. Me: "Are you waiting for something?" Siya: "Yeah, he's outside. I can't leave until he walks in. We don't exchange in the open." Me: "You guys get a rule book? Code of conduct type of thing when you join?" Siya: "Yes. But There's different rule books. Three to be exact. The first is like a type up of Komandments of the KUG. That's when you join as just a worker. Then There's Konduct behavior for the Kapos under me, Kompany and Komodity." Me: "What do they do?" Siya: "They take orders from us. Whatever I tell a Kapo to do, he does it. General errands, nothing too hectic." Me: "General errands?" Siya: "You should really

be asking your dad about these things." Me: "I want you to tell me. After the Kapos, There's you, Kompany and Komodity. What does he call you three?" Siya: "Nothing special. The K Elites. Well, Khaya being his direct right hand man. Kompany is his driver and security. I am his doctor and also business manager." Me: "So where does my mom fit in?" Siya: "Komary?" Me: "She made it in the top four? Go Mom!" Siya: "She married Komodity. She couldn't be a Kapo or general worker while married in this group." Me: "I see. And what does she do?" Siya: "She assists Komodity with everything. Especially when he's at work. Now she's generally taken over most of his duties. Although a lot of it still has to go through sir." I nodded. Me: "These Kapos are sent to kill, right?" Siya: "Uhm..." Me: "You can't start lying now when you're doing so well." Siya: "Spho, your dads will tell you everything about the business. My explanations stop here." Me: "Its okay. Thank you. I'm not mad either. I knew what he was before I knew he was my dad." Siya looked over me since I was shorter than him. Then he looked at the ground. I turned around and saw Komander. Great. Now he heard me call him dad. Well, this is awkward. Kom: "Komfort, you may be dismissed." Siya: "thank you sir. Goodbye Spho." he walked out. Kom: "So is there anything you want to ask me?" I shook my head. Kom: "I'm not a monster, Spho." Me: "Okay, Where is Babalo?" Kom: "Trying to come to terms with himself. He's in the car." Me: "You told him?" Kom: "I showed him." Me: "Is he okay?" Kom: "No. He might need a few days. His training starts on Tuesday." Me: "He agreed to be aKomander." Kom: "Yes. He understands his life is in danger." Me: "I feel so sorry for him." Kom: "He'll be fine." Me: "Siya said something about Lakhe having to train as well. Something about me being too powerful could harm him." Kom: "Yes. Your mother had to go through it as well when she married your dad." Me: "Does he have a choice?" Kom: "Yes. The better choice is him being able to protect himself." Me: "but I don't want him to change and have demons and all. I don't want him hurt." Kom: "No, this won't be putting demons in him. Its just training him for defense. Its up to him otherwise if he wants to join the K Elite group then you'll have to sit down with him and explain but the protection initiation is just going to be normal and not too painful." I nodded. Babalo came in the house. Balo: "Hey." Me: "Hi. You okay?" Balo: "You knew all along?" I assumed he meant him being the 'k' word. Me: "No we just found out last night." Balo: "I'm sorry Spho. For being inappropriate. You must think I'm a creep. If I knew you were, are my niece I wouldn't have....." Me: "Its okay Babalo. Water under the bridge." Balo: "I need to lie down." he walked to his bedroom. Me: "You threatened him didn't you?" Kom: "How did you..." Me: "I can see he looks like a kicked dog. All you had to do was talk to him!!" Kom: "I did what any father would do." Me: "Can you promise me you won't be intimidating my family again? Please." Kom: "Fine."

Sibu was here?" Me: "Yes, to fetch his clothes. He said he needed some time out." Kom: "That's not good." Me: "Why." Kom: "He's staying with his grandfather who's probably feeding him demons. I need to fix this immediately." Me: "Are you staying for dinner?" Kom: "No. Thank you." Me: "I see." Kom: "Spho, we spoke about this." Me: "I get it. You can't be the dad I want. You may leave Komander. Feel free." Kom: "Please don't do that." Me: "Do what?" Kom: "shutting me out-" Me: "You keep shutting yourself out!! I keep trying to love you and all you do is push me away!!" Kom: "Why are you yellin-" Me: "I am yelling because I'm angry! If you want a business contract for a daughter then FINE. Just don't appear at my gate at 2am. That ship has now sailed! I am done!" Kom: "Sphosam." Me: "No. You do not get to play that card. You are toying with my feelings." Kom: "I'm not." I moved closer to him. Me: "You won't even hug me. Your own daughter. Not a single hair touch." he stepped back. Kom: "that's Its difficult." Me: "Oh I know how difficult it is. Just go." he walked to the door. Me: "And you're just going to leave!?" Kom: "You told me to-" Me: "So you WANT to go?" Kom: "THEN WHAT DO YOU WANT!!!!!!!!!!!!!" he roared. I flinched. He had a cold look of hatred in his eyes. A Cold, Unresponsive and Painful look. I held back my tears trying to swallow the lump in my throat. Lakhe: "What the hell is going on here?" Kom: "Spho..." I ran to my bedroom and shut my door leaning behind it. Why did I expect to be loved by a demon? In which universe could this have possible? How I always had to emotionally bruise myself before I learn a lesson. I felt a sharp pain traveling through my body. Why did it have to be like this? I wish I could trade my life right this second and not have to experience this madness. Why do I have to be so welcoming and kind and vulnerable? My heart had dislocated from its original place. The expression in his eyes alone could have killed me. It was a soul-sucking look of hatred and contempt. Something I never wish to see again in my life. I never want to see him either.

Hours later, Zama stood in the lounge Masilakhe's house. She was with Sandile and Lakhe as well as Komander. Zama: "Again, I ask, what happened here? And this time, I expect an answer." Lakhe: "I got here too late. Spho ran to her room the minute I appeared. They were screaming at each other." Zama looked at Komander. Zama: "You were screaming at my daughter?" Kom: "She started screaming at me." Zama: "Why would she scream at you!" Kom: "I don't know." Zama: "You're trying to tell me the child I have raised, just out of the blue started screaming at you for absolutely NO reason?" Kom: "Yes." Zama: "That is not true." Kom: "Were you here?" Zama: "Spho is an emotional being. I know that but what I also know is that she's understanding. For her to become emotionally unstable, you must have triggered something. What did

you do to her?" Kom: "I am not the father Spho needs in her life. I never can be." Zama: "No wonder umntanam enje mos! How do you tell your own child you don't want to be part of their life? The father figure she was introduced to as a baby, molested and raped her for years!! Then she found Khaya, he developed a deep bond with her!! Now Khaya is in a coma. Which no one knows if he's going to wake up or not!! When it comes to a father figure, Spho is extremely sensitive. She probably thinks you hate her!! You don't understand the pain, the emotions and the childhood trauma we had to go through as Spho's parents but you're just going to come in here anyway and bulldoze everything then walk away. Have you even tried getting to know her and her life? Spho knows everything about you, what do you know about her? Except for trying to fight YOUR battles through her and making her join your cult! For the first time, you actually repulse me! I knew I should've kept her away from you. Khaya warned me and told me You'd ruin her life the minute she knew you. I should've listened to him. She's only a child that needs her father. You can't just release anger like this! Look what You've done!" Kom: "Zama..." Zama: "No. This time, I say NO. I don't care if you decide to kill me but I will stand by my child. What could she have done to you to deserve this?" Kom: "I have to go." Zama: "And do not come back." Kom: "What?" Zama: "Undivile. Spho is pregnant. Among everything You've brought. All the stress, all the spirits, all your baggage. I do not want you anywhere near her." Kom: "Or else what?" Zama: "Or else Him." Komander walked out....

#140

I woke up on Sunday morning and went about my business. After a shower and getting dressed, I took my bag and laptop bag as well. Lakhe: "baby?" I looked at him. Lakhe: "You haven't spoken to me since yesterday. I get that you're upset but I just want to make you okay." Me: "I just want to be alone. Don't worry about me." Lakhe: "How can I not? You're my wife. And I can't let you be by yourself." Me: "Lakhe, when you get mad at something and tell me you want to be alone, what do you do?" Lakhe: "that's not a fair question." Me: "how is it not?" Lakhe: "Its different." Me: "How?" Lakhe: "I'm a guy, I get to be quiet and alone. Women like to talk things out." Me: "I don't want to talk. I want to be alone." Lakhe: "What about church?" Me: "I got work to do today. I'll see you later. I love you." I walked out. It was already 9am. I needed a quiet coffee shop or restaurant. In the lounge, Sandile was having cereal, watching TV. Komander was standing by the couch. Sands: "Here she is. Hi Spho, looking fabulous today girl." Me: "Thanks Sandile." Kom: "Spho." I took my car keys and walked out. Sands: "You done fucked it up this time. Come

to think of it, she's exactly like you!!" Kom: "Are you talking to me?" Sands: "No.. I'm just having a conversation with my cereal." Kom: "Get your brother out his hole. You got work to do." he walked out to his car. Kom: "Komary's house." he slipped in the back seat and Kompany drove. In no time, he arrived at the residence and got out his car then went to knock on the front door. Zama opened the door and looked at him. Zama: "What do you want." Komander walked in. Kom: "How dare you." he turned to look at her. The door slammed shut sending a crisp bang echoing in the air. Zama: "This is you trying to threaten and strangle me?" Kom: "You made me look like a fool!! It is taking all of me not to end you right this second!" Zama: "And why don't you?" he glared at her. Zama: "Ohhh yeah.... Your Father." Kom: "How could you of all people turn on me?" Zama: "You turned on yourself." Kom: "Zama, I've done all I could, I literally can't do no more." Zama: "Then it'll be easy for you to step back." Kom: "Is this about you and me? That's why you're doing this?" Zama: "I thought about that. And then I've come to the realization that No. Its not about that. See, you lured me to you. Your incubus demon, the sexual one was the one pulling me to you. Not your personality. And there's one thing I will not stand for, that's seeing my daughter hurt." Kom: "Zama you're...." he sighed and looked at her. Zama: "You're making me late for church. Get out of my house." Kom: "We have a business contr-" Zama: "and I will adhere to it and it only. Everything else is off the table." Kom: "What do you want me to do?" Zama: "You've already done enough." She held the door open. He looked at her one last time then walked out. Kom: "Graveyard." Kompany drove to the location of the graveyard where the training was being done by Lakhe and Sands. He arrived under 20 minutes when the two just parked. Sands: "I'm not going near that car." Lakhe: "What are you talking about?" Sands: "I know what it feels like to be iced out by your wife. YOU of all people know what it feels like. I am not interested in finding out how a demon feels about it." Lakhe: "He's fine. He just needs to....." he stared at the smoke coming out underneath the Audi Q7. Sands: "Go on. You were ramping up to a great finish. He is pissed off Lakhe, not to mention hurt. Spho didn't even bother looking at him, let alone acknowledge his existence. She just walked past him like he was a bee. I could've damn well cried. Actually bees even have poise, he was like a fly to her." Lakhe: "We need to fix this. If he's mad at Spho then he'll be mad at us too obviously. We know what that means." Sands: "Hence I'm not going anywhere near that car." Lakhe: "Mxim." he walked to the Audi and knocked on the driver window. Kompany pressed down the window. Kompany: "Yes?" Lakhe: "So....Mr Komander is in the back?" Kompany: "What do you need?" Lakhe: "Nothing. Just checking if he's okay." the window rolled back up without a reply. Lakhe: "I guess not." he walked back to Sandile. Lakhe: "I, too am getting pissed off now. Spho wasn't

talking, now he isn't either. What do they think about us? How we feel?" Sands: "You like saving everyone. Let them be. They'll gravitate towards each other eventually. Everyone is being so dramatic. My dad was stressed. Mom couldn't eat. What's wrong with you all? The two people involved don't even care. I say, ignore them. Let's focus on our own problems now. Like where the hell these boys could be." the driver door of the Audi opened. Kompany's long leg stepped out. Sands: "Good Lord what is that." Lakhe: "Stop it." Sands: "He looks like a soldier praying mantis." Lakhe held in a chuckle. Lakhe: "Yazi when it or he gives you a beating I'm not going to stop it." Kompany opened the boot and took out two bags. He brought the bags to them and dropped them at their feet standing directly in front Sandile. Sands: "You and I look like we could be best friends. Playing basketball and all." Lakhe: "Uthula nini." he hissed. Sands: "Just catching up with my buddy." Kompany: "I am not your buddy." he walked back to the car and drove off. Lakhe: "Shit man!! What's wrong with you?" Sands: "I didn't know what to say! Its clear he heard us from 100 meters away. He's got the hearing of a bat. Is he a vampire?" three white GTI's drove toward them. Lakhe: "Just keep quiet when he's around. I don't like that thing. It gives me the creeps." Sands: "Fine. But just so you know-" Lakhe: "Yeah, yeah, this wasn't worth McDonald's. I get it." Sands: "better get it. I didn't come all the way here for this." he walked to his trainees.

My phone rang while I was at the restaurant. I picked up. Me: "Spho Sobukwe." "Hi Spho. Its Kevin." Who the fuck is Kevin? Me: "Kevin from?" Kev: "From before? Julie's uncle." Me: "Oh yes. Hi Kevin. How can I help you?" Kev: "Are you busy?" Me: "Not really I'm just sitting at Bocaddilos having a light breakfast." Kev: "Perfect. I'm 5 minutes away. See you now." he hung up. What just happened? I shook my head and continued with my work. A new email came in and I read it through. Gerard Kuche PhD does not give up neh? I dialed his number and he answered almost immediately. Gerard: "Hi Spho." I could hear him smiling on the line. Me: "Good day Dr Kuche." he laughed. Gerard: "You have a very good memory. Incredibly formal too, call me Gerard." Me: "Alright Gerard, how are you?" Gerard: "Fairly well. And yourself? How's the little bunion?" Me: "Doing absolutely wonderful." Gerard: "Perfect. So I hear through the long grapevine that you're organizing an event for my favorite hotel." Me: "I am." Gerard: "Alright, I want to chip in. In terms of marketing and advertising. Spho, I really like you. You are very professional, articulate and great at what you do. I have a proposal for you. Put me up as the official Marketing and Advertising for this event. I am willing to put forth a staggering R100 000 in courtesy of my company." Me: "In exchange for?" Gerard: "Come work for me." I knew it. Gerard: "I'll draw up a contract. Very

lucrative. Comfortable salary and exceptional benefits. Being able to work at home will be a bonus since we're awaiting our new mini CEO." I chuckled.

Me: "Gerard this is very generous of you but I have to decline unfortunately."

Gerard: "Okay. Let me know if you change your mind." Me: "I will do so."

Gerard: "So back to the event, I'll send you the cheque. Make an appointment with my office so we can get the details. how's that?" Me: "Its great. How does your day look tomorrow?" Gerard: "It looks like golfing. Listen, let's do 10am. My office." Me: "Email me the meeting details and I'll be there."

Gerard: "Thank you Spho. Enjoy the rest of your day okay?" Me: "Thanks Gerard, You too." we hung up as I saw Kevin walk to me. He was wearing white linen pants and an orange, yellow and red Hawaiian shirt. He had gladiator sandals on his feet and big sunglasses on his face. He's definitely gay. Sandile was right. Kev: "Spho." he pulled a chair and sat down taking off the shades. Me: "Hi Kev, how are you?" Kev: "I'm fine. I'm great. What are you doing here?" Me: "I was doing a bit of work." Kev: "I hope I'm not disturbing." Me: "No, I could do with some company." I was a bit lonely to be honest but I could not stand being in that house. I just wanted to be around new people and hear their normal problems because mine have officially reached psychopathic status. I so miss normal problems. Kev: "Okay. I want to thank you again for getting Julie back to us safely." Me: "You're welcome Kevin. It was really no trouble." Kev: "I feel bad that I came to your house guns blazing throwing accusations." Me: "Its what any normal parent would have done, trust me. How is Julie doing?" Kev: "She's fine. Dave told her about her mom. She's been a bit upset lately, its so hard to watch." Me: "Maybe I should bring Chris over, seeing him might lift her mood." Kev: "That's a good idea." he ordered his drink. Kev: "Spho.... I'm new to the city. I arrived her about six months ago when I learnt of my sister's health." Me: "I'm so sorry for your loss." Kev: "Its been hard but we've coped thus now. I just don't have friends. It has been difficult for me ever since I was young its just that I feel somehow free when I talk to you." Me: "I understand. You can call on me whenever you need a hand Kevin. As beautiful as life is, its difficult. For everyone. It'd be a much better place to live in if humans showed more empathy toward each other." Kev: "You're right about that." his drink arrived and he sipped it. Kev: "I have a secret and I can't keep it any longer." Lol. Fresh gossip? I'm always down. Me: "Is everything okay?" I sipped my tea. Kev: "Not really. Like I've said, its difficult for me to make friends. Simply because I'm....a little different. I just.....it was hard for me growing up. I had a superstar sister and I was the dork. Always having to live under her shadow of stardom. Everyone thought she was a sweetheart. She was talented in everything. Sports, head of debate team, head girl, part of a drama club. At home, she was completely different, well I give credit to the drama club. She was the opposite of

sweetheart. An actual monster, she tormented me and bullied me. Called me all kinds of names. One time she found me in her room, I had tried on one of her dresses and heels, she was livid. Screaming and hitting me against the wall saying that I could not get any weirder and if I didn't keep this "shit" to myself she would ruin me before I damaged her academic career." Me: "Wow." Kev: "So I've lived in the closet my whole life, scared of her, and her opinion. I loved her. She was my sister after all. Then she met Dave 5 years ago and got pregnant. What she did to me all those years, she did to Dave too. I don't know why. Anyway, Dave finally gets tired of it. I come to visit them and she isn't home. Dave told me about what was happening and said he wanted a divorce but was thinking about Julie, who was then 2. Uhm....we had a few drinks and I spoke about my experience with her as well. We had something in common. Its weird I know. One day, we...kissed." I was doing my best to keep a poker face. But, my word!! Are we really having this conversation? Lakhe is going to laugh. Kev: "it was electrifying. So amazing. We connected deeply but I couldn't carry on so I left. I ran like a coward back to Bloemfontein. He called everyday to check up on me, sent messages. I just couldn't do this to my sister. No matter what she's done to damage our self esteem, I just could not do it. We kept in touch though, Dave and I. Which was bad because I fell deeply in love with him. Those conversations we had on the phone lasting for hours, how he talked about his job, talked about my pursuits in life. So....my sister discovered she had cancer when Julie was 3. Unfortunately she discovered it late. There was not much that could be done. I dropped everything to come look after her and spend the final months of her life with her." Me: "after everything she's done to you?" Kev: "Yeah. When you're faced with death, things like that don't matter anymore. I don't think I'd have been able to rest if I hadn't come. To me, I just imagined never seeing her again. During those months, Dave and I had discussed that we would give it a pause. My sister then died. We buried her in dignity. I was broken. My only sibling had passed. Dave was there to comfort me and in a moment of weakness we slept together." I needed more tea. Kev: "Ever since then.....wehaven't stopped. Now he has asked me to permanently move here, with him and Julie. I love them so much Sphe, but I feel like I'm betraying my sister by stealing her family." Me: "Before we worry about the dead people. Let's first focus on the alive ones. The one person you should be worried about first and foremost is Julie. Does she know you're in a relationship with Dave?" Kev: "No she doesn't." Me: "Good. Now she just lost her mother. That on its own is enough stress for a child to endure especially a young one. Its great that you're there taking care of her but protecting her is just as important. You do not want to confuse her or further hurt her because she might grow up to be resentful and hate you, stating that you killed her

mother in order to get her father. Try and focus on building a relationship with her. Raise her with well manners and respect. Give her time to mourn properly. Once she is older then you can sit her down and let her know respectfully what has happened. Now, back to the dead. Your sister, no matter how bad she treated you, still loved you. Yes she was cruel to you all your life but the important thing is, she was your blood. Even if she didn't show it then, she surely wants happiness for you now. You respected her by staying away at first, as difficult as I imagine it would be. Don't let the negative energy she had stay with you, let go of it completely. What happened to her in the end is awful but why dwell on misery. You're happy with Dave. You can finally be free." Kev: "I just feel so guilty." Me: "When you get home, look at Dave without him noticing. Watch what he's doing. Whether he's eating, watching a sports game or taking a nap. Look at him, imagine life without him, if you feel your heart pause and retrace and starts beating again don't ever let him go. Go get your man, girl." he smiled. Kev: "You are crazy." Me: "You'll get used to it." I finished my tea. Kev: "I feel like a whole weight has been lifted off my shoulders." Me: "Talking to someone does that." Kev: "What work do you do?" Me: "I just resigned. I was an MD at GoldenCell. My husband is the CEO." he gasped. Kev: "This explains that huge gigantic elephantical house. It is gorgeous! I only see those types of houses on TV." I laughed. Me: "and very expensive to maintain." Kev: "I can only imagine." Me: "What do you do?" Kev: "At the moment, nothing. I just paint and cook new recipes. Dave wants me to stay at home and make sure Julie is well fed and all. He wants to turn me into a house wife." Me: "You could still do that while working." Kev: "Exactly, look at you, you had Chris and having the second baby now. Still successful. I don't see why he's so worried." Me: "Talk to him and let him know." Kev: "He's just been so stressed, I don't want to bother him. He's already taking care of us financially-" Me: "and he will get tired. Julie is his daughter and he is obliged to look after her. You on the other hand. You need to be able to take care of you." Kev: "You're amazing. Your husband ever tell you that?" Me: "Every day." he ordered lunch and we had a light chat about his life back in Bloemfontein.

Sunday late afternoon, I drove into my yard, parked my car and went into the house. I was carrying my bags and a cake I got at Woolworths. Inside the house, the family was in the lounge watching television. Rob helped me with my bags. Me: "Molweni. How was your Sunday?" Stella: "It was fine. You look like you're in a good mood, honey." Me: "I am ma. I'll get started on dinner." Rob: "Vicky is already taking care of it." Me: "Alright. Here's some cake for dessert later. I'll put it in the fridge." I went to the kitchen, put the cake in the

fridge and took a snack to my bedroom. Lakhe and Sandile walked in. Lakhe: "Molwe-" Rob: "Spho is in a good mood. Do. Not. Ruin. It." Lakhe: "All I said was Hello." Sands: "What happened?" Rob: "I don't know, she walked in here smiling." Lakhe: "So?" Rob: "After the fight yesterday, you think its not weird she's happy?" Sands: "I'm confused." Stella: "You think she might have done something to him?" Lakhe: "No I saw him a few minutes ago. He's okayish. Physically." Sands: "Nope. He's in abad mood is a little light. How about, he took Satan's face and hung it in the place of his own." Stella: "Can we stop talking about him now?" she whispered. Rob: "Why would Spho be so happy then if he's still upset? What could she have said to him?" Stella: "Does it matter!" Rob: "Yes!" Lakhe: "You actually believe that Spho is capable of hurting someone? Kaloku She's your role model." Rob: "Maybe she made a mistake." Lakhe: "Tata, Spho is human. You need to get it into in your stomach that she is capable of being hurtful to others, whether on purpose or unintentionally. She's not an actual angel. I love my wife but she's very mean when she likes." Rob: "Not my Spho. HE must have said something to her and she retaliated. He shouldn't have tried her. She clearly had enough time." he flipped a page on his newspaper. Sands: "You really think you'll win an argument about Spho with utata? Your whole father? He is her personal private cheerleader, laced with pom poms and all. You're wasting your time." Rob: "Louder." Lakhe: "mxim." the gate rang. Nosi and her friend were calling. He opened the gate for them and walked to his bedroom. I was just out the shower and was sitting on my bed applying lotion when Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "Hi sweetheart. How was your day?" Lakhe: "M-my day?" Me: "Of course, silly. Come here." I kissed his lips then continued wearing my underwear and leggings. Lakhe: "It was okay. How was yours?" Me: "It was great. I met up with Kevin." Lakhe: "Who's Kevin?" Me: "Julie's uncle slash step dad. Sit, I have some tea." Lakhe: "I'm not into tea." Me: "I mean gossip. So, Kevin grew up being in the closet because his sister was a bitch to him." I recited to him the story Kevin told me. Me: "So, now Kevin is feeling guilty for being in love with David." Lakhe: "So they're gay?" Me: "Yes! And Dave asked him to move in with them." Lakhe: "This is not weird to you?" Me: "Of course its weird but who am I to judge? Look at my story, that's beyond weird. Its borderline crazy." Lakhe: "and you didn't share that with him, did you?" Me: "of course not." I wore a white maternity top. Me: "You okay? You're always happy when I give you fresh gossip, what's going on?" Lakhe: "Have you spoken to your dad?" Me: "How can I? He's in a coma." Lakhe: "I meant your real dad." Me: "Khaya is my real dad." Lakhe: "Spho, come on. This isn't healthy." Me: "What isn't?" Lakhe: "Pretending nothing happened so that it hurts less. He's miserable! Please talk to him." Me: "Who's him?" he stared at me. Me: "Oh, 'him.' I'll try and catch him in between meals. You want to help

me in the garden? Those beautiful white roses will look so good by the key bowl stand at our front door." Lakhe: "I don't like gardening." Me: "Neither do I. Excuse me for trying to spend some time with you. I thought we'd bond over something we both dislike." Lakhe: "I had a long day Spheo, can't we just chill in bed and do something we both like?" Me: "We will, later. Get some rest. I love you. I'll be outside." I walked out. Me: "Sandile, would you like to help me pick out some flowers from the garden for our key bowl stand." Sands: "Erh....." Me: "Its okay if you're also tired." Rob: "I'll pick out some roses with you." Stella: "I'll watch." Me: "Great! I'll get the garden equipment." I went to the garage. Sands: "Somebody put the police on standby?" Rob: "For what?" Sands: "I am afraid, tata. Gardening? She's never done gardening! Spheo is dangerously angry. This is the worst type of anger because she looks like sunshine but its a pin drop away from a thunder storm. The smallest thing could set her off and I don't want to be here for it." Rob: "Don't be silly." he got up. Stella took her camera. Sands: "You will be the first to tell me I was right. Something is definitely amiss here." Stella: "Then what do you want us to do?" Sands: "Just be careful." I came back with the garden tools. Me: "Ready?" Rob: "Yep." he followed me to the garden and we picked out a bunch of white roses. I took them into the house and prepared a round vase, pouring a bit of water and placing the flowers in. Such a beautiful display. Me: "Sandile." Sands: "Yes?" Me: "I need a hammer and nails. There's this key hanger I want to go buy quickly. This key bowl is kind of annoying me." Sands: "Don't worry, I'll do it." Me: "I kind of want it done now not when Chris is 22 years old." Rob laughed. Sandile opened the gate while I went to the kitchen. Vicky: "hee...is that drizzle?" Me: "Who?" she pointed to the light shower outside. Huh. It was sunny just a minute ago. I walked back to the lounge and I found Komander standing by my beautiful white roses. A crackle of thunder burst in the sky. Lakhe: "Baby, you need to talk. I called him here. This needs to be resolved." I looked at my flowers watching them slightly wilt. Me: "Please move away from my display." Kom: "Not until you look at me." I looked at him. Me: "Its not working. Move away from my flowers please." Kom: "I don't want to fight with you." Me: "I beg to differ since you're doing everything in your power to destroy me flowers." Kom: "This is not about the flowers." Me: "What is it about?" Kom: "I know I hurt you. It wasn't my intention to." Me: "I see you're not here to apologize." Kom: "How can -" he composed himself. Kom: "How can I apologize for being myself?" Me: "You're right. I should be the one who actually is apologizing for trying to change you." I took my vase into my arms since he was not moving any time soon. Kom: "I'm sorry." Me: "For what? All you did was be yourself. I expected too much from you and you couldn't give it. I understand." Sands: "Nope." Kom: "I'm glad you understand. I thought you hated me." Me: "I could if I wanted to but what would that help? You

know what I realized though, since you came into my life, I didn't really appreciate what Khaya did for me. Raising me. Teaching me strong values. Loving me unconditionally and protecting me. He is an amazing father and I don't know what came over me thinking I could replace him just that easily. So you know what? I think I'll give you your space to continue with your life as you did before. I'll help you with the skill set of defeating your father if you still need it so that we can carry on with our lives as before. No bad blood?" I handed him a single white rose. He took it and stared at the flower deteriorating in his touch. Me: "You know what? I want to host an appreciation party for dad. Tomorrow, if you're going to be available, please come through, bring Kompany. It'll be an intimate thing. Only strict family. We gonna have snacks and cake. I'll get a big white paper so we can write sweet messages for him. Then I can hang it in his room, along with our pictures to let him know we were thinking about him. Imagine him waking up to that. It would be great if everyone dressed in all white for the shoot, I have to get a photographer. Like we're his angels. Whether he wakes up in heaven or earth, we're always there with him." Sands: "Jesus Christ, my heart..." he held his chest. Me: "Its okay if you can't make it though." he looked up at me, putting the flower on the table. Sandile pulled me back a few steps. The look on Komander's face was unreadable. I don't think anyone could guess his next move. He stepped back and walked out of my house. Me: "Okay. I think dinner is ready guys."

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Monday morning I was up early making arrangements for the last minute party. After my shower, I sat in my closet trying to think what to wear. Not only do I miss him, I just wanted to make sure he was okay. Maybe I pushed it too far this time. Well I can't really undo it now. The baby kicked me hard almost shocking me out of my thoughts. Me: "hayi ke Ufuna ndithini baby?" that was followed by multiple kicks again. Me: "I don't want to talk to him." I folded my arms looking at my dresses. The baby kicks became less aggressive eventually feeling like little pokes. Me: "uqumbile kengoku? Get mad then. Your grand daddy think he slick. I've given him what he wants, now he's mad again? Kanti what must I do? Pretend I don't care about him? Or just do? Its confusing." Lakhe: "Who are you talking to?" he stood by the door. Me: "Peanut." he looked at me with a questioning look on his face. Lakhe: "Okay, what are you two talking about?" Me: "Peanut is mad because I don't want to talk to You know who." Lakhe: "You sure you're not the one mad that you don't want to talk to him?" Me: "Are you here to help me or what?" Lakhe:

"Sandile is looking for you." Me: "I can't find a dress. I have a meeting in two hours." Lakhe: "the one with Gerard you didn't tell me about?" Me: "What?" Lakhe: "Yeah." Me: "Is that why you ignored me all of last night?" Lakhe: "No, but why is it a secret?" Me: "Its not a secret Lakhe, Gerard called me yesterday-" Lakhe: "Still. I don't know about it and wouldn't have known." Me: "So you went through my emails?" Lakhe: "Don't you go through my phone Spho?" Me: "I've never gone through your phone. I only play games, that's it." Lakhe: "I was playing a game too when the email came in and I decided to check it for you, since you're my wife and heavily pregnant not to mention stressed but I was in for the shock of my life." Me: "That's not cool Masilakhe." Lakhe: "What's not cool is you quitting your job and poaching my clients after you said to me you won't be working anymore and only going to be a house wife and stay at home mom. Why did you lie? Am I that horrible?" I took the first dress close to me which was a light pink maternity dress. I wore it and pulled my white block heel. Lakhe: "I'm asking you a question." I wore my shoes. Lakhe: "So you're going to ignore me too? I hope you can keep up with that attitude." he walked out. I really couldn't talk actually because I was too upset and I didn't want to say something that I'll regret to him. I needed to calm down before I talked. After brushing my weave and tied it back in a low ponytail I took my bag and shades. I needed to go change my hairstyle now. But that would be for another day. I went out the room. Sandile was waiting in the lounge. Sands: "Sphosam." Me: "What's up?" Sands: "Come here." he pulled me to his room and closed the door. Sands: "I don't own any white." Me: "You have a white shirt, put on some jeans and shoes. Its fine." Sands: "What's wrong?" Me: "Nothing. I just have a meeting. I'm gonn bring you the invoice later okay?" Sands: "Alright. Well...I want to talk to you about your dad." Me: "Not you too please." Sands: "Just sit." I sat on the comfy couch. Sands: "I know you're hurting and its normal. You don't have to feel bad for your emotions. Nobody else feels them except you. Therefore nobody else can tell you anything about them. Process your feelings through the correct channels for as long as you need. There's no need to be afraid. I'll be here for you." Me: "Thank you Sands." Sands: "On the other hand, you also need to think of your father-" Me: "Why doesn't he think for himself?" Sands: "He can't. His entire life he's never had what you give him. What makes it worse is that he's not fully inclined like you and me. Its difficult for him to feel and think about love. He's not my favorite person but I understand his dilemma. Your love is a special kind of love Siphosenkosi. Even your name says it. You're God's gift. He cannot handle it. You remember when I disappeared? It wasn't just my world I was trying to escape from, it was my world with you in it. You have room in your heart for each and every living thing. Even Babalo, you pretend to hate him but you lowkey like him. I mean

you invited him to stay in your house for goodness sake. By the way, you might want to check on him, I think he's going through something. Anyway, you have a different kind of energy and some of us with cold hearts can't handle it. Mine has already melted. Understand his situation." he reached over to the table and gave me a burnt damaged flower. Sands: "This is the flower you gave him. When he held it, it drained all its beauty and died. This is why he won't let you hold him. He's afraid he'll damage you. The way he's damaged." I looked at the flower and I had a flashback of the expression on his face on Saturday. That angry, hatred-filled look. I cringed at the memory. Sands: "You gonna forgive him right?" Me: "He didn't do anything wrong. Its just that...I think its best for our relationship to remain platonic. If that's what he's comfortable with. I don't know what came over thinking I could save him from his pain and just" I wiped my tears. He hugged me. Sands: "I know bhabha. The problem is you can't save the whole world. You need to accept that and be okay with it." Me: "What am I supposed to do Sandile? When I love someone I want them to understand it and cherish it." Sands: "Well, we appreciate it as your family." I pulled back dried my tears. My heart was feeling so heavy and heartbroken again. I just wanted to crawl into a box and cry. Me: "I have to go." I got up and took my bag. Sands: "I'm here for you Spho. I've told you before, use me." I nodded and walked out. Stella was holding her iPad standing in the lounge. I wore my shades. Stella: "There you are honey. I wanted to ask you, do you have anything specific you want for the party tonight?" Me: "No mama. I just want everything draped in white. We can call a catering company to come cook." Stella: "Catering company?" she laughed. Stella: "I have a chef and his team in mind. I'll call him. By the time you're back we'll be half way done. I've called a photographer, he'll be here at 4pm to capture everyone. Is your mom coming?" Me: "I'll call her ma." Stella: "perfect. Go about your day sweetheart, I'll take care of here." Babalo was sitting at the table staring at his full plate, pushing the food around with his fork. I went to him. Me: "Hey." Balo: "Hi." Me: "You're not eating." Balo: "I don't have an appetite." Me: "Then let's go." he got up and went to fetch his shoes. Rob: "Where is Sibulele?" Me: "Visiting his family tata." I went to look for Chris and found his room empty. I had a mini panic attack. Me: "Where's Chris?" I asked them back in the lounge. Rob: "he left with Lakhe. Is everything okay?" Me: "Oh...yeah tata. Its fine." I left with Babalo. Thank goodness he was quiet because I didn't feel like talking either. I know he was probably driving himself crazy, thinking a whole lot. He needed to breath. Balo: "Where we going?" Me: "I have a meeting. After that I need to book Chris' doctor appointment. Then go to CNA to find the paper I need. Do you have an all white outfit?" Balo: "No." Me: "then we go shopping." Balo: "I'm not a baby. I can take care of myself." Me: "Should I take you back to the house?" Balo:

"No." I carried on driving. Balo: "What if he finds me?" Me: "I dare him to come near you while you're with me today. I've got enough time." Balo: "Who got you mad?" Me: "Nothing." I looked ahead quietly. Luckily he didn't pry. Me: "Your training starts tomorrow. How do you feel about that?" Balo: "I don't know. I haven't gotten it in my head that this is what I am now." Me: "I know its hard. I'm gonn need you to be strong okay? No matter how painful it is." Balo: "What if I die?" Me: "Your brother will never let that happen." I drove into Gerard's company parking lot for visitors. Me: "We're here. Come." we went in.

Later in the day, after the shopping Babalo drove us home. I was eating my ice cream sitting in the passenger seat. He kept looking at me every few minutes. Me: "What?" Balo: "you sure know how to put someone in a role." Me: "What you mean?" I took another mouthful. Balo: "Uncle driving his niece home after buying her ice cream." I giggled. Balo: "and I was forced to buy it too." Me: "I had a long day. I deserved ice cream." Balo: "You really do. I was impressed by how you conducted the meeting with Dr Gerard. You really know how to run a business Spho." Me: "Thank you." Balo: "Why don't you start your own company?" Me: "For now I just want to focus on my baby." Balo: "You'd do an impeccable job to be honest." I finished my ice cream. Me: "Thank you Babalo but I really can't. Lakhe won't forgive me." Balo: "Why not?" Me: "Its complicated." Balo: "Whatever it is. He's your husband, he loves you and he will support you." If only it was that simple. Lakhe doesn't see me as just his wife but competition in the work front as well. Something I can't tell anyone because marriage. Me: "I guess." he drove into the yard and when I got out the car, my phone rang. I answered. Me: "Hi Kevin." Kev: "Hi Spho. How are you?" Me: "I'm great and yourself?" Kev: "I'm super. Listen, I won't waste any of your time. I just wanted to know if You'd be available for a dinner date sometime this week. I want to cook a special meal. Well, its actually for Chris and Julie." Me: "I'd love to. I'll check with my husband and let you know okay?" Kev: "Alright. Thanks Spho." we hung up. I took the bags into the house. Sands: "So You've replaced me." I gave him his packets." he put the Zara paper bag aside and opened the plastic that had a remote controlled helicopter. Sands: "Suuuuuuuper!" Me: "something smells good." Sands: "the chef's are in the kitchen." he stared at the box. Me: "and Chris?" Sands: "napping." Me: "Just open it." Sands: "I don't want to ruin it." Me: "You won't ruin it. Its a toy. Play with it." Sands: "This is not a toy Spho. Its a collectors item. If you open the box, it loses value." Me: "Still a toy. Change into your white pants, the photographer will be here any minute. Is Lakhe around?" Sands: "No he just brought Chris home, fed him then left." my heart cracked a little. Me: "Did he say where he was going?" Sands: "No, he didn't. Is

everything okay?" Me: "Yes. I'm going to change." I went to my room and looked for a white dress. Two options I had. The floaty maxi dress or the boob tube body con. Both crystal white. The maxi dress made me look like a baby whale dressed in a curtain lace and I hated it. I went for my shower and got dressed into the white body con that was a bit over my knees. I paired it with all white Nike Cortez sneakers. I put a gown on and did my make up whilst trying to call Lakhe. It hit voice-mail more than three times. I took out my diamond choker and put it on taking off the gown. Fixed my hair then walked out to foresee the rest of the plans. Stella had done a wonderful job. This house looked amazing like a scene in heaven. The dining table was in a white cloth and the chairs had white covers on them that hung to the floor. There were gold candles and white roses in short vases on the table. Perfection. Stella: "Spho." she rushed to me. Stella: "What do you think?" Me: "Its so beautiful ma. Thank you so much." Stella: "It was great planning it. I enjoyed it. Let me get your father in law dressed." she hurried off. The chef's were setting the tables. Sandile was probably getting dressed. Babalo came out his room ready in his all white. Me: "Where is Hlumi?" Balo: "She's on her way. When is Dumi coming back?" Me: "He told me tomorrow." I was actually quite pleased that Dumi spent the weekend with Zingi and their kids. She really needed help with Baby Lisa. At least she got some rest now. Perhaps, he might even move back with her. Balo: "I'm actually kind of hungry. Those dishes are so appetizing." Me: "We have to start with the photos first so that nobody messes on themselves. Please help me with the presents." we fetched them from the car and stuck each person's gift under their assigned seat." Balo: "You're good people Spho." Me: "Thank you Balo. Here's the photographer I hope." I opened the gate and he came in. Sands: "Say hi to Mr handsome." he walked into the lounge. He was dressed in all white. Crisp white fitted pants and a matching shirt with three buttons loose. He was wearing white formal shoes and I don't know where the hell he got those but he was looking hella. Boogie was in his arm and I noticed a white bow tie around his neck. Me: "Really? The dog?" Sands: "that's why I call him Mr handsome. He's a beautiful boy today, aren't you buddy?" Balo: "that's weird man." Sands: "Oh hell nah, it aint." I held in a chuckle. The photographer knocked. Me: "Hi, come on in. Onke right? You can find a spot and set up." Stella and Rob came out dressed. They looked so beautiful. Me: "You guys look amazing." Stella: "and by that she means me." I smiled. Everything went ahead. The photos were taken. A few family pictures and individual ones. Lakhe hadn't shown up or called. He was probably still mad at me and punishing me. After the shoot. Dinner was served then dessert. Me: "Can I have everyone's attention please?" I stood up. Me: "First of all, I want to say thank you for every one of you for making the effort of dressing up and

joining me. Yesterday, I said this would be an appreciation party for my dad but today, I realized it was for all of you as my family. So, I got each of you a little something just as a little appreciation for being my source of happiness and support system throughout. Underneath your chairs is a gift for each one of you." they reached under their seats and pulled out their presents. Chris: "I got a car!!" (toy) Me: "Yes honey. You gonna hitch me a ride?" Chris: "Absolutely not. You gonna break it mama." Sands: "Ouch." Me: "I'd actually be offended if it wasn't so funny." Stella: "Thank you so much Spho. I love it!" hers was a gorgeous handbag. Rob: "This is amazing! Spho..." he hugged me. I got him gold golf balls with white gloves. Me: "If I'd thought of this party earlier I'd have had them sew your name." Rob: "I love it mntanam." everyone loved their presents. I had Luke's one waiting for him when he was done with his private program too. Dumi's one would wait until he's back. Even Sibub's was waiting in his room for him. Lakhe would receive his when he came home. After the presents, we all signed on the white A1 paper I bought. Sweet messages from all of us. Unfortunately my mother couldn't join us but she would sign the paper at the hospital. Stella: "Maybe this should be an annual thing. Every January, an appreciation party for the whole family. This is so special." Rob: "I agree. We might live together for now but sooner or later people will be moving on with their lives, in their own houses-" Sands: "Can I get that in writing?" Rob: "Its not even your house. Anyway....we're more appreciative of you Spho. You've opened your heart and home to us. Never questioned us or disrespected us. You're my little hero, baby girl." Me: "hayi tata. You're going to make me cry." all in all, everyone had a wonderful time. In the evening, I sat on the couch outside by the pool. There was a beautiful sunset and a warm breeze. Sandile sat next to me. Sands: "how's my little rice krispie." he tickled my tummy. Sands: "I'm actually going to be an uncle. Again. Chris really forced me into it." Chris: "forced yourself Uncle Sandile." he came running. Chris: "with your Uncle shoes. Get away from my mommy." he hung on my lap. Sands: "I will push you into that pool, boy. Play with it." Chris made chicken noises flapping his arms and I laughed out loud. Sandile grabbed him, taking him to the water. Chris: "Uncle Saaaandillllleee!!!!!" he screamed. Sands: "Apologize." Chris: "Sorry!" Sandile put him down. Chris: "Chicken." he ran to the house. Chris: "Xela kutatam!" Sands: "little demon." he sat down. Sands: "The party was amazing. You're not happy." Me: "I am." Sands: "Is it because he didn't show up?" Me: "Who?" Sands: "your dad." Me: "I expected him not to show up. My invitation was sarcastic." Sands: "So....why aren't you happy." How could I tell him that his brother was ignoring me? I didn't keep anything secret from Lakhe. I simply forgot to tell him, that's it. Although he won't see it the same way. Me: "I'm just tired. Today was long. Gerard is in charge of the marketing and PR for your event." Sands: "I thought

it wasn't a public thing." Me: "It isn't. Its news worthy though. He is putting together a proposal of how we can make this also a charitable event. Your most regular clients are invited to the show right? Well we're adding sponsors to the list. Millionaires of sorts willing to donate. The money goes to a certain charity after the event." Sands: "I like it." Me: "You're going to have to come with me to these meetings Sands. This is your hotel." Sands: "I trust you with it. Besides, I've hired you." Me: "Hired means I get paid, I'll send you my invoice." he laughed. Sands: "This sun is making you a little light headed and delusional." he pulled me up and we went back into the house.

That evening, I was getting ready for bed. I needed a massage so badly. My door opened as I crawled into bed. Me: "Hey." he looked at me taking off his shoes. Me: "I've been trying to call you. You missed our entire party." Lakhe: "your party." Me: "it was for everyone. The least you could have done is shown up for the photoshoot." Lakhe: "I have a JOB. I can't just go on spontaneous photoshoots. On a Monday still? Hayi man. This obsessive behavior of trying to act like everything is okay will blow up in your face. What was the need for this party? To hurt someone you think you love? Spho, a lot of people love you but this isn't healthy and sometimes you overdo everything. Its annoying." I got into my blankets. He went to take his shower. After attempts of trying to fall asleep, I realized it wouldn't happen. Lakhe: "I'm going to the study." Me: "Just to avoid me?" Lakhe: "You resigned without notice. I haven't been able to find anyone to help. My company is suffering because you decided whatever. How do you expect me to just chill?" I didn't respond. I was in no mood for a fight today. If this was still about Gerard then it was completely absurd. I stayed in that room for hours not sure why I couldn't fall asleep after such a long tiring day? I did a bit of yoga to relax and it seemed to work a bit. The door opened again, this time Chris walked in rubbing his eyes and carrying Mr Courage(his doll man) in his other arm. He crawled into the bed without a word and started snoring. I snuggled him closer to me and I fell asleep. No...this wasn't sleep. I was.....just dreaming. All I saw was a woman standing and staring. I looked at her eyes and woke up. Who the hell was that? I looked at Chris. Was he dreaming this? Did he know her? He looked a bit restless in his sleep. I held his cheek and he stopped. His breathing was fine again. Me: "who are you seeing baby boy?"

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1 week later.

It was a Tuesday afternoon. The week of the hotel event. Everything was crazy. This morning I had to take Chris to day care, then go to the doctor for my weekly check up after that, meetings all day. I was 8 and a half months now. Soon I'd have to pop. Hopefully after the event because I could not afford to miss it. It was getting more difficult to get up from bed, I had to roll around like a whale. After my shower, the next athletic activity was putting on lotion then getting dressed after that. Not to mention shoes. Lol. I've given up on lace ups, all I wore was fur slides. After getting dressed I took my things. Lakhe was still sleeping and from the snarl I got a few days ago for waking him, I was not going to do it again. Nguban sana ofuna uphoxwa ekseni? I paddled like a penguin to the lounge where Sandile was sitting watching TV. He was already dressed. All black as usual. Sands: "There you are." Me: "Morning." I sneezed. Sands: "What's that?" Me: "My bag." Sands: "No, what's that sneeze?" Me: "Probably dust. Where is Chris, its time to go." Sandile was my chauffeur since yesterday. His explanation was that he didn't want me to give birth while driving. Sands: "Chris is eating his porridge. Sit and eat yours." Me: "I'm not hungry." Sands: "I didn't ask." he sat me down on the table. Chris came out of the kitchen drinking his yogurt. Sands: "Are you done?" Chris: "Yeah. Hello mama." I hugged him. Me: "hi sweetie." Chris: "You not gonna forget tonight is my play date with Julie." Me: "Of course. Did you let daddy know?" Chris: "Yes." he went to sit on the couch. Chris: "he told me to have fun." Me: "He's not coming?" Chris: "Nope." I stood up. Sandile pushed me gently back down. Sands: "Eat." Me: "I'm tired of his attitude. I need to talk to him." Sands: "Yeah, but you gonna eat first." Me: "Fine." I ate my breakfast and drank my water. Sands: "Let's get moving guys, we're late." the gate buzzed and Chris jumped up to go open. Me: "Who is it Chris?" Chris: "I dunno." You read it correctly. That's exactly how he said it. I'm gonna hand that one over to Julie. Only she can fix someone's grammar. Me: "Please check Sandile." I took my bowl to the kitchen. I was getting a little dizzy now and my back already hurt. Slowing down was a much needed option but at this point, I really couldn't. It was a crucial time. I walked back to the lounge and found Komander standing there with Sandile and Chris hanging on his leg. He looked down at the boy. I hadn't seen him in a week. Ever since that day. Me: "Hi." Kom: "Hi." Now it was a bit awkward. Kom: "Is Babalo here?" Me: "I guess. I've barely seen him since his training started last week." Kom: "He's hanging in there." Me: "That's good." silence again. Sandile folded his arms and looked from him to me. Kom: "So its almost time huh.." Me: "Time for what?" Kom: "The baby." Me: "Oh yeah.... That. Yeah." Kom: "That's good." Sands: "Oh fucks sake!!! TALK !" he took Chris to the bedroom. Kom: "So when last were you at the hospital?" Me: "Yesterday." Kom: "I saw the decorations in his room. Its beautiful." Me: "Thank you." Kom: "Is everything okay? With you

and Lakhe." Me: "I think you and I came to an agreement last week that this isn't going to happen. We're not that close." Kom: "You're right." Me: "Should I call Babalo for you?" he didn't respond. Dear God are Going to have to go through this again? Me: "I'll go call him." Kom: "Spho." I stopped half a step and looked at him. My heart just gave away. I had to look down. Kom: "Look at me." Me: "I can't." Kom: "You know you can block me right?" Me: "I don't want to." I took a step away. Me: "How is Sibuzi?" Kom: "He doesn't want me near him. He will be back here this evening though. You'll be giving birth soon." Me: "Is there anything you want me to do?" Kom: "Spho, things don't have to be like this between us." Me: "Like what?" Kom: "Cold." Me: "I'm confused now. You don't want me to care about you and you don't want me to be cold?" Kom: "That's not it." Me: "That was you last week. You said you can't give me what I want and I understood. Now I must continue giving you love and affection knowing fully well you don't want to reciprocate? Let's talk about that for a second." Kom: "I can't." Me: "Is it difficult for you?" Kom: "Yes." Me: "Alright and I respect that. Now you can understand that its difficult for me too to go all this extra for someone who doesn't want to give me the same energy. One thing about me, I don't linger where I'm not wanted. Its hazardous to MY health. I understand your situation, please understand mine." Kom: "That's not going to happen." Hehake. I walked to Babalo's room, knocking slightly on the door. Was he still sleeping? I know Hlumi leaves the house at 6:30 so she was already gone. I knocked again a little louder. Silence. Was he even home? I opened the door and walked in. Me: "Baba- Oh my God!!" Why does this keep happening to me!! Hlumi: "Hi Spho!" Me: "NOOO!!!!" I ran out of there. What the fuck sex position was that!!! NEVER in my life have I seen it? Was Babalo wearing her wig? Oh Dear Lord the visuals!! Me: "Sandile!!!" I stood with my bag by the door. If I witnessed one more sexual encounter, I would be labeled a pervert. Why don't they put on signs on the door. We have a kid in the house. Parents! Me: "Sandile!!!!!!" Kom: "Is everything okay?" Me: "No!!" Babalo came out the bedroom dressed in a gown. Oh dear Lord here he comes! U Y A P H I. Balo: "Spho!" Me: "No!!!!!!" Balo: "Why do you keep saying No? Look at me." Me: "N O !!!" Lakhe: "Is there any way in this house I can get some peace and fucking silence!!!!!!!!!!!!" he screamed down the passage. Okay. What was that for? He slammed the bedroom door shut. Kom: "What is going on this house?" Sands: "I'll tell you what's going on. Everybody is ready for this baby. We about to give birth-" Me: "Let's go!!!" I took Chris' bag. Balo: "Spho." Me: "No, absolutely not." Balo: "Its normal. Its okay. No need to be embarrassed." Me?? I must not be embarrassed? Okay. Its time to get out of this ridiculous house. I walked to my car. Chris followed me and Sandile. We drove to drop Chris off. I had to take him in to class as normal and I saw Stacy. She had a new hair cut. Chris

stared at her and fell down laughing. I wanted to laugh so bad but I had to be a parent. Me: "Christian get up and apologize." I tried to say with a semi straight face. Chris: "I can't mama, there's a turtle on her head." It took all of my self control to hold in laughter. Me: "Chris that's not funny. Get up." Chris: "Turtle Stacy." he dragged himself up from the floor. Me: "I'm sorry about that." Stacy: "I expected no less from Christian Sobukwe." Me: "He's just a child. He doesn't know better-" Stacy: "Oh he knows a lot. It will get him into trouble." Chris: "Your last hair style was better and that barely looked like a hairstyle." Stacy: "You said you liked it." Chris: "Was I not clear?" Chris crawl to his desk and buried himself in his arms still laughing uncontrollably. Me: "You look nic-" Stacy: "Don't." I signed the register and walked out. Once in the car I let out the bubble of laughter. Sands: "Mind sharing the joke?" Me: "Chris' teacher has a new hair do and Chris laughed and called her Turtle Stacy." he laughed. Sands: "but this child." he drove off. On the way, I sorted out the paper work. Sands: "So...Lakhe is going to meet you at the doctor?" Me: "No, he said he'd be busy with work. Do you have a stapler or paper clip?" Sands: "None. And you're okay with that?" Me: "I'll just put them in a plastic sleeve, its not a big deal." Sands: "I'm talking about him not coming to the doctor." Me: "Yeah its fine really." he stopped at the robots. Sands: "Is it? This is your first born together. I'd probably go with you to the toilet. Cutting your toenails and painting them red. Why are you not asking him?" we were close to the doctor now. Me: "because Sandile. I've turned his life upside down by resigning and he's taking strain already and overloaded with work." Sands: "So why hasn't he hired someone?" Me: "I don't know. Can we stop talking about this please? And from here on, I'll drive myself." Sands: "I'm trying to take care of you." Me: "I can take care of myself. I'm not an invalid." he parked the car and looked at me. Me: "can I have my keys." Sands: "after the doctor's appointment." Me: "You're getting an Uber to your hotel right now. I'll be there in 45 minutes." Sands: "Fine." we got out the car. I took my bag and went around to take the car keys. Me: "Thank you. For your help." I went inside the building and signed to confirm I've arrived. In 5 minutes the doctor was ready for me. Luckily Paul was back so he was attending to me. After my appointment, I took my vitamins and left only to find Sandile still standing by my car. Me: "Sandile." Sands: "Spho I don't care if you hate me or hit me. I'm never going to leave your side especially when you need someone the most. You're supposed to be resting yet you're running around trying to make my event a success. The least I can do is make sure you're okay throughout." Me: "I understand. Let's go." we left for our first meeting which was at the hotel. The program had been set and printed in beautiful black metallic paper and gold italic words. The other one was white. Since it will be an all black event, the white would be better. Imagine everyone in black, holding white pieces

of paper with gold. The second meeting was with the chefs. They'd prepared the gourmet dinner. Starters, main and the dessert. Sandile tasted the wine and chose two different bottles. One to go with the fish and the other to go with the steak. We had to stock two cases of each. The third meeting was at 12:30pm. Sandile had left to go fetch Chris. I had to meet with Gerard and plan the seating arrangement for the private associates he invited which took almost two hours. Then of course after that, he invited Gerald (his identical twin) whom invited me for tea in his towers. He said tea because I obviously can't drink scotch. He had a business contract he wanted me to help him with. Gerald: "I know you're a whiz at this. My lawyer keeps telling me not to sign it. Since he's not in business, I don't trust it. You on the other hand are good at turning companies around, from ashes to prominent unbreakable statues. What do you think the chances are with this particular investment." Me: "With any investment, there's a risk of losing out Gerald. My experience with this is actually going through all the stages the business went through. The owner must sit you down and give you a breakdown of why they need your partnering. After they give you that information, you compare it with the financial records and history of the business. If there's any loopholes, the owner must fill them in. Always start with what you can afford to lose, since there's no guarantee. Don't give in to full investment if the business seems shady. I see potential here, I've heard good reviews about this company. Possibly with proper leadership it would prosper." Gerald: "I see. I was thinking of Lakhe to partner with me. He has a sensible business head." Me: "He's extraordinary. Call him up, because I won't be able to answer on his behalf." after we had our tea, we parted ways.

My day finally ended around 5. My head was spinning. By the time I arrived home, I was ready to drop dead. Sandile, Dumi and Rob were sitting in the lounge. Vicky and Luke sat at the dining table with their Bibles. Stella was probably out. Me: "Molweni." Rob: "Hi. How was work?" Me: "I wasn't at work tata. Just meetings." Rob: "Counts as work. Can I just say how proud I am of you?" Sands: "everyday since last Thursday dad. Let it go." Rob: "I'm proud of you Spho. That baby will pop out of you with a ready PhD." I laughed. Me: "Hayi man tata. Have you had dinner?" Rob: "Not yet. We were thinking of ordering pizza but not sure which flavor you like." Dumi: "I tried to tell them but they didn't believe me." Me: "I'll eat just anything tata. I don't mind. Thank you." Rob: "You're welcome." I went to put my bag in my room. Lakhe wasn't here. Probably still at work. Since we were having pizza I'd have to cook him something. I quickly changed the linen on the bed, put the other in the laundry room. I went to the kitchen. Roasted chicken and vegetables? Or

steamed fish? Did he even eat during the day? I decided on the chicken and vegetables. After about an hour Chris came into the kitchen. Chris: "Mama." he looked adorable in his denim jeans and white shirt. Me: "Hi sweetheart. You look so handsome." Chris: "Thank you. Can we go now?" Go? Where? Oh shit. The play date. The eager look on his face almost broke my heart. Me: "Let me finish here quick okay?" Chris: "Okay. Do you need help?" Me: "Nope. I'm almost done. Try and keep clean." Chris: "Okay." he went to the lounge. I tried calling Lakhe and it was on voice mail. This play date was really important to Chris and I wanted him to be there. I finally finished up and dished a plate for Lakhe. Just then he walked in. Me: "Hey baby. Listen, the family is having pizza. I made you roasted chicken and vegetables-" Lakhe: "I already ate." Where? Because he does not eat take aways. Me: "Okay. Uhm...Chris' play date. Its tonight. We need to get ready and leave, it starts at 6:30pm." Lakhe: "I'm not going to a stupid four year old date. Ndiyothini? Watch them play? You already there as an adult, why do I have to go?" Me: "You need to bond with our child." Lakhe: "I bond with Chris just fine, I don't need to impress YOUR friends with it." Rob: "Haibo Lakhe. What's wrong with you lately? You can't speak to your wife like tha-" Lakhe: "Get out of my house. Each and every one of you. I want you gone by tomorrow. You've overstayed your welcome now. I will not look after you all, maintain this house and still be dictated to. Do you know how much this shit costs? I want all of you OUT." he walked to the bedroom. Me: "Christian. Let's go." Chris: "But mama-" Me: "Now Chris." I took my keys, he followed me to the car and we drove to Dave and Kevin's place. Something was seriously wrong with Lakhe. I don't know maybe he was too stressed with work. Maybe he was nervous about the baby's arrival. I just didn't know. And I didn't want negative energy around my kids. Chris cannot be seeing Lakhe acting like that. It was so unhealthy. Talking to Lakhe about it would sure as hell make him angry and yell, which I did not need because I was due any day now. I arrived at Dave's house and we knocked on the door. I had to put my happy face on. Kevin opened for us. Kev: "Hi guys!! Julie come see who's here." we walked in. Me: "Hello Kev, how are you?" Kev: "absolutely good Spho. You're looking so beautiful. This baby glow is on steroids." Me: "Thank you Kev. Where's Dave?" Kev: "He'll be here in a minute. Where's your husband? I really wanted to thank him again for staying with me when Julie was missing and keeping me calm." Me: "He's swamped with work. He can't make it. He apologizes." Kev: "I understand. He owns quite a large company. Would you like some juice?" Me: "water please." he gave me a bottle of still water. Julie came out her room dressed in a pink dress. Julie: "hello Mama Chris." So I'm mama Chris? Me: "Hi Julie, how are you?" Julie: "I'm pretty. Thank you for asking." You go girl. Me: "indeed you are. Chris say hi." Chris: "Julie." Julie: "Chris." What.. Me:

"are you guys okay?" Chris: "No. Julie seems to think she's smarter than me just because she can spell and has a photoshop memory-" Julie: "I'm thinking you mean Photographic and the correct term is eidetic memory but carry on." Chris: "If you use that condescending tone one more time-" Julie: "What you gonn do? Photoshop me?" Chris: "Mama." Me: "Where did you learn the word condescending?" Chris: "Uncle Sandile taught me in the car. He told me to tell Julie, I'm not playing with her anymore." Julie gasped out loud. Kev: "Julie you need to apologize to Chris for being condescending because you're hurting his feelings." Julie: "Does he even know what the word condescending means? Ask him to define it." HOW IS SHE FOUR!!! Chris: "I'm done with this. Mama please take me home." Julie: "Condescending. Having or showing an attitude of patronizing superiority. And I didn't even need a dictionary." Chris looked at me with glossy eyes. Kev: "Julie!!" Dave walked in. Dave: "good evening. What's going on?" Kev: "Julie is being mean." Dave: "Again? Julie what did I tell you?" Julie: "I am sorry Chris." Chris looked far away without even acknowledging her. Julie: "Chris, I apologize for hurting your feelings." Chris: "Do you even know what the word apologize means? Define it." Ouch. Julie: "Sarcasm?" Chris: "Mxim. I want to go home mama." Me: "You'll have to sort things out with Julie properly first." Chris: "She's not my friend anymore." Me: "You dressed up." Chris: "I dress up to go watch a movie inside the house. It does not mean anything." Julie: "Chris you need to stop being such a cry baby. Come on. Its not like you're not smart. You're the only one who understands what I say at school." Chris: "It would be easier if you weren't such a know it all." Julie's bottom lip quivered. Now the glossy eyes were hers. Julie: "I can't help it if I'm born this way." she sobbed and ran to her room. This was such a disaster. Me: "Christian." Chris: "Hayi mama I didn't do anything." Me: "My love listen. Girls are not like boys. You can be strong against all forces but us girls are little sensitive. Even though we are mean at times, the best thing is to keep quiet as a man. Don't ever hurt a girl, you understand? Its better dignity for you to walk away instead of hurting her and landing in jail. Okay?" Chris: "Okay." Me: "Julie just lost her mom too. She's not really okay, she's hurting. Do you want to go and apologize?" Chris: "Yes mama." Me: "Run baby." he ran to her room. Kev: "Her IQ is very high. She gets it from our father. He graduated high school at 15. They didn't let him in to University because of his age. Back then it was taboo. He then started inventing things with his own understanding and hands. Two Phd's and a Nobel Prize. He's just extraordinary. Like Julie." Damn... This was some smart ass family. Chris came back to us. Chris: "She wants to meet Mr Courage. To introduce him to her Barbie." Me: "And?" Chris: "Not happening. Let's go." Me: "Just go play wethu." I laughed. After 8pm, a lovely dinner cooked by Kev, and a few board games, we went home. I actually had a nice time. Now I had to go back

home to the madness. I'd probably sleep in Chris' room too. I drove in our yard and we walked in. Nobody was in the lounge. Everything clean. I imagine because everyone was scared of Lakhe or they'd already left. My heart broke at the reality of coming home to this silence everyday. I took Chris to bed and tucked him in. I needed some water before I slept so I walked back to the lounge. Sibulele walked in carrying a bag. I looked at the bruise on his swollen left eye. The thought of what caused it made me cringe. Sibulele: "Spho." he dropped the bag. Sibulele: "Please.....help me."

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Sibulele sat down on the couch. Me: "What happened?" Sibulele: "I've been in hiding for days now. I realized that my grandfather wasn't what I thought he was. He said that he'd heal me and if I stayed with him he would train me better. Instead....he broke me. I was nothing but a slave to him." I was staring at him in the eyes. His pupils were pure black and the size of a tiny full stop. Me: "Sibulele..." Sibulele: "Yes Spho." Me: "You can't stay here. Lakhe won't let you. He chased everyone out. Why don't you go to Komander? He can help you better than I will." Sibulele: "he doesn't want me. You're the only one that can help." Me: "How can I help you?" Sibulele: "I need a place to hide." Me: "Your grandfather knows this house through and through." Sibulele: "Yeah he does....it has to be else where." Me: "If we were talking about an ordinary man, yes that would be possible. But he is not human. He'll find you no matter where you are. The best thing I can do for you is pray." Sibulele: "but if....." he looked around. Sibulele: "You said nobody was here." Me: "I just arrived not so long ago as well." I looked at the door. Siyanda stood there. How the Me: "You really brought him here, Sibulele?" I stood up. Siyanda: "Don't worry Spho, its really me. Wena, get out." Sibulele: "You don't tell me what to do!" Siyanda: "I am warning you." Sibulele: "You get out! I'm here for my sister. This is not even your house!" Siyanda: "Spho, go to the bedroom." Me: "Can we keep it down?" Siyanda: "When he leaves." he walked in. Sibulele: "Get the hell away from me!!!" Siyanda stood tall and stared at him coldly. Sibulele: "You can't attack me Komfort. I'm more powerful than you. You don't have the Komander blood running through your veins." Siyanda: "I don't. But you're not stronger than me." Sibulele: "Prove it-" Siyanda grabbed his arm twisting it behind his back and tying it with the other. Siyanda: "Keep talking. I'm listening." Me: "Siyanda-" Siyanda: "Spho, Sibulele is here for the baby. He is lying about his grandfather to get you to trust him." Me: "I know that! I'm not stupid but you're not going to release him to the wild." Siyanda: "and why not." Sibulele: "Let go of me!!!" Me: "He needs his father." I dialed Komander's number and he answered almost immediately. Me: "Sibulele is here." Kom: "Ok."

Me: "And Siya." Kom: "Must be a full house." Me: "I need you to come fetch Sibü." Kom: "Why." Me: "He needs your help. So he says. I can't help him and I don't want him in my house." Kom: "Oh... Okay. I'll be there in 20 minutes." in under 20 minutes he was already here, Sibü had tried getting loose twice. Sibü: "Spho, don't believe them. I would never hurt you!!" Me: "I know that bhuti. I know you don't want to hurt me. But you're working for something that does. I can't risk it. Besides, your father can keep you safe-" Sibü: "He's not my father!!!!" Me: "Sibü.... We're trying to help you because we love you." Komander walked in. Kom: "Evening." Me: "Hi." he looked at his son. Sibü: "Get away from me." Kom: "No. Not this time." Sibü: "Grandfather will never let you get away with this!!!" Kom: "Then call him right now.....oh wait, he does not have a phone. Maybe you could channel him. If he comes over, I'll let you go." Sibü: "Bet!" Kom: "Spho's life." Me: "WHAT!!!!!" Did he really just bet my life away to two psychopaths!! Me: "Hell NO!!!! Get out of my house before I call the police!!! All of you!!!" Kom: "We're not leaving until Sibü's grandfather is here. So that we can settle this once and for all." Me: "I. Don't. Want. Him. In. My. House!!!" Kom: "Bring him here Sibü." Sibü: "Let go of me! How am I supposed to do anything with these things on my wrists!" Siya let him loose finally. The doors closed. A gloomy dark fell upon us and swirled around the room. Then nothing. Kom: "Go ahead. Try again." The same thing happened, the icy breeze unmistakable and Sibü's eyes turned white as snow. He fell down and it was quiet again. Kom: "See my son, learn to listen to those who've experienced it first before attempting. Your grandfather will never show himself here. Spho is the doppelganger of his wife. The one that gave birth to me and Babalo. There is a curse lingering on him sent by that woman. And Spho, right here, was born as that woman. This isn't about you. Its bigger than all of us. Why fight something that's not for you? He doesn't want to face her because he is scared." Sibü: "You're lying." Kom: "Why did he block you then. He has an opportunity to come here, why doesn't he?" Babalo walked out his room wearing his gown, no doubt in the nude underneath it. He had a sleeping bonnet on his head and pink bunny slippers on his feet. Gosh. Balo: "I heard my name." Okay that's super cool. Imagine hearing what people say about your name ukude or fast asleep. Kom: "Finally you wake up. Get dressed, we need to take Sibü home." Balo: "Do I have time for a snack?" Kom: "Just go!!" Balo: "Well damn then. What did chips ever do to you." he mumbled on his way to his room. Kom: "You need to get to bed." he said to me. Me: "Is he going to be okay?" Kom: "Sibü will be fine." I looked at my brother still kneeling on the floor bending over. Me: "You need to break the hold that man has on him. He's not only blocking him, he is holding him captive in his mind. Look." Komander lifted Sibü's head and noticed his unresponsive eyes. Kom: "Light a fire under Babalo's ass. We need to get

moving!" Balo: "I'm here." he wore his shoe bouncing about. Siya and Balo carried him to the car. Kom: "Get some rest." then he walked out. I turned to go to the bedroom when I got a mini fright seeing Lakhe walking out the passage. He was carrying Chris who was wide awake. Me: "Hey. You scared me." they went to the kitchen. I followed them in. Me: "Can I help you with that?" he placed Chris on the counter and took milk out the fridge. Lakhe: "No. I got it." he poured it in a small pot and switched on the stove. Me: "Can't sleep pumpkin?" Chris nodded. Me: "I'm sorry my angel." Chris: "my room is cold." Me: "Really? You want me to put in a heater?" he shook his head. Chris: "I'm gonna sleep in daddy's bed. You can put a heater for yourself in my room." Ouch. Me: "What do you mean?" Chris: "You were sleeping in my room, so you can use a heater." Me: "You don't want me in daddy's bed?" Chris: "but you're not gonna sleep. You were talking with Uncle Sibz and grandpa." Lakhe switched off the stove pouring the milk in Chris' cup. He picked him up and they walked to the bedroom. Chris: "goodnight mama." Me: "Night baby." they door closed behind them. I didn't know what to do to be honest. I was getting sick and tired of Lakhe's attitude and we needed to talk about it urgently. I went to the room and tried to open but to my surprise, it was locked. I turned away painfully and went to Chris' room and sat there thinking till morning sunrise.

I went to make breakfast at 5:30am and I finished at about 6:10am. Rob came out with his suitcases followed by Stella. Yuuh, my heart took a dive and broke like glass. Me: "Hayin tata, you can't leave." Rob: "We have to darling. Masilakhe can and will turn into a wild animal if we don't. You're welcome to visit our new beach house anytime you want. We need to give you your space." Me: "At least have some breakfast." Stella: "We're actually rushing to the airport my angel. I promise we'll call you often. We love you Spho. Take care of yourself and the baby. Also Lakhe." Me: "I love you too." they hugged me. I was holding my tears not only because they were leaving but because I didn't know what was wrong with my husband. After they left, the gate buzzed and I saw a white Land Rover. Who was this? I opened the gate. Dumi rolled his wheelchair out with his bag on his lap. Me: "Dumi, where are you going?" Dumi: "My mom. I really have overstayed my welcome. Thank you for everything You've done for me. I'll always be grateful to you." I hugged him. His mother came to take his second bag and roll him out to the car. After they left, I sat alone in the lounge with a broken heart. Have you ever been so confused you didn't know where to begin? Another buzz from the gate. Siyanda's blue BMW. I opened the gate. Vicky and Luke came out their rooms holding their bags too. Me: "No guys. Please!" Luke: "I'm thankful

for you Spho. And your family. It is our time now." Me: "You guys can't leave. This is your home. Luke where will you go?" Luke: "I'll be staying with Vicky in East London." Me: "Let me take you to the station at least?" Vicky: "I called a cab. But thank you Spho. I will always remember your kindness." after their goodbye, they left the house too. Siya: "What's going on?" Me: "What are you doing here Siyanda?" Siya: "I came to check if you're okay." Me: "You don't need to come check if I'm okay because I'm here with my husband who makes sure I'm okay. Okay? Don't just arrive here unannounced. You need to call first and only unless its urgent." Lakhe walked out the passage fully dressed like a pharaoh in his Armani suit. He paid no attention to either of us and walked to the kitchen. Siya: "I didn't think it would be a problem. Lakhe and I are cool, he invited me for drinks before and said it was okay. Why now has that suddenly changed?" Me: "Nothing has changed but it doesn't give you the right to just appear here." Siya: "Oh. I'm sorry. I'll get going then." Lakhe drank a cup of coffee walking to the TV. Siya: "Lakhe, I'm sorry if I offended you by coming here. Its just that, ever since this war with Spho's granddad. I have to take care of her. Per her father's instructions. I'm sorry if I stepped on your toes." Lakhe: "Its fine man, I understand. Go ahead and do your thing." he put on the news channel on TV. Me: "Call when its important. Qha." Siya walked out the house and I opened the gate for him to leave. Me: "Baby, please talk to me." Lakhe: "When did I not?" Me: "You locked me out of our room last night! How could you do that?" Lakhe: "So we're going to pretend You've Never done that to me?" Me: "No, but-" Lakhe: "I was protecting the child Spho. He came into the room crying of cold. You and your family screaming at each other, releasing demons and what not. What was I to do?" Me: "We weren't releasing demons." Lakhe: "uh huh." Me: "Lakhe what's going on?" Lakhe: "I never bargained for this Sphosenkosi. I don't want these super powers and unnatural things around me and my child. You were a church going lady when I met you. Kind and sweet. Now you're entertaining evil spirits." Me: "You were the one who told me to talk to my dad, and called him here." Lakhe: "Your dad is not the problem. I knew what he was when I met him. Its you that I live with that scares me." Me: "I would never harm you or our kids Lakhe. I promise you that." Lakhe: "I think we should separate. I can't say I enjoy these surprise late night ghost visits you have with your dad in my house and tragic nightmares every night. I can't take it anymore Spho. I barely sleep and when I do, its these things haunting me in my dreams. I don't have peace of mind anymore." Me: "We can fix it baby, just give me time. Please." Lakhe: "Fix it how? Are you going to swap your DNA with someone who isn't half demonic? I gave you enough time. I'm leaving Spho." Me: "I'm about to give birth to your child." I sobbed. Lakhe: "According to your family, that child isn't even mine. I just share the DNA. But

he is a Komander. And I don't think I can live with that." I sat down trying to control my wails. Lakhe: "I'm taking Chris with me too. There's no way on God I'm letting him live in a house that has demons. The child did nothing to deserve that. I've already packed. We won't be back this afternoon."

#144

I spent the rest of the day calling him and he didn't pick up obviously. After catching up on sleep, I woke up after 2 in the afternoon and showered. I went to get dressed and took my bag and keys, driving to his office. When I entered at reception, I saw his assistant. Me: "Nwabisa." Nwabi: "Hi Sisi, unjani?" Me: "I'm fine thanks wena unjani?" Nwabi: "I'm good. Uhm...ubhuti is in a meeting." she was lying, I could see it in her eyes. Me: "What meeting?" Nwabi: "The, uhm...for your position." Me: "Oh okay. I came to fetch Chris, I won't disrupt him." Nwabi: "I can get Chris for you." Me: "Step away from me Nwabisa. I am going to fetch my child, myself." I walked to the office and knocked lightly. Lakhe: "Come in." I walked in the office. A woman on the opposite seat looked up at me. She was light in complexion with beautiful long legs. Wearing a short red dress and black heels. She looked really beautiful and exotic. Like from those islands eating nothing but healthy fruit and vegetables. Me: "Good day." Lakhe: "I'm in a meeting." Me: "I came to fetch Chris." Lakhe: "He's with the baby sitter. He'll be fine until I'm done here." Me: "Where is the baby sitter?" Lakhe: "What are you going to do? Fetch him again and not have time for him while you're busy with your event and meetings with Gerard?" Me: "Lakhe, Chris is my child too. Matter fact, he's my blood. You can't keep him from me." Lakhe: "I'm not keeping him from you but you can't come demand a child while I'm in a meeting. Finish your event, see it to the end then come fetch Chris. If you won't be busy by again with something else. Right now, I'm in a meeting and you're being rude." His lady friend was hiding a smirk on her face. Yuh, ndizithanda ke mna, I walked back out the door. I got in my car and drove back to the house. I packed all of my bags, from shoes to underwear to jewelry and clothes then toiletries and makeup. I shoved them all in my car. Thank God its a big car. Finally Sandile appeared. He looked disoriented and sleepy. Sands: "Hey. What's that." I walked back in the house. He was rubbing his eyes. Standing barefoot with no shirt on and just normal black jeans on. Me: "Sands.... You know you're the best brother I could have asked for right?" Sands: "What's going on?" Me: "Lakhe and I have separated. He moved out and I can't stay here either." Sands: "What do you mean separated?" Me: "You know what separate means Sandile. Please don't make this hard." Sands: "So why are you

leaving?" Me: "It hurts living in this house. Especially knowing that he doesn't want me. I can't." Sands: "What about me?" Me: "You can visit me any time you like." Sands: "Why did he decide this? Because I know you didn't agree to it. So why did he?" Me: "He says I've changed. Ever since the demons and everything. He says he's tired of the tragic nightmares he has everyday and he doesn't want Chris to be part of this. He took him with him. Look, I'll be at my mom's place until I get my own. Please take care of yourself and Boogie." I took my last bag and walked out. I drove around for quite some time really I didn't want to be at my mom's house. Not for any reason really. I just wanted to be alone but I couldn't afford to run out of money because of a hotel. I finally arrived at mom's place and took my bags in. Ma: "What's going on?" Me: "Nothing much. Just moving in." Ma: "You have a whole mansion and a husband in it. What are you doing here?" Me: "We've separated Mama." I pulled two suitcases in. Ma: "What do you mean!" Me: "Mama. Lakhe udikiwe ndim. And I don't want to get into it, I just want to be alone. And can you also not confront or threaten him, please?" Ma: "I need you to tell me why first and I'll leave you alone." I told her everything Lakhe said. My last bags were finally in and I moved them into the bedroom. Ma: "Do you want anything?" Me: "No mama." Ma: "Have you eaten?" Me: "No I haven't." Ma: "I'll make you food utye, ulale." Me: "Thank you mama." I switched off my phone and went to bed.

Lakhe was wrapping up his meeting With Onika at the office. Lakhe: "We've got the last screening process this week. My HR department will be in touch." Onika: "Oh, I thought I was already hired." Lakhe: "There's a process. Anyway, thank you for coming. It was a pleasure hav-" his door burst open. Sandile walked in. Sands: "What the hell is wrong with you!!!" Lakhe: "I am in a meeting!" Sands: "I don't give a fuck!!!! Man, I knew you were cold but I did not expect this!! How do you leave your wife when she is literally about to give birth to YOUR CHILD any second! I warned you Masilakhe that if you ever did this, I would never forgive you. If you can turn your back on someone who loves you and does everything for you then I don't want anything to do with you. Yes, I get that you had your reasons but did you care to share them? No!! Did you ever sit down and ask for assistance. No!! You just want it readily given to you! You want someone submissive, who will bow down to all your demands but God forbid should they have any minor flaw and you're gone. I am fucking done with you. Don't ever call me again. You're dead to me." Lakhe: "If you like Spho that much, why don't YOU marry her and see how it feels to be her husband rather than her best friend." Sands: "I just might." he threw the house keys and the BMW i8 keys at him then stormed out the office.

Sands: "Get the fuck out my way!!!!!" everyone jumped out of the way. Onika: "Wow." Lakhe: "He's just dramatic. He'll be back." Onika: "I don't think so. He looks pretty mad." Lakhe: "I know my brother." she stood up. Onika: "Well, it was nice meeting with you, I look forward to hearing from you soon." they shook hands and she walked out.

Days later...

Saturday morning. I woke up with back aches and I realized it might be because I've spent most of my time in bed. I had a hair appointment in an hour and then go over to the hotel to make sure everything is in order. I got up, and showered. My dress was to arrive at 1pm today. My stylist would be here at 3pm. Everything was going to work out okay. Although my heart was in a shattered piece, I had to put my brave face on. I got dressed in a track suit and made my way out to the salon. I took off the weave I had and installed a straight Brazilian grade 9a. It had a 360 lace closure and I wanted them to tie a neat flat high pony tail. After I'd finished, I went to the hotel. I wonder if Lakhe would come. He was the first person to receive his gold invitation and he was the only golden seat up in front to pay respect of him being the previous owner. Inside the conference room, everything was beautifully set up in black and gold. There were purple and blue fluorescent lights installed to give flavor to the performances. I helped with setting up the gift packs on the table. Each one had a thank you note signed by Sandile. After the gifts, I sat down for a second. My back was still hurting. Our performers were rehearsing for the last time and it sounded really good even Peanut was dancing inside me. I checked the gold chair for comfort and viewing. It was in the perfect place able to see everything. Next to it was a small table with a bottle of his favorite. Sandile arrived. Sands: "Hey." he kissed my forehead. Sands: "You're looking stunning. Loving the new hair-do, you look like Beyonce." I smiled. Me: "thank you. Everything looks perfect. Are you nervous?" Sands: "this is my first formal event ever. I'm actually excited." Me: "Bringing a date?" Sands: "You're my date. Let me check the food. I haven't eaten all day." he went to look for the chefs. After I was sure I could trust the people I've left in charge I finally left. Sands: "I'll fetch you at 5:30pm." Me: "Okay. Thank you Sands." I drove home and when I got there I took an hour nap. Mom woke me up before 4. My stylist and dress were here. After my shower I wore my black lace under wear. The stylist helped me into my black lace dress. My arms, stomach and legs were in see through lace. Everything else with doubled lace to cover up modestly. The dress had a Chinese collar and it was floor length. They helped me with my black Christian Louboutin

heels and my heart broke even more. I've missed Chris for days on end and I wondered every minute how is he coping. I've only spoken on the phone with him once. Lakhe was too busy to be and I quote, "calling every hour." At least the event would be over today. Maybe I'd talk to Lakhe then. He would have calmed down by now. The Make up artist did my face beat and the stylist fixed my hair up to the high pony tail. Everything was set. Sandile arrived to come pick me up. Mama was not coming with because she wanted to go to the hospital again. My turn was tomorrow. I took my clutch and walked out to the car. Sandile was standing outside, leaning on the car. He looked up and stared at me. Sands: "uhm..." Me: "too much?" Sands: "no...no...uhm...no... Just....perfect." he opened the door for me. I got in the car and he drove us to the event. Me: "You hired a car just for tonight?" Sands: "Yes." Me: "Are you okay?" Sands: "uhh...yeah I'm fine. Are you?" Me: "you're acting funny." Sands: "I'm fine. Just nervous." Me: "its going to be okay. I promise." when we arrived at the venue. A mob of journalists carrying cameras were outside. I froze. Me: "Who called the media?" Sands: "Your friend, Gerard." I was panicking. Sands: "Don't worry. They don't bite." my door was opened by the valet, who was dressed in all white. Everyone working was in white. I got out the car and we walked on to the red carpet. All I saw was flashing lights and people screaming questions at us. I've never been in the spot light like this before and it scared me. After taking pictures we went inside. Me: "Have you spoken to Lakhe." Sands: "No. And I don't want to ruin our evening talking about him. Would you like some water?" Me: "Please." he brought me a bottle of still and I sat down. I had to gain some strength for when the people showed up. After drinking my water I stood up and welcomed the guests. After at least 30 minutes everyone had arrived and Gerard insisted I sat with him and the sponsors but I had my own table with Sandile and the two other important guests. We got our starters and ordered the main. The first act came on. So Lakhe really wasn't coming despite my texts. The golden chair sat empty and I had a lump on my throat staring at it. Maybe it was the opera singer. Maybe it was her magical voice or maybe it was my emotions finally catching up to me. How I longed to see Chris' face again. Lakhe's smile. The tears rolled down my cheeks. I had to keep mute the entire time because of the sound of this music. Sandile held my hand through out the performance. Once the first one was over, I needed the toilet. Tip toeing out to the bathroom. After urinating and washing my hands I tried to call Lakhe again. It hit voicemail. If my heart could sink any further, it probably would. I had to come to terms with the fact that he wasn't coming back. I'd lost him because of my DNA. It was over and I had to let go. I powdered my face and went back to the room. Our steaks were served twenty minutes later. Sandile had the fish. Sands: "Taste." Me: "I don't like fish." Sands: "A tiny bite won't hurt you." Me: "It

might." Sands: "Come on Spho. There's a hot girl sitting at the next table and she only smiles at me when you're around. I think she's the freaky type that likes the fact a man is unavailable." Me: "Why don't you just ask her?" Sands: "It would ruin it. Help me." I took a bite of his fish from the fork he was holding. Sands: "How does it taste?" Me: "Its a little salty." Sands: "I thought so too. She's looking at me again." Me: "That's really creepy." the next act came on. My mind was not here honestly and I really wish it was. Luckily I did not have to stay longer because there was only two more left but I'd leave after this one. Me: "I'm going to book an Uber in about 10 minutes time okay?" I whispered. Sands: "Spho don't do this to yourself. Sit and enjoy the show. You've been working on this for weeks." he whispered back. Me: "I'm not feeling that well Sandile. Honestly." Sands: "Okay, I'll drive you." Me: "No, the girl won't wait for that. Go make your move." Sands: "You're my sister and I'm not leaving your side for anything least of all some ass." Me: "You haven't enjoyed yourself in a while Sandile." Sands: "I've enjoyed myself since day 1. You're my best friend. Now shhh, it's almost done." We waited till the end of their performance then we dashed out. Since the press wasn't allowed in, they were still waiting outside. Sandile led me to the car and opened my door then drove me home. My back was aching again and I was a little dizzy. I closed my eyes. "Spho....." a voice called out to me. "You need to listen carefully. The time has come. You will not be able to go to hospital. When the midnight hour strikes, the King will be born. Nobody is to be in the room or he won't make it. Nobody is to know he is being born only after." Me: "Mama, how am I to give birth without help." "I will be there Spho. Remember, Nobody is to know." I snapped out of the vision. Sands: "You okay?" I looked at him. Me: "Yeah." he parked the car. Sands: "You look amazing. Thank you for tonight." Me: "No, Thank you Sandile." Sands: "Get warm and have a goodnight, okay?" Me: "thank you Sands. Enjoy your evening. Better hurry before your girl leaves." Sands: "You're right. I'm gonn tell her my wife isn't feeling well but I'm back for the after party which will be in my penthouse suite." I laughed. Me: "mxim. Goodbye." I got out the car and walked to the house. My mother was in the lounge watching TV. She looked like she was in a bad mood too. Me: "hello mama." Ma: "hi." yep. Bad mood. Me: "I'll be going to bed then." I walked to my room and undressed. I felt the back aches again but this time with a sharp abdominal cramp. After letting it subside I carried on dressing. It was 23:15. Was that a contraction? I crawled into bed when a rumble of explosive thunder crashed in the sky. I calmed myself down and breathed properly. After some relaxation, I felt another pain and I winced. 23:24. Me: "Mama." I called out. She came into the room. Ma: "What's wrong?" Me: "I had a vision in the car. My grandmother said I'm giving birth at midnight and no one is allowed in the room. I am so scared. I think I'm having contractions." Ma: "I

stood up to go to the toilet and as I walked water slid down my thigh. Me: "Oh dear Lord no. My water just broke." Zama: "We have to get you to the hospital!!!" Me: "I can't mama. I have to give birth here and alone. She'll help me but nobody else is allowed to be in the room and nobody is supposed to know I'm giving birth. Or else my baby won't make it. I can't risk it." Zama: "Fine. What do I do?" I sat back down experiencing another contraction. 23:33pm. Me: "I don't know. Get baby things ready, towel, lukewarm water." she ran around the house getting everything ready. Another loud shot of thunder frightened us. The lightening bolts illuminated so bright and bold. I had to start praying. Would I even make it? My phone rang. Komander. I answered. Me: "There is a thunder storm outside." Kom: "The King is to be born." Me: "what!" Kom: "Prepare yourself Spho. Its not going to be easy. Not from now on." he hung up. Me: "Oh Almighty Father." I held my stomach with both hands. My mother brought the items in the room. My phone rang again. I switched it off completely. 23:41pm. Me: "I look unto you Dear God. I ask that you protect me and guide me. Have your way with the birth of this child God, lead him in your faithful direction as he enters this world. May he not entertain or welcome evil in his life. Hold your hand on his little heart and fill it with purity and love. Let his existence be the freedom of those bound in evil. He is King. He is to preach Your word God. Let those who look to him, see you. Your greatness and nothing else. May his mere touch break down walls of pain. His eyes be the salvation to everyone who looks into them. We praise you God! We call on You to deliver us. Deliver Your seed into this world. Deliver Your vessel into this world safely. Mhlambulule Nkosi, umfihle ezintweni zonke zalomhlaba. I -" another contraction. I held on to the sheets waiting for it to subside. 23:52pm. I carried on with my prayer and again another contraction. 23:56pm. Me: "Phuma mama." Ma: "But baby I can't leave you alone-" Me: "Now. Please!" she walked out with a sad look on her face. I can't imagine her pain. Having to stand aside while your child goes through labor without help. I wiped my tears and braced myself. I felt a bit of pressure on my abdomen. 23:58pm. Me: "God. I trust you." with a big pillow supporting my back, I began to push. 23:59pm. The house began to shake off its foundation. I pushed again for the second time and felt a numbed tear below. Ignoring the pain and impending duty. I pushed again, screaming out loud. She appeared before me again. "You're doing great. Another push." I pushed again. "he's coming. One more big one." I inhaled a long breath of air and pushed harder. A slippery blob came out and started wailing immediately. I looked between my thighs. I laughed between my cries. He was finally born. Me: "Sobukwe. King of Komander. By the grace of God and His everlasting love, Welcome to the world, my boy."

#145

Sunday morning. 07:55am.

Zama: "Doctor, Spho has been unconscious since we left the house. What's wrong?" Doc: "We've checked everything ma'am. She's stable only really tired. Its outstanding how she could deliver a baby on her own considering the fatigue she's suffering. Your child is really strong. She'll be awake when she has enough strength." Zama: "She has to." Doc: "My shift is over in 30 minutes, Dr Kusile will be taking over from me and she's familiar with him." Zama: "Yes we know him. Thank you doc." the doctor walked off. Komander came in the hospital standing with Zama in the passage. Kom: "She's going to be fine." Zama: "My child is unconscious. If you can't wake her up, don't talk to me at all." Kom: "Are you still angry at me?" Zama: "Sir, I told you the only thing involving you and I is our business contract. I've asked you kindly to stay away. Can we not have this discussion again? Thanks." Kom: "What do you want me to do?" Zama walked into the hospital room again. Zama: "Sweetie." Kom: "Zama.." Zama: "What's wrong with you!! My husband is in a coma for saving your life. Its been almost a month now. My child is now in a coma too and had you not come close to my family this would never have happened!! Why do you hate me so much? What did I ever do to you? Was trying to love you so wrong that you had to ruin my entire life?" she sobbed. Kom: "I don't hate you. Please stop crying." Zama: "Leave me and my child. Alone." Kom: "She's my child too." Zama: "When it suits you. Please get out." Kom: "I have a right to be here." she sat on the lone chair and cried in her hands. Kom: "Komodity is awake." Zama: "Stop lying!" Kom: "Have you checked your phone?" Zama: "When would I have gotten the chance when my child gave birth and fell into a coma?" Kom: "He woke up at midnight. When King was born, when he cried." Zama: "How do you know that?" she stood up. Kom: "I see everything. His cries have a healing somehow. What was Spho doing when she was giving birth to him?" Zama: "She was praying." Kom: "That makes sense." Zama: "He's awake? As in eyes open and responding?" Kom: "Yes." she stared at her daughter. Kom: "She'll be awake by the time you come back. Did you call Masilakhe?" Zama: "Yes, I left him a message when we left the house. His phone was off." Kom: "Tell him to come and name his child." he sat down. Zama: "Yes sir." she walked out then ran down the passage out of the maternity ward to the ICU. His doctor bumped into her. Doc: "Mrs Ngudla. I've been trying to call you all morning." Zama: "Is it true? Is he awake?" Doc: "Yes, we've even moved him out of ICU. We're awaiting test

results from the lab." he led her to the new room. Zama: "Khaya!" he looked up at her and smiled. Zama: "Baby. You're awake!!" Khaya: "It took you this long?" Zama: "Spho gave birth." Khaya: "Really? When?" Zama: "At midnight." he stopped smiling. Khaya: "Has the child been named?" Zama: "Not yet. We're waiting for Masilakhe. Spho is still unconscious." Khaya: "King..." Zama: "What?" Khaya: "Nothing. Get me up. Take the wheel chair." Zama: "Where are you going?" Khaya: "To see Spho." Zama: "You'll see her later. You need to rest. You had a serious brain injury baby. We need to take it slow." Khaya: "Where is he?" Zama: "Who? Sir? He's with her." Khaya: "Give me some space." Zama: "no baby-" he stared at her coldly. Zama: "What happened to you?" he stared without response. She took her bag and walked out.

I woke up to a brightly lit room. Definitely not my room. I looked around and saw Sandile sitting on the chair. Sands: "You're awake." Me: "Hey." my body was in agony. Sands: "Your mother called me when she couldn't get hold of Lakhe." how did I get to hospital. Sands: "Why didn't you tell me Spho? You were in labor throughout the day. If You'd stayed another hour at the event you would've given birth on stage." Me: "Would have been the event of the year." I chuckled. Sands: "That's not funny. I was worried about you." Me: "I'm fine Sandile. Where's my baby?" Sands: "In the nursery. The doctor says he's perfect. Let me check if you can hold him." he walked out. I wonder where my phone was. I needed to let Lakhe know, that the baby is born and we're in hospital. Sandile came back almost immediately with a sour look on his face. Me: "What? Where is my baby?" Sands: "Lakhe's with him." Me: "Oh. At least he knows. We need to name the baby, perhaps he has changed his mind on the original name he picked. So I need to know." Sands: "why don't you name him?" Me: "Not now Sandile." Sands: "Fine. Anyway...." he picked a big box up from the floor. Sands: "this is to say, I am proud of you mommy. Childbirth is no child's play. That was mighty strong of you. I have gained more respect for you. I am elated, to have you as a sister. You badass you." I laughed. Me: "thank you Sandile." I hugged him and opened the box. Inside there was a whole pack of goodies. Just about everything. A blue fluffy sweater with the words 'I'm a super mom to a prince' written on it. There was an excellent-smelling bath and body kit I couldn't wait to use. A daily planner with my name and 'little prince' written on it. This would make my life easier planning the baby's routine. There was also a Lifeproof Nuud and Alpha Glass iPhone case. Sands: "in case the prince decides to throw it at the wall. Or spits on it. That thing is indestructible." I laughed. Me: "smart." my next gift was a NuRoo nursing scarf. It transforms into full coverage nursing poncho as well. There was also a post partum health shakes and a waist trainer. Sands: "I'm

not going to lie and say you look fine ke, I don't want you to look at yourself and hate your body. Always remember that it produced a whole blessing but if you want to change it, here are the tools. I've researched the company and these products, they're especially made for breastfeeding moms." I was near tears honestly. Me: "this is so sweet. I thought this would be baby stuff only but instead it was for me." Sands: "Of course its for you. I love you, you're my sister and I want you to know that I've always got your back. Little prince has his own care package at home. I'm even baby proofing my penthouse suite tomorrow." Me: "Thank you for this and everything else you've done for me. You really are the best brother ever." my mother came in the room. I thought she'd be more excited to see me awake. Me: "Is everything okay mama?" I packed my items into the box and put it aside. Zama: "I'm okay sweetheart. I'm just glad you're awake." Me: "Mama, please talk to me." Zama: "I promise you. I'm okay. Your father is awake too by the way. How are you feeling?" Me: "Really? That's great mama nje! Why aren't you happy?" Zama: "I am. Its been a long night. Did the doctor say when he's discharging you?" Me: "I haven't seen the docto-" Siyanda walked in. Siya: "Before you scream at me, this is my job, Paul, your primary obstetrician is off and I'm your secondary. I am not stalking you." Me: "I didn't even say anything. I know this is your job." Siya: "good, I don't want you to feel I'm always in your space. If you want someone else, I'll call them all so you can choose." Me: "I'd like that." Siya: "Fine. After this." he asked me a few medical questions and ticked off his file. Siya: "we're bringing the baby in two minutes for his feeding. Have you chosen a name yet?" Me: "I'm waiting for Lakhe." Siya: "What do you mean?" Me: "I mean I'm waiting for him to approve on the name we chose before. We didn't do final decisions." Siya: "Spho, Lakhe walked out of here just now." Me: "Walked out how?" Siya: "I mean he asked about the delivery and how the baby is doing, held him for a few minutes, put him back down kissed him then said goodbye." Sandile was seething. Zama: "Where is Sir?" Siya: "He had some business to handle across town he left thirty minutes ago. Guys, am I missing something here?" Me: "No, bring me my baby." Siya: "Okay. I'll also discharge you at 11. You're good to go. After feeding the baby, get ready." I nodded. He walked out. Sandile got up and walked out. Zama followed him into the passage. Zama: "Sandile!" she grabbed his jacket. Zama: "I know you care about Spho but you need to stay out of this." Sands: "Mama I tried. How the hell does the mother of your first child, your wife, give birth, and you don't even come see how she is. If she's alive or not. Spho was unconscious for hours, I don't care how separated he is!! She is still married to him! How dare he do this to her!?" Zama: "Sandile, I know. I'm just as hurt as you are by this but you need to be there for Spho. Leave Lakhe alone. He'll

come around eventually. For now, we focus on getting this baby and Spho out of here and out of danger. You hear me?" Sands: "Yes mama."

I was ready to go. My baby was wrapped like a burrito and safely in my arms. I couldn't stop staring at him. How beautiful he was. His mouth puckered out in a moody pout like Lakhe when he is sleeping. It was so cute. I couldn't wait to see him open his eyes. The amount of love I felt was overwhelming. Sands: "Everything is ready in the car." Kom: "We can't use your car. Its rigged with fumes that are meant to suffocate the baby." Me: "what!!" Kom: "Your grandfather is doing everything he can. Kompany is waiting for you in the car. Sandile will follow us to the house. I need to build a wall of salus when we get there." Me: "What happens when Lakhe wants to see his child? The last time you said that the wall of salus makes the house disappear from the ordinary eye. How is he supposed to find us?" Kom: "Did he come see you when he heard you're in the hospital, after the birth?" Me: "Bhuti, this is not about me now. We're separated but its still his child." Sands: "When last did you see Chris?" Yuh. My heart cracked. It didn't break it was still a crack that could be broken by the slightest wind. The nurse walked in again. Nurse: "Spho, before we release you love. The baby still needs a name for his certificate." Me: "can I borrow a cellphone?" my eyes were blurred with tears. I dialed his number and listened to the phone ring. Lakhe: "Hello?" Me: "Lakhe, ndim uSpho. How are you?" Lakhe: "I'm fine." I'm okay too, I guess. Me: "I gave birth last night. I just woke up. We are at the hospital and the baby is healthy-" Lakhe: "I know, I was there. I saw the baby." Me: "Okay, well we hadn't decided on his name yet." Lakhe: "You and who?" Me: "Me and you his parents?" Lakhe: "Oh I'm involved now?" Me: "When have you not been. I've only discussed the naming with you. Everything about our baby, only with you." Lakhe: "Spho, name the baby. Is that what you're asking for? Permission?" Me: "The name we both liked was Silakhile iKhaya. Now that we've separated, I don't know if its still applicable. I don't know if this separation is actually a divorce in future. I need you to talk to me. You can't just shut me out." my voice was shaking as I tried to control my tears. Lakhe: "If you want to name the baby Silakhile or anything else its up to you." Me: "So you don't want to be involved in the naming of your child?" Lakhe: "What does it matter when you gonna call him what you like anyway? Do as you please." Me: "Okay." I hung up the phone giving my mom the baby. My hands were already shaking and I was a pin drop away from losing my mind. I took the form and stared at it. If I'd knew it would happen like this I'd probably have prepared for it. Although, who really prepares for when their husband leaves them? I really wish someone in the room would speak up but

all of them were quiet. I wrote down the name that first came to mind. My father. It was the same as Lakhe's unused name as well. Khaya. Khayalam. Kom: "Are you sure about that?" Me: "I can't think of anything else. His dad is Masilakhe'ikhaya. Then there's my dad who raised me and gave me a loving home. Uli Khayalam ngoku lomntana. I've seemingly failed in my marriage." I gave the nurse her forms back and took my son. Sands: "I'll wait in the car." he walked out. I looked at the peaceful baby in my arms. I've always loved my parents marriage, and being in their warmth. There were a few times I'd get scared of thunder and go snuggle in between them in their bed. I wanted that for my children and it would never happen. After the processing, and my discharge forms were signed we finally left hospital. When we got to my mother's house I went straight to my room, asking not to be disturbed. Luckily my mom had changed my bedding. It was close to feeding time. I had a reminder on my phone. As if on cue the baby jolted awake. Me: "Its okay, I got you, my love." I placed him in position and he latched on safely, swallowing his milk, eyes wide open. Just the look in his eyes immediately reminded me of his dad. I just started weeping without realizing it. Me: "My Almighty Father. Give me the strength to cope and continue. I ask You to look after me and my son. Cover him with the blood of Jesus Christ. I pray for his father, I pray that he finds forgiveness and healing in his heart. I pray that You forgive me God for often turning away from You. Please restore my faith in You oh God. Strengthen me with all Your might to be able to withstand this pain. Xolisa intliziyo yam Nkosi elungileyo. Mnini wento zonke. Wena kumkani yeeKumkani. Ndithembele kuwe ke bawo. I pray that what ever goodness there is left in me, may it be transfered to iKhayalam. No amount of pain should harm a hair on his head. Forgive me my Father, for all I have sinned." he stopped sucking and started to cry instantly. Me: "What's wrong baby?" I tried rocking him back and forth wiping my tears. I checked his diaper. I burped him. Nothing made him stop. So I sat in the birthing position and put him on my lap facing me. I stared at him in the eyes. He quieted down only left with after crying hiccups. Me: "Mama's okay baby. Yhini ulila kangaka." His bottom lip quivered. Me: "Everything is okay. I won't cry again, I promise you." finally he was quiet. Zama: "Honey?" she knocked on the door. Me: "ngena mama." she opened the door and came in. Zama: "Is everything okay?" Me: "Yeah." Zama: "Spho, this child will read your energy and act on it. If you're crying, he too will cry. I know you're hurting baby but your child has been in your stomach for months. He knows how your heart beats, the minute you hurt he feels it too. You have a special bond. It sucks now you'll have to put your feelings aside and take care of him. We'll be here to help you if you need anything." Me: "Thank you mama." Zama: "Sandile is asking if its okay that he tells his dad that you've given birth?" Me: "Yes its okay ma.

Grandmother said, I can tell once the baby is born. Throughout the birthing process was the only obstacle." Zama: "Okay ke mntanam. I'm making you food. Anything specific you want?" Me: "I don't have an appetite ma." Zama: "I'll make you a grilled cheese sandwich then." she closed the door. In the lounge Sandile was putting together the baby cot. Komander walked in the house and stared at him. Kom: "Are you trying to break it or build it?" Sandile mumbled under his breath. Kom: "I know you're angry because of your brother." silence was response. Sandile read the instructions again and continued. Kom: "and the fact that you don't respond to me is proof enough that you're really angry." Sands: "You are sitting there asking me questions like a psychologist when you should be fighting for your child!! Why is it that I must do everything for you!" Kom: "So its me you're mad at?" Sands: "You are Komander!! The most feared man in the world!! Yet, Your daughter and your newborn grandson are in that room, heart broken and in tears. You heard that baby cry and if that was not enough to break you inside, stay the hell away from me." he lifted up the finished cot. Kom: "Okay. Sandile, contrary to what you may have been told, I don't go around killing people just. It doesn't work that way." Sands: "Who said anything about killing!!! You are the ONLY person Masilakhe listens to! Why don't you talk to him." Kom: "I'm not done. Sit." Sandile sat down. Kom: "I only work on command. If I had the go ahead, he'd probably be dead. That's the only way I talk. Spho hasn't asked me to do something and I know she won't. At the end of the day, he's still her husband and she loves him. I am not going to interfere. She will talk to him if and when she wants to. Me, you, her mother and everyone else, its none of our business. Do you understand me Sandile?" Sands: "No I don't. You're supposed to protect her." Kom: "You think I like what's happening? You think its fun for me seeing her like this? Sandile, I don't want to lay eyes on your brother. It won't end well for your entire family. I do my bit staying out of his way if he wants to see his child, he better reciprocate the same energy when I want to see mine. I am not having this conversation with you again." Sandile picked up the cot and walked to the bedroom carrying it. He knocked on the door. Me: "Come in." he opened and brought the white little bed in. Me: "you built it?" Sands: "Yep." he put it in its place, next to my bed and he climbed in next to me. Sands: "How is Little Kyalami Estate?" I laughed. Me: "Stop it. You're something else yazi. I really didn't expect that." Sands: "Its what I do." he held the baby's hand. Sands: "He is so beautiful." Me: "He really is." Sands: "You should've named him Sandile 2.0. He's already lit." Me: "That's what I was worried about." he smiled. Baby K wrapped his tiny hand on Sandile's index finger. I looked at Sandile. A lone tear was traveling down his cheek. Sands: "I have to go." he stood up. Me: "What's wrong?" Sands: "Nothing. Call me if you need someone to talk to okay? I'll be here doing a

split in a second." I smiled. Sands: "Take care of him. He is indeed precious." he walked out. I looked at my baby. Me: "Your uncle calls you precious, are you precious, baby boy? My precious little bunny." I heard a little fart. He looked sleepy again and was about to fuss. Me: "Hayi kodwa baby. Why are you leaving me alone now?" his mouth was shaping to an O ready for a yawn. Me: "lala ke my love. Have the sweetest of dreams as the angels of heaven watch over you."

#146

In the lounge, Komander was sitting in the couch staring into space. Zama: "Are you okay?" Kom: "Am I a bad father?" Zama: "What is it now." Kom: "Sandile says he always has to do my job for me and he's right in a way. I just don't want to involve myself in Spho's relationship with her husband. Is it even appropriate to confront your son in law?" Zama: "What is your real question?" Kom: "My real question is will Spho hate me for not standing up for her?" Zama: "Spho already hates you. So it does not matter." Kom: "Really?" Zama: "I'm kidding. Look, go ask Spho what she expects from you. And I think its good you're not interfering. That is her marriage, she could go back to him any day. We just need to let them sort it out themselves." Kom: "I don't think its that simple. There's deep emotional scars that Lakhe is dealing with. Its not just gonna be that simple. I just see continued pain." Zama: "You mean he's going to continue hurting her? After everything You've done for him? You got him out that orphanage when no one was bidding. None of those kids that grew up there made it. It burnt to the ground. He is the only one that made it out of there. He got a well connected family, you got him off a murder charge. Maybe Sandile is right, you should talk to him." Kom: "Robert chose Lakhe. I just signed. It was a tragedy that the orphanage burnt down, he doesn't even know what happened there, he was young and was just glad to be out. And we both know Lakhe didn't kill that girl. It was just a bad coincidence." Zama: "Still. He would be on trial right now ready to face a murder conviction." Kom: "Just don't ever tell anyone about that. He doesn't need to know." Zama: "Fine. All I'm saying is, as much as you don't show it, you actually care about this family." Kom: "That's not it." he stood up. Zama: "Its okay. To care." Kom: "Well I don't." he walked to the bedroom and knocked. Zama: "That's caring." she said from the lounge. Me: "Come in." I'd just put the baby in his cot. Komander walked in and stood in the middle of the room. Me: "Hi." Kom: "Hi." his eyes were fixed on the sleeping baby. Me: "He's already asleep." Kom: "I see that. I came to see how you are." Me: "I'm fine thanks and you?" Kom: "I could be better." I sat down. Me: "Is everything okay?" Kom:

"Yes. I want to know if you want me to do something about Lakhe abandoning you." Me: "No! Absolutely not! He didn't abandon me. He just asked for space." Kom: "Are you sure?" Me: "Yes. I'm positive." Kom: "Why does he need space?" Me: "I can't talk about that." Kom: "Its me, isn't it?" I looked away. Kom: "If he didn't want me around, he could have said something." Me: "Its not you. Itsyour.....things." Kom: "My demons? You know they can be put to sleep right?" Me: "I do. When he calms down, we will talk this through and he will let me know what he doesn't want and dislikes then we can sort that out." Kom: "Seems like a plan." Me: "I'm sorry." Kom: "For what?" Me: "Well....this." Kom: "It doesn't even bother me. I'm not attached to people. Their opinions don't bother me." Me: "Okay." he looked at the baby again. For a couple of minutes it was just silent. Him staring at Khayalam. The baby finally opened his eyes. Now why would he do that? Me: "I just put him down." I complained. Kom: "I'm sorry." I was expecting to hear the baby cry any second instead he closed his eyes again. Kom: "If you need anything. Let me know." Me: "I will Thank you." Kom: "Your training starts when he turns 1 month." Me: "That soon?" Kom: "No time to waste." Me: "Okay." he walked out. Robert and Stella knocked on the front door. Zama: "Come in." they rushed inside. Rob: "Where is she!! Hello Zama, oh Hi to you sir. Where's Spho?" Zama: "What is all that?" Stella: "Presents, of course!" Zama: "Gucci?" Kom: "She's in the bedro-" they rushed past him and knocked on the door. Stella: "Spho?" Me: "Ngena ma." she walked in with Rob carrying shopping bags. Rob: "Ohhhh there he is!" he dropped everything and went to the cot. Rob: "Oh my God. He looks like Masilakhe. Honey, come see." Stella gasped. Stella: "He is soo adorable!!" she squealed. For the next 30 minutes all they did was stare at him and take pictures. Even with all that noise he slept soundly. Stella: "Sweetheart, we apologize for coming this early. We know the whole 10 days thing but we were so excited. We are going to pray for him right here." Rob: "True. When Sandile called me, I almost chopped my foot off, running around." Stella: "Literally. He was like a turtle on drugs." I laughed holding my hand over my mouth. Rob: "anyway! These are for you and little king. This one is my favorite." it was a white Balmain onesie and cute little shoes. Me: "its so cute tata." Stella: "this is from me." I opened it. Red Balenciaga thigh high boots for me. I couldn't hold in my amusement. At about what point would I wear these please? Stella: "See? She gets it." Rob: "I don't. Where and how will she wear those things with a baby?" Stella: "Spho knows fashion, She'll make a plan." the other gifts were more clothes for baby Khaya and some for me. After an hour they left our house. I felt much better laughing and joking with them.

3 weeks later. . .

I'm up at 3am. Khayalam is crying and I'm near pulling my hair out. I switch on the light and take him in my arms. Immediately he keeps quiet. Me: "Boy you better stop playing with me." I latched him on my breast and he sucked while staring at me. Me: "why don't you sleep pumpkin?" I'm disturbed by a slight knock on my door. Me: "come in." my mom comes in. Zama: "love, why don't you pump then Khayalam sleeps with us this side. You need to rest." Me: "I am rested mama." Zama: "What's all this?" Me: "Oh nothing. Just something I've been thinking about, finally putting it down on paper." Zama: "You're working? Already?" Me: "When the baby is asleep, I can't sleep." Khaya: "What's going on?" (Dad, he was home from hospital with a funny looking bandage on his head.) Zama: "She's working when the baby is sleeping." Khaya: "Spho aren't you supposed to be sleeping?" Me: "Tata, Lam just wakes up when I'm almost dozing off and I'd rather just be awake now." Khaya: "Give your mother the baby." Me: "I can't tata. I'll sleep the minute he's asleep. I promise." Zama: "Spho I'm worried about you." Me: "I'm okay mama. I promise." she nodded and walked out. After burping the baby, I rocked him to sleep again then carried on with my research. 6:45 Monday morning. I still hadn't gotten a wink and it wasn't even the baby. He was still asleep in my arm which was numb now. I had to be at the doctor at 9am. The health shakes and waist trainer were really a great help. I kept doing only light exercises and stretches. Which is probably why I also had energy. Zama: "Spho." I just walked into the kitchen to take the pumping machine. Me: "Ma? I just came to get this. I'm going to pump." Zama: "You haven't slept or eaten in 3 days." Me: "I do sleep. When I get the chance. The health shakes are really good-" Zama: "I don't care. I'm talking about real food." Me: "I ate an apple yesterday." Zama: "Spho, I know you're a new mom but you need to take care of yourself! You'll feel much better when You've eaten and rested." Me: "Mama. I'm fine." Khaya: "When last did you speak to Lakhe?" Me: "I can't remember." Khaya: "Have you called him?" Me: "Yes." Khaya: "And." Me: "he was busy but I'll be picking Chris up this afternoon, he is excited to see his baby brother." I went to the bedroom. After pumping, Khayalam woke up. Finally. I fed him his milk then I bathed him and dressed him up. He just yawned in my arms, clearly ready for another nap. Me: "my bumble bee looking so cute." a facetime came through on my phone. Me: "Sandile." I answered. His face popped up. Me: "What are you doing still in bed at this hour? Don't you have a hotel to run?" Sands: "I have a meeting at 11 only and baby is making me breakfast." Me: "baby? Who's baby?" Sands: "I met her two weeks ago. Her father owns the Oracle. She is COO. They just

opened a new division this side." Me: "Ohh, that is super cool! Wait, her father is Mel Thomas?" Sands: "That's the one." Me: "Oh. My. God. I need a favor." Sands: "a favor for a favor." Me: "what you want?" Sands: "Tip down your phone." I tipped it down. Sands: "Hey Titty man!!!! Wake up!!!!" Khayalam got such a fright. His eyes almost popped out his head. Me: "Sandile!!" Sands: "So what you need?" Me: "A meeting." Sands: "With who?" Me: "Mr Thomas obviously. I'm working on something and it needs a company like his to lift off." Sands: "Is this not something Lakhe's company might take a huge knock from? Because if it is I'm down like underwear." Me: "No. I'll be pitching to him too, I just need three companies. Lakhe's, The Oracle and I'm still researching the third." Sands: "Why are you including Lakhe's one?" Me: "Business-wise him and I see eye to eye. I know he wouldn't let this just past." Sands: "I see dead bodies already cuz you gonn be killin shit. Anyway, I'll talk to her." Me: "Okay. Thank you. Please keep her Sandile." Sands: "We've been doing well for the past two weeks. I like her." Me: "That's great. I'm happy for you, please do not ruin it." Sands: "I won't. When are you bringing Burberry baby? I got something for him here." Me: "sometime next week." Sands: "Perfect. Everything is baby proof and the - Yes baby, just like that. Its fine. No, the egg and toast don't touch. I'm talking to my sister. I'll be there in a second. As I was saying Spho, everything is baby proof and there's baby food as well." Me: "He's still Titty man for now but he has like a bit of porridge. He doesn't like it though." Sands: "Which man on earth would swap a titty for porridge?" Me: "Stop it." Sands: "Alright. I miss you guys. Give him the phone." Me: "He can't hold it." Sands: Hold it for him then. Hey mans. How is it? Is he smiling?" Me: "No he's passing gas." Sands: "He smiles when he farts?" he laughed. Sands: "my little lion. I miss you man. Promise to come say hi okay? Spho, I'll talk to you guys later. I'm bout to be late out my ass." I ended the call. My phone rang again. It was Stacy. Me: "Hello." Stacy: "Hi Mrs. Sobukwe, is it okay to talk?" Me: "Yes what's wrong." Stacy: "Would it be possible if you came to class." Me: "Can't you tell me over the phone?" Stacy: "Chris is having a bit of difficulty. He says, you don't live with him anymore. He refuses to communicate and cooperate in class. I've tried everything. He is really depressed and its not good." Me: "I'll pick him up today. I'll talk to him." Stacy: "Okay, I'm not one to tell you how to raise your kids-" Me: "okay thanks bye." I hung up. I didn't need her opinion right now. I dialed Lakhe. It rang twice and stopped. A message immediately came through. 'Can't talk. In a meeting.' There was no meeting. It wasn't even 7am. Me: "Okay but we need to talk. Please let me know when you're free." I replied. No response. Amazing stuff. I went to give the baby to my mom and took a quick shower then came back to dress. Just jeans and a white t shirt. The doctor was 5 minutes away and I couldn't stay long. Me: "mama, I'll be 30 to 45 minutes maximum." Khaya: "I need you to go fetch my

medication too my child." Me: "Okay tata." he gave me his prescription. Me: "One hour max." Zama: "I also need you to pick up some groceries-" Me: "Okay why do you want to keep me out the house?" Zama: "You need a break nana." Me: "I. Am. Fine." Khaya: "No. You're. Not. As long as you're still in my house eating my food, you're not okay. I need you to be outside." Okay that actually kind of really hurt me. If I couldn't be here in my parents house where else could I go? Is it because he was in hospital for so long and he misses mom? Their privacy? Is it because Lam wakes up in the middle of the night crying at least three times a night? Either way, I was upset. I took my bag and car keys, leaving the house. Zama: "Did you have to?" Khaya: "What?" Zama: "You've hurt her feelings. She probably thinks we hate her for being here all the time." Khaya: "She'll be fine." Zama: "Khaya, I know you've changed but this isn't right. This is your daughter and she's already hurt. You shouldn't be making her feel worse." Khaya: "How am I making her feel worse when I am being honest? You want her cooped up in this house till when?" he stood up and walked to his bedroom without another word.

Robert knocked on Lakhe's door. He (Lakhe) was living in their secret house with Chris after leaving the main one. Lakhe: "Come in." Rob walked in. Lakhe: "How did you find me? Oh wait.....Sandile." Rob: "I have resources beyond Sandile. Besides, he doesn't want to talk to or about you. Ready to fight anyone that does." Lakhe: "Sandile is melodramatic and taking Spho's side because she cooks his favorite dishes and listens to his nonsense." Rob: "and takes care of him." Lakhe: "Yep." Rob: "Well before he shut down the Lakhe subject. He told me what happened. So you're separated from your wife." Lakhe: "Is that why you're here? To lecture me on how perfect she is and how stupid I am?" Rob: "No. I'm here to listen to your reason why." Lakhe: "Unfortunately, that is none of your business tata and I'm late for a meeting." Rob: "You're going to sit down and talk to me. I don't care about your meeting. You can't complain about people not being attentive to you and still YOU don't have time for them." Lakhe: "hayi ke tata." Rob: "Sit. And Talk." Lakhe: "I'm just tired tata. I love Spho but she has changed. She's discovered her new family which happens to possess demons, something I'm not comfortable with at all. They arrive whenever they please in my house and weird things start to happen. Since when did we accept demons as normal things now? Its not normal! Its actually disgusting." Rob: "So Spho and her family disgust you?" Lakhe: "Yes." Rob: "Not just her family but her as well." Lakhe: "She's part of them so yes." Rob: "I need you to do me a favor." Lakhe: "What?" Rob: "Don't ever say that again. Ever. Not for anything but your safety. You know how hectic they are-" Lakhe: "That's the thing tata, why must

I always fear for my life? I never signed up for that. Why can't I voice my opinion because I'm 'scared' I might get killed by demons? What type of witchcraft is that? Hayi I can't. And on top of this baggage, she really undermines my business intellect. She thinks she's much smarter and much better than I am with MY company. It was cute at first but when she starts to poach my clients? That's not fucking on. No." Rob: "Have you spoken to Spho?" Lakhe: "Is she gonna listen to me?" Rob: "Have you?" Lakhe: "Well no-" Rob: "You made a vow in front of a pastor and God. For in sickness and in health. Richer or poorer. In good and bad. The minute things turn sour, you leave her. When all evidence pointed to you that you murdered your ex girlfriend, whom by the way you cheated on her with, she never left your side. The money, for your bail that had to be dug out of a grave for you, she was there. She knew and still stood by you. Yes, I know about the grave money too. I know about your dealings. I know all about you because you are my son and I still love you regardless. I am not saying she's perfect. She's not. She has mistakes as any other human being but when you put that ring on her finger, it was a symbol of infinity, overlooking or fixing together the simple mistakes. Our flaws are sometimes unfinished business in our childhoods and the partners we choose complete those flaws. Do you remember when you were 14?" Lakhe: "Please for the love of God, do not bring up that story again." Rob: "Sandile wanted to join your soccer team and you let him. He was made captain and after a few weeks, you pushed him down the stairs and he broke his leg. The day before a tournament." Lakhe: "I never pushed him! We were arguing. It was a mistake and certainly had nothing to do with the tournament." Rob: "and when you ran over his science project on the biggest day of his science class?" Lakhe: "How was I supposed to know he put it behind the car? Tata, all of this you're telling me trying to guilt me into going back to Spho and its not working." Rob: "No. I'm not. Your brother wanted to be an astronaut. You told him it was a stupid dream and he should think of something else. Problem is, he never wanted anything else. Which is why he chose to be nothing. You're his big brother, he looked up to you and everything he saw was perfection. He has decided to take his life back, and without you in it. Not because he hates you but you've hurt him. Sandile does not know the kind of emotional trauma you went through as a child. You don't even know yourself because you were only a child. For years I didn't pay attention to it but you are the unstable one. You had such a tough upbringing. Those first seven years of your life were unbearable for you and that is why you can't talk about them. They etched onto your brain. Something you can never forget. Which is why its so difficult for you to accept other people. You envy them because they're doing well on the outside, what you miss is that, everyone has a deep emotional scar, maybe not as

deep as yours but deep nonetheless. I understand why its so difficult for you to let anyone else be in control, you had to kill for control before you had it and you can't let it go. In this regard, Spho keeps touching an emotional nerve that reminds you of the pain your mother gave you-" Lakhe: "That's not true!! My mother loved me!" Rob: "Then why did you kill her? You strangled her to death at the age of 7 Masilakhe. I understand that you were scared. You were only a child." Lakhe: "Get out of my house!" Rob: "We love you Masilakhe. I realize now not even love can repair the pain in your heart. You resent Spho for loving you the way she does. You're not sick my child. Its not your fault-" Lakhe: "GET OUT!!!!!!!" he screamed. Rob: "I'm going to need you to do one thing for me. Please, divorce her. As soon as possible. Let her go." Lakhe: "Leave me alone, you know nothing about my life with my mother! She loved me! Just get out." he hissed. Rob: "You can't force yourself to stay where you're visibly unhappy. Let her go, son. For the sake of your children." he stood up and walked out the house. Lakhe looked at his phone as it rang. Lakhe: "Yes?" Nwabi: "Hi bhuti, Onika is here for your meeting. Will there be anything else you'll need?" Lakhe: "Please cancel the meeting Nwabisa, I've got a family emergency. Reschedule with Onika for later in the day." Nwabi: "but you have back to back meetings bhuti and the status meeting at 7pm tonight." Lakhe: "Nwabisa I don't care what you do. I'm taking a day off. Reschedule everything." Nwabi: "and the status meeting too?" Lakhe: "No, you'll attend that on my behalf." Nwabi: "m-me? But I'm just an assistant." Lakhe: "With a Finance degree. I trust you." Nwabi: "Thank you bhuti. I won't let you down." he hung up and sat down. His fingers danced over the keypad unsure what to write then finally decided. "I want us to talk. I've canceled the meetings I have. If you're available, please come. With the baby too. -Lakhe." Send To Wife.....

#147

I really hated traveling with the baby because of his age. I wanted him to be at least two months to go out somewhere. After my doctor appointment, fetching Chris, getting mom's groceries and father meds, I took an Uber with Khayalam and Chris to Lakhe's house. When we arrived, Chris was carrying Lam's diaper bag and his own back pack. I rang the door bell and he just pushed the door open and went inside. Chris: "Come mama. Can I play with him now?" Ever since I fetched him from day care and went about our errands he's been going on and on about his brother and what they would do together. So he was excited. Lakhe: "Hey boy. Come here." Chris: "Dad, not now. Lam is here and we have plans." Lakhe: "Lam?" I walked in. Chris:

"Yes, my brother, Lam." Lakhe: "Who's La....oh. Hi." Me: "Hi." Chris: "Bring him mama!!" he laid a thick fleece with a pillow on the carpet. I brought the baby down and on to the doubled fleece. Chris sat next to him and stared at his face holding his hand. I got back up letting them stare at each other. Lakhe: "You look good." Me: "Thanks, you too." he looked at the baby. Lakhe: "soo...Lam?" Me: "Khayalam." Lakhe: "Why." Me: "Well, it was the first thing that came to my mind after I called you at the hospital. Both you and my dad have that name. And well, Khayalam is my home now." Lakhe: "Its a beautiful name." I wish you'd had a say in it though. Me: "You said you wanted to talk." I sat directly opposite the boys to be able to see them. Lakhe: "I'd prefer not to have this conversation in front of the kids." Me: "Well I can't leave them on their own. Lam is only 3 weeks." Lakhe: "Fine. Would you like something to eat or drink?" Me: "Just water please." he went to the kitchen to fetch me a bottle of water. By the time he came back Chris was lightly snoring next to a wide awake Lam. Lakhe: "I figured as much. Usually his nap time. He could actually fall asleep mid-activity." Me: "That's Chris for you. Thanks." I opened the bottle and took a sip. Lakhe: "I'm sorry about leaving. I know it wasn't easy. Especially not having me there to help you." Me: "Oh." Lakhe: "Yeah. This isn't easy." Me: "I can imagine." Lakhe: "Spho, I love you. I always will." Me: "This sounds like a break up." Lakhe: "Spho, please don't make this difficult." Me: "I'm not. I'm just saying how I feel." Lakhe: "I am really uncomfortable with your new family. Their association with demonic things and spirits, its unsettling. I don't want to keep looking over my shoulder or being unable to sleep." he spoke in a low tone. Me: "We can fix that-" Lakhe: "Through more witchcraft? Why must I suffer and sacrifice for something I didn't want or bargain for?" Me: "Lakhe I didn't bargain or want this either but in marriage we compromise-" Lakhe: "Compromise demons? No Spho. That was not the plan." he whispered. Me: "Lakhe I can't help where I come from. If I could change it for you, I would." Lakhe: "but you can't." Me: "We can try it out babe. I would do anything for you if you asked." Lakhe: "You're asking me to join a cult? Are you even hearing yourself?" Me: "Its not a cul-" Lakhe: "I'm not doing it Spho. I will not be part of it. What happened to you? You used to be passionate about church and prayer. What is all this?" Me: "Lakhe I don't know what all this is. What I know is that I'm still passionate about prayer and church. I love God and I'm never turning my back on my faith. I just cannot change my blood. I was told you'd be affected by things neither of us can control and the only way is if you got init-" Lakhe: "What!! No, Spho, I'm not doing that." Me: "So what do you want me to do?" Lakhe: "Nothing. You carry on with your things." Me: "and what about us?" Lakhe: "I don't know about us Spho." I stared at the bottle in my hand. Heartbreak was an understatement. We sat in silence for a short while before Lam started to fuss. I picked him up from the

floor. It was time for his feeding so I gave him his breast. Me: "You want a divorce?" Lakhe: "Not in front of the baby." Me: "Lakhe answer me. You want a divorce because of my DNA which I cannot change?" Lakhe: "Don't make it sound like I'm a jerk Spho. I can't help feeling uncomfortable. What must I do?" try and understand my situation. I wanted to say. Me: "Its okay." Lakhe: "So what now." Me: "I'll get a lawyer, you get a lawyer and then we do this." Lakhe: "The kids?" Me: "You'll see them whenever you want." Lakhe: "Why do I have to visit?" Me: "You're the one that wants a divorce." Lakhe: "Its not my kids I want to be away from." Me: "Oh." Yuh. I'd never felt so small, insignificant and rejected. After Lam was asleep I put him down. Me: "Do you want alone time with them for now? I'll fetch them later." Lakhe: "I'd love that." he smiled. Lakhe: "I just don't know what to expect fr-" I gave him the journal Sandile gave me as a gift. Me: "His itinerary is on the first page, the second page is his eating, third page is how to change him, fourth page is putting him to sleep and fifth page is keeping him entertained. The directions are very thorough." Lakhe: "How do you get time for this?" Me: "I made it when he was asleep. I'll be back at 4pm." It was already 13:30pm. Lakhe: "Okay." I requested my Uber and left the house. I didn't have anywhere to go to clear my mind. And I didn't have anything more to fight for except my kids. The Uber drove me to Komander's house. I went inside and it drove away since I registered a card instead of cash. After pressing the intercom the gate opened immediately. I stepped inside to the front door. He was standing there waiting for me. Me: "Why would you do something like this?" Kom: "like what?" Me: "I know you planned this with Siyanda. You wanted Lakhe to leave me so that I can marry your servant?" Kom: "I did no such thing." Me: "Then why didn't you warn me? Since you know so much already and can see things before they happen? Why would you ruin my life like this?" Kom: "There's no need to be dramatic. We could get Lakhe on board." Me: "I hope you're not going to compel him to come back because I don't want a demon possessed husband! Its bad enough I didn't get to choose for myself but I'm not dragging another human being in it." Kom: "Then I can't help. Its either you want him like that or you don't." Me: "That can't be fair! He already wants nothing to do with all this, him becoming one of us will make him hate me more and even hate himself." Kom: "Then there's nothing I can do for you." Me: "I am not going to marry Siyanda. You can forget it." Kom: "I don't want you to marry Siyanda." Me: "Then why can't you help me?" Kom: "I just offered and you refused Spho. I can't change the rules." I folded my arms over my chest in defeat. I was honestly near tears. I didn't want to let go of Lakhe but it seems as if he does. Me: "I can start tomorrow." Kom: "Start what?" Me: "My training. I want to start tomorrow. There's no need to wait anymore." Kom: "You sure you're ready?" Me: "Yes. How long will it take?" Kom: "Four weeks." Me: "Then let's do it." Kom:

"You don't have to do this Spho." Me: "Really? I have a choice all of a sudden?" Kom: "Well, not really." Me: "When and where do we meet." Kom: "I'll send you the location. A quarter to midnight. Tomorrow." Me: "I'll see you then." I requested another Uber. Kom: "I'm sorry about Lakhe." Me: "No, you're not." Kom: "You're right, I'm not. I was trying to make you feel better." Me: "No point in that now. The damage is done." Kom: "Okay." we stood in silence. Kom: "Why would you think I'd plan this with Siyanda?" Me: "He was the one that brought up initiation for Lakhe because he won't be able to survive being my partner then conveniently Lakhe separates from me and now wants a divorce." Kom: "Divorce?" I looked away. Kom: "Just because of us?" Me: "Yes." Kom: "No, that's not true. Lakhe is dealing with personal things. This only contributed to them. Ask him." Me: "I have to go, my cab is here. I'll see you tomorrow." Kom: "Yeah. Go well." I walked out the gate.

The next day was a Tuesday. During the afternoon Lakhe walked up to Sandile's hotel elevator doors. He pressed for the penthouse and went up. Upon arrival, Sandile was having coffee reading off his iPad. Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "Sandile." Sands: "You must be lost. This area is strictly off limits." Lakhe: "I'm here to see you." Sands: "Do you have an appointment?" Lakhe: "How long are you going to be like this?" Sands: "Like what? Like lenient? Respectful? Civilized? because I'm about to run out of patience now and I'm ready to kick you out." Lakhe: "I gave you this hotel-" Sands: "So you want it back? No problem." Lakhe: "Don't be ridiculous! I'm here to talk to you." Sands: "At what point did I look like I wanted to talk to YOU?" Lakhe: "Are we going to let a woman come between us? Seriously? Something that's never happened before?" Sands: "Except that woman was my sister and you broke our family." Lakhe: "I didn't break the family." Sands: "Oh ok." he packed his bag. Lakhe: "Sandile I'm not going to beg or plead. You're my brother and we're going to sort this out. She's still your sister regardless." Sands: "ok." Lakhe: "I came here to let you know, because I didn't want you to hear from anyone else, Spho and I are getting a divorce." Sandile kept quiet and tidied his apartment. Lakhe: "That's the longest you've been quiet and I don't like it." Sands: "Seems like there is nothing you do like." he grabbed his bag. Sands: "I'm going to work." Lakhe: "Sandile don't be like this, we're brothers." Sands: "Don't be Like what!! What!!! You want me to congratulate you for leaving your wife before you even finish 5 months in your marriage? You want me to congratulate you for letting your newborn son to grow up without both parents in one house like you did. What do you want me to do? You have hurt her bhuti, more than enough and I told you I wouldn't take it. I was not playing. The fact that endlini you all think I'm just a big baby who jumps

around following orders is enough. I am done with that. You want your hotel? Cool, I'll sign it over back to you by the end of the day I'll be out by then too. Just don't ever call my phone again." Lakhe: "Sandile, what do you expect me to do? I don't like the idea that I'm going to be around demonic entities and rituals and shit. I want none of that. I want a normal life. I want you in it. I'm sorry I hurt Spho. It was not my intention, I promise." Sands: "You left Spho because of her blood. Something she cannot choose. And she stuck by you, when you chose to be a criminal." Lakhe: "hayi ke ngoku. What does that have to do with anything? Does that mean I must be uncomfortable in my own life just to prove a point? That is not fair." Sands: "What happened to 'she can't ever leave me'. What happened when you ordered me to kill Bulelani for the incriminating evidence he had? Were you not the one who was bat shit crazy and hell bent on protecting your marriage?" Lakhe: "Sandile Ufuna ndithini ndihleli kabuhlungu nje? You want me to live in a world of pain because you like Spho-" Sands: "Correction, I love Spho. You introduced her into my life and she took care of me like she was my mother. Go ahead and divorce her. Its fine. Its your life anyway." Lakhe: "Sandile, This is not easy. How can you not understand?" Sands: "I understand. You're in pain. You need to be let free. I get it." Lakhe: "Then why does it feel like you're taking her side?" Sands: "I'm not taking any sides. You made your decision. I'm not going to interfere." he walked out the house.

Tuesday evening. I'd pumped enough breast milk for Lam and I was putting him to sleep. It was almost 9pm. I needed him asleep so that I could finish this research and finally put it to use into a proposal. I lay down the baby in his cot and continued with my work. My father walked into the room. He stood in the centre and looked at me. Me: "Hi tata, do you need anything?" Khaya: "You're supposed to be sleeping you have a long night ahead of you." Me: "I'd rather finish this. If I sleep I'll be groggy for the whole night." Khaya: "Its been Four days since you last slept. Look at your eyes." Me: "I can't." Khaya: "Spho, you need rest for this part of your life. You need to be focused and you need to be well fed or else it could turn dangerous for you very quickly." Me: "I can do eating and focus. Sleep will wait till after." Khaya: "You'll learn the hard way." he walked out. I finished with my research finally right before eleven. Stacked it neatly into a file and got dressed in a tracksuit. I kneeled on the floor and began to pray. Me: "Thixo olungileyo, Kumkani yezulu nomhlaba. I come before you this evening, humbling myself at Your feet. I have come to ask for protection, I've come to ask for guidance. Lead me in Your righteous path dear Father with all that I do. Cover me with the blood of Jesus Christ as I fight head on with the enemy. I trust in You God. I have faith

in Your promise. As I walk out this door I know You've sent your angels to walk with me and You are the presence around my sons as they sleep. May the Holy Spirit watch over them and bless their dreams to be full of positive memories, light and You God. In Jesus' name, Amen." I stood up and took my keys then kissed Lam and Chris goodnight. Me: "Mama?" I entered the lounge. Me: "I'm on my way. Lam will be awake at 1:30. His bottle is ready-" Ma: "He'll be fine, don't worry." Me: "Okay. Please look after them mama." I tore myself out of that house with a heavy heart. I drove all the way to the secret location and parked next to the Audi. I got out the car, walking to Komander. He handed me a bag. Kom: "Change. You'll find me inside the forest." his voice was the same quake feeling I heard when he was preparing to be in demon mode. I started to panic. Should I be going through with this.... Kompany got out the car and followed his boss. Kompany: "There's no turning back now, Queen. It is time." a growling roar shook the leaves off their branches and jolted me into a state of shock, confusion and pure fear. My bladder was about to let loose and there was no way out.

#148

I knelt on the ground in the middle of the forest. My chest was on fire. My eyes saw blurry a faint hue of sunrise. Kom: "Get up." Me: "I can't..." I breathed. Kom: "Get. Up." three of them stood in front of me. I honestly couldn't take it anymore. This was a death experience times by 10. I pushed myself up and stood on my feet, knees buckling ready to give up any minute. I started hearing those sounds again. When I close my eyes they would be more audible. I stood still and tall. Kom: "You are dismissed." he said with his normal voice. I would've damn near fainted to be honest. Never in my life have I been so relieved. I crawled to my car and climbed inside the driver seat. Before even closing the door, I had to first breath. Balo: "move over." Me: "I can't." he picked me up from my seat and carried me to the passenger then drove me home. Balo: "You're not eating. You're much slower than you're supposed to be." Me: "You sure its not because this is PhD military training." Balo: "No, its just physical strength. Its like this in the beginning but harder if you don't take care of yourself. And eat." he stopped the car. Balo: "Mcfest large meal. Whichever drink and two bottles of water." Me: "No-" Balo: "I'm not talking to you." I opened my eyes slightly. We were at McDonald's. He paid and collected then drove away. Balo: "You have to eat and soak in a hot bath before you sleep." Me: "I can't" he stopped the car and opened the packet. Balo: "Open your mouth." I opened and took a bite off the burger. Balo: "Its difficult being us. Our blood repels normal people and its up to us to

take care of each other. Your dad is not the caring type ke we know that. You've protected and cared for me, now its my turn to take care of you. Open." I swallowed and took another bite. Balo: "I heard you're getting a divorce." I didn't want to think about that. Balo: "I'm sorry about that." Me: "Its fine. How's Hlumi?" Balo: "Very supportive. I told her what was going on and gave her some time. She decided to accept the initiation. She starts tomorrow. At least for a partner its not as hectic as ours. They only need two weeks." Me: "I'm happy for you." I finished the burger and chips then drank both bottles of water. I was finally full. He took me straight home. I took a long bath and went to check on Lam. He was asleep too. I crawled into bed and fell asleep almost immediately.

My next wake was at 3pm to the smell of food. My dad was putting the tray on my dresser. Khaya: "How are you feeling?" Me: "much better and hungry." Khaya: "that's good. Here's your food, eat and then go back to sleep." Me: "I don't think I can sleep again." I sat up and ate. He walked out my bedroom. By the time I finished my last sip I was yawning and slipping into my covers again. In the kitchen Khaya was washing the dishes and wiping the counters. Zama: "How is she?" Khaya: "Sleeping. Plus she ate." Zama: "You drugged her didn't you?" Khaya: "She wouldn't sleep or eat. What I was supposed to do?" Zama: "She's breastfeeding Khaya, you can't do that." Khaya: "She'll do that pump and dump thing. There's enough milk and baby porridge for now. Sphe needs to be strong and stop pretending to be." Zama: "How do you expect her to be strong when her husband is leaving her? You know how much she loves him-" Khaya: "She's better off without him!!" Zama: "You did something to him?" Khaya: "How could I possibly do anything from a coma? And if I did do something, it would leave him paralyzed. I don't want to hear that disgrace of a name in my house!" Zama: "Khaya you can't say that." Khaya: "I. Just. Did." Zama: "Sphe needs to heal properly, I don't want her to be like....." Khaya: "Like who? Me? Her father? It is in her blood to be like this. That thing was holding her back anyway." Zama: "I don't know what's gotten into-" he walked out the house. Zama: "You." the baby woke up in the bedroom, crying. She rushed over to him. Zama: "Hi sweetheart." she picked him up and rocked him in her arms. Lam screamed louder and louder. Trying to get away from the bottle in his face. I woke up in that noise and went to them. Me: "give him to me mama." she had tears in her eyes. Zama: "You need to rest mntanam." Me: "Its okay, I got it." Zama: "You're my child Sphe, I'm supposed to help and take care of you." Me: "Mama ndicela undinike umntana." she handed the baby over to me. I went to my bedroom. Me: "You'll never know till you're alone how it feels to have love on your side. So when you go into

the night, I will be there, as your brightest star. I'll look you in the eye, follow you home, surround you with a light You've never know, I will be there, lighter than a leaf in your pocket. I'll be the air." he grinned looking at my eyes. I felt so much warmth in my heart. That beautiful smile on his face meant more than anything to me. Me: "and when you smile, I will be there. And when you cry, I will be there. Lighter than a leaf in your pocket. I'll be the air." I watched his little mouth pull into a small O and yawn. I put him on the bed changing his diaper and continued singing to him. His eyes were focused on the ceiling. Me: "When you go into a storm. I will be there, protect you. I will shoot the waves down, and I'll come around, surround you with a light I've never shown. I will be there..." he looked at me again. Me: "I will be there mntanam. You want to sleep with mommy?" I picked him up and held him in my arms while sitting on the bed. There was a fire inside my chest, not heartburn something more like rage. There was nothing I hated more than failure, I've never been a failure. Ever. And life decided to show me flames within a year and a half. How was it possible? I got left. Twice. Hehehe. Relationships were definitely not my strong point and I had to accept it to professionally move on. I had Chris and Lam to take care of. I had a business to start, I needed to make money as soon as possible. After putting Lam down in his cot, I sat in my desk and took my laptop out. My dad walked in and stared at me. Khaya: "You were sleeping." Me: "Your drug didn't work." Khaya: "I'm trying to help you." Me: "I know tata and I appreciate your help but I need to finish this." Khaya: "What is that?" Me: "Business Proposal. I want to partner with an private company for this project, its going to be huge tata. I see billboards, adverts and newspaper articles in my mind. Its like my brain is about to explode." Khaya: "I like the sound of that but you still need to rest. I'm giving you one hour and you're back in bed." Me: "okay daddy." he walked out the room and I went head on into my work.

Two weeks later, my training seemed a bit better. I took Hlumi out for breakfast when we both finished. Well, she was officially done and looked physically stronger too. Her skin was glowing and she had this beautiful look in her eyes too. Now I sound a little lesbian. Was I? Hlumi: "I would've loved to spend some time with Lam." Me: "You can come by the house later. I'm sure he misses his girlfriend too." she laughed. Me: "How was the training?" Hlumi: "So difficult. I almost died Spho. Twice." Me: "and you kept going?" Hlumi: "Yes. I love Babalo. I would die for him if I had to." Me: "That's really sweet." I ordered my breakfast. I couldn't even feel tired until I willed my body to be. Which I synced with Lam's daily itinerary. He wakes at 5:30am and is up until 7am. Then asleep again until 10am. I'm going to get home, do a bit of work

and we'll both sleep at noon. Then my mom takes over till I'm up in the evening. My water arrived first and I drank it in one gulp. Hlumi: "How's it going with Lakhe?" Me: "Its okay I guess. We're meeting with our lawyers today, that's why I didn't go straight home. If I fell asleep, I'd wake up in the evening." Hlumi: "You're really getting a divorce?" Me: "Yep." Hlumi: "You're not even going to try to sway his decision?" Me: "No. It has to be his own will. He said he doesn't want me and I respect that. I don't stay where I'm not wanted." Hlumi: "So you gonna be single now?" Me: "I guess so." Hlumi: "I have a friend-" Me: "No. I'm done with relationships." Hlumi: "I'm not even done talking. I'm saying I have a friend who went through the same thing, after her divorce she didn't want anything to do with men but a few months later, she met the love of her life. Someone who accepted all her flaws and loved her with all his might. She's happily married now." Me: "Good for her." our food arrived. Hlumi: "Spho you can't blame all males for one of them." Me: "I'm not. I'm just done." I started eating. Hlumi: "How is your training going." Me: "I had strength training these past two weeks. Everything that involves physical. Fighting, running at high speed, carrying and disposing of heavy things-" Hlumi: "Like dead bodies?" Me: "Possibly." Hlumi: "I learnt it too. Just not as hectic as yours, I've seen you in action Spho. You're fucking scary. Sir himself stood back when you were in motion. There was a white light illuminating around you when you moved. Child, What I saw was magic. Or should I address you as queen?" I smiled. Me: "Thanks. Maybe when I've graduated." Hlumi: "I'm really proud of you Spho. Seriously. You gave birth, you're doing this on the down low. How the hell." Me: "and I've got two meetings lined up to present my project tomorrow afternoon and Thursday." Hlumi: "Fuckng Superwoman." I laughed. We had our breakfast and made our way home. After changing, showering and dressed clean. I drove to Lakhe's office quickly. Our meeting was in 15 minutes and I'd rather be on time than late. My lawyer said she would meet me there. I'd thought of hiring Dumi since he was my lawyer but also Lakhe's lawyer, so that would be awkward for him. I'd rather we outsourced for the divorce and not involve our friends. I parked my car and went inside. Me: "B, how are you?" Bianca: "Oh my God Spho! Hi!" Me: "Hi." Bianca: "Did you not just have a baby a month ago? How is this possible?" Me: "Bianca. Stop. I'll email you my meal plan, is Lakhe in his office?" Bianca: "Yes." her attitude changed to cold. Bianca: "he's in there. Do you want me to get him?" Me: "No, I'll manage. Thanks B." I made my way to the office. Bianca: "Don't forget to email me." she yelled behind me. The door in his office was slightly open and I could hear him talking inside. Instead of wanting to make a noise I poked my head in to let him know I've arrived and will wait in the boardroom for him. Lakhe: "I know what I said and I promise I'll make it up to you. I'm just busy with this divorce thing. Hopefully it'll be over in no time because I'm not

in the mood to fight about my money no one helped me gain." the girl that I walked in sitting on the opposite chair a few weeks ago was now sitting on his lap. She kissed his cheek. I stepped out before they saw me and went to the boardroom. So he's moved on. Good. After a few minutes, Bianca walked in. B: "Oh there you are, I thought You'd left." Me: "he's busy." B: "Want some water?" Me: "No." B: "Cool, here's his lawyer." she walked out and Dumi wheeled himself in. My lawyer followed behind him and Lakhe too. I had a pen in my hand. Dumi couldn't even look me in the eye. Jessica(My lawyer) greeted me and introduced herself. Me: "Where are the papers." Dumi: "Uhm, Spho. There's a contract-" Me: "I don't want a contract. I want the divorce papers." Jess: "Just a second... Spho, we're here to divide everyth-" Me: "I don't want anything." I took the paper and read through it. Dumi: "Spho, we're trying to be reasonable here." Me: "Dumisani Jolobe. Ndithe Andifuni Mali ka Masilakhe iKhaya Killian Sobukwe. Is that clear enough for you? I want absolutely nothing. If I sign this, how long will the process take to be officially divorced?" Jess: "What are you doing!!" I signed the papers. Me: "Everything I came into this marriage with, I will leave with. I didn't contribute to the money You've made ne. Keep it. And you don't dare use my intellectual property either, any idea I implemented on this company, is off limits. You can build your own." I handed him the papers. Lakhe: "Is this about Onika?" Me: "Jessica, please draw up the custody agreement. I'll give you a call later." I took my bag and walked out. When I got in my car, all I could hear was a rubble and roar of thunder. I sat there and tried to calm down eventually seeing straight and starting the car. I had a big day tomorrow and I needed to stay in focus. Everything else had to fall behind. I reversed and drove off. Clearly not feeling the speed of my Range Rover SVR. It was just flying off the road at dangerous levels. I was thinking of my project. My first meeting tomorrow was at 2pm with The Oracle and I was not nervous at all. The only thing making me nervous was today I was officially done with strength training and I had to start learning how to block spirit. This was dangerous for Komander himself but he had to do it per his mother's instruction. Hopefully nothing bad will happen. My training was not demon centered. It was mostly for strength and defining. You can't go and fight evil beings with chatting. I really hope I don't hurt him, but at least Babalo, Siyanda and Kompany would be there. Speaking of which, Babalo's graduation was this Friday where he would get a new name unfortunately I was not allowed because I'm still in training. The robots closer to me turned from green to orange and then red. I had to hit my brakes because I would need another 5 seconds to get there. I stopped and waited for green again, then sped off once free. I heard a loud hoot coming from my right side and a crash that sent my car spinning to a halt. What the fuck was that? I tried my door and it was locked, all I could

sense was smoke and fire. I kicked the windscreen repeatedly and crawled out, walking away from the car. What the hell hit my car maan? A total of six other cars stopped but nobody came forward. I just stared at my piece of metal bursting to flames. Something was clearly trying to kill me.....

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I sat a few meters away from the scene. I was just defeated. My car was burnt, luckily not the whole of it. I could retrieve my handbag only that was in the boot. Everything inside the actual car was gone. After police statements and an ambulance arriving checking me even after I said I was fine 30 times, Siyanda arrived. He came straight to me. Siya: "Spho, are you okay?" I stood up and he hugged me. Me: "How did you know?" Siya: "Your insurance got an alert, and your dad is the second person on your emergency contact. Since he's unable to drive yet and your mom taking care of Lam, he sent me." Me: "Oh." I pulled away. Me: "Someone is trying to kill me." Siya: "It's your grandfather." Me: "Take me to him." Siya: "What!! No. Absolutely not! You're only halfway in your training you're not strong enough yet." Me: "So I should just be dodging death everyday of my life?" Siya: "Yes, but that's what the strength training was for. You wouldn't have been able to get out that car before but you did." Me: "I don't know if I can do this Siyanda." Siya: "You can and you will. Let's get you out of here." they towed my car and we left with his. I asked him to drop me at home to rest. Siya: "I'll take care of the insurance company on your behalf. Is that okay?" Me: "Yeah." I walked in the house. Khaya: "Spho! What happened?" Me: "Tata I don't know, something hit my car and seemingly it was just air because there's no animal or any other car that hit me." Zama: "Did you go to the hospital?" Me: "No I'm okay-" Khaya: "You didn't even get an x ray, what if you have internal injuries or an aneurysm. Siyanda how could you be so irresponsible!!!" Siya: "She insisted she was fin-" Khaya: "I don't care!!! You are a doctor!! You insist!!! Do I have to do everything myself!!!" he grabbed his keys. Khaya: "Little lady, march!" I've never seen him so angry. Siya: "Tata, I can take her-" Khaya: "You had one job but here you are. Move out my way Dr Kusile." I did not even want to argue with him, all I did was walk to the car. Siya: "At least let me drive." Khaya: "You stay exactly where you are. I'll be sure to file this misdemeanor in." Zama: "Haibo Khaya. That's a little extreme." Khaya: "Extreme is him putting Spho in grave danger right after an accident! He knows she has to train a new program tonight, how the hell will she do that now? What would happen if she suddenly drops dead in the midst of it all? If you're ready to lose a child, I need you to know I'm not." he walked out the house to the car. Me: "daddy

let me drive." Khaya: "You will sit there." he started the car and drove. He was a little slower than usual. I kept quiet and closed my eyes trying not to think. Khaya: "Don't sleep. Do not give in Spho, I don't want you to fall into a coma. Try and stay awake." Me: "I'm fine tata-" Khaya: "You may have a concussion." Me: "Dad. Chill." Khaya: "I can't lose you Spho. Not after this whole Lakhe thing. I wish I could have been there for you both. Maybe if I was around, I'd been able to talk to him and make him more comfortable." Me: "Maybe yeah. But tata don't blame yourself for what happened. You were being selfless, protecting someone important, you did it for me. That is enough." Khaya: "I was actually a coward. Avoiding your disappointment, trying to protect him. He is like my brother. I wish I could say I love him but I just don't feel. Not for anyone. Except you. You're the only one that makes my heart stop. When they called me and told me you were in an accident, I panicked." Me: "I'm sorry. Ndiright tata. Even the doctors will tell you." we stopped at the hospital and he took me in straight to his work station. Me: "uhm...dad." Khaya: "I'm going to change, I'll be back just now." Me: "No tata. I am not letting you do this. Get me another doctor." Khaya: "I can cope." Me: "I said No." Khaya: "Fine." he went to fetch me another doctor and walked closely behind him watching his every move. Me: "dad." I hissed. Khaya: "Okay!" he stood back finally.

It was almost an hour later when Sandile came in the hospital room. Sands: "Spho." I looked up at him. Me: "Hey you." he sat on the bed holding my hand. I saw the saddest look in his eyes. Me: "I'm fine, I promise. The doctor will discharge me in a few." Sands: "I saw the car. Its a write off. I almost lost you." Me: "Sandile, relax. Its not that easy to get rid of me." he sighed, looking at the floor. Sands: "What do you need?" Me: "I need you to be okay. I need you to know I'm still your sister, I always will be. And I need you to talk to your brother again. I don't want to be the person that tore you two apart. You were fine before me, you will be fine after. Don't worry about me. I am fine." Sands: "No, you're not." I was holding back tears. I really wasn't. I really missed Lakhe. I missed seeing his smile, even his frown. I missed watching him sleep, making him food and watching him eat it. I missed our chats and spontaneous disappearing. I miss talking to him about business. Every single thing about him even his smell. Sands: "I'm here for you. I will always have your back, no matter what." Me: "thank you." Sands: "Don't ever scare me like this Spho. Please." Me: "I won't." the doctors walked in. Khaya: "Time to go home Spho. We're done." Sands: "Molo tata." Khaya: "Sandile." he helped me out the bed. Sands: "Tata, may I please talk to you?" Khaya: "and what makes you think I want to talk to you?" Sands: "What I did to you is unforgivable. I am

really sorry. It was never my intention to hurt or try to kill you." Khaya: "That makes it a lot better and seemingly gives me back the time I wasted lying in a coma because it was not your intention. What was your intention anyway?" Sands: "I was angry. Not thinking straight. I wanted to hurt him, for letting Spho live through that pain." Khaya: "and what gave you the authority to think you can do such things?" Sands: "Nobody sir but when you love someone-" Khaya: "You're not going to be the one to tell me about love. You and your apology better stay away from me because I will not be liable for my actions if I catch-" Kom: "Leave the child alone. He said he is sorry and you will forgive him." he stood by the door with his hands in his pockets. The room was dead silent and icy. Khaya: "I forgive you." Kom: "Sandile, stay away from Komodity." Sands: "Yes sir." Kom: "We'll wait in the car." He and Khaya walked out. Me: "You okay?" Sands: "I'm fine. No one can intimidate me that easy well except for your real dad. Yeah he scares me to the shits. I didn't even hear him approach, you just hear his voice and you're like ahhhhhh." I laughed. Me: "he must probably like you." Sands: "No, he just tolerates me. I'm annoyingly loud and sometimes demons like to laugh too." Me: "masambe wethu. My demon comedian." Sands: "heee, do you think if I got initiated, my name would be Komedian? Ask him for me!" Me: "That's not happening. You're going nowhere near initiation. You're fine like this. And besides, you don't choose your own name." Sands: "Are you jealous?" Me: "why do I need to be jealous?" Sands: "I don't know maybe because I'd have the coolest name in the camp." Me: "Okay, you're not doing this. Do you understand?" Sands: "Fine!" we walked out. Sands: "but promise to call me Komedian from now on." Me: "Fine, Komedian." Sands: "Sounds like butter, don't it? Nice and smooth." I looked at him and laughed. He was actually serious. Sands: "How's my little Kyalami?" Me: "He's perfect. 5 weeks now." Sands: "I want to see him, but I'm told to stay away from your dad." he whispered. Which is good(that he whispered and didn't call the name) because their hearing is incredible. Me: "I'll bring him over to your place. You'll chill with him for about an hour then I'll take him to his dad for the rest of the day. Unless you can work something out for the three of you together." Sands: "No, this would be fine. Anyway, I told you my whole apartment is baby proof right? He has his own nursery too. He's gonna love it." Me: "I don't think he can understand." Sands: "Of course he can. He's a Sobukwe. I can't wait. You'll bring him tomorrow right?" Me: "Yes I will." he hugged me. Sands: "I'll call you later?" Me: "Okay Sands. Thank you for visiting." Sands: "It was a pleasure." we separated, me going to my dad, him going to his car. Both my dads were driving. Well, Komander was always driven by Kompany. But nonetheless, two cars. I went to Khaya's. Me: "Ready to go, dad." Khaya: "You'll have to ride in the other car. Sir wants to speak to you." Me: "Can't we do that at home?" Khaya: "No.

Now." God. I hopped off and went to the Audi, climbing in. Kompany drove off immediately. Kom: "You've got two broken ribs." Me: "No I don't." Kom: "Of course you're not going to feel it now. Only later." Me: "but I didn't bump into anything." Kom: "The purpose wasn't the accident itself, that was a disguise. The purpose was to kill you." Me: "I understand that." Kom: "We have to take a break and wait till you heal properly then resume. I don't want to risk your health." Me: "Isn't that going to set me back in terms of strength?" Kom: "Yes, you'll have to go through another stretch of physical." Dear God no!!!! Yeses that pissed me the hell off. If only they knew how painful that shit is but they don't. My flesh had literally torn and bled throughout those sessions. My insides had dried and only started recently again to work properly. If I didn't hate that grandfather thing before, I sure as hell loathed him right now. I just wanted to gauge his eyes out their sockets and feed them back to him. He's a fucking menace. Kom: "You know I can go through all of your thoughts right?" I didn't respond. I just needed one hug. To be held and told it'll be okay and over soon. But Lakhe obviously won't hear it. I just needed to look ahead and march forth. Kom: "Sphosam." Me: "Please don't." Kom: "Don't do this." Me: "My mind is tired okay? My heart, my soul, everything! I'm just tired and drained. I can't do this. I am just not the one. Maybe Babalo can do it. He's strong. He's a man. I'm just done. I want no part of this anymore." Kom: "Is this because of Lakhe? You want his support?" Me: "Please let Lakhe be." Kom: "He's beginning to cost me now, why must I leave him alone?" Me: "He didn't do anything wrong. He is entitled to his own beliefs." Kom: "When he got married, he made the decision to stick by you and if that broken promise starts to negatively affect you then he has to pay for it." Me: "Are you listening to yourself?" Kom: "You need to make your pick. You continue your training alone and confidently, or I'll drag him back here and he'll complete it with you." Me: "Are you threatening me?" Kom: "Yes. If you want to protect your so called ex husband, you'll be back in training in two days. Heal your body for now. I wouldn't hate to make an example out of him." my heart ached badly just at the thought of what he would do. The car stopped in front of my house. Me: "You are supposed to be my father." Kom: "I told you Khaya is your father. I do not have those elements. You know exactly what's at stake here." I got out the car and inside the house. I was so hurt I could barely think. Lam was fast asleep in his cot next to my bed. I crawled into my covers and blocked all my thoughts out. If only I could just disappear.....

I was awake the next day feeling the same pain in my heart. I took my phone and made a call. Lakhe: "Hello?" he answered. Me: "Hi. Unjani?" Lakhe: "I'm great. You? Hey, I got a few missed calls from the insurance company

yesterday but I was really busy. Is everything okay by your side?" Wow, and he didn't call back? Me: "I was in an accident." Lakhe: "Oh? I'm sorry. You okay?" Me: "I'm fine. Car written off though." Lakhe: "Shit. Its not even two months since you got it. Sorry man." Me: "Uhm, I'm taking Lam to see Sandile today, only for about an hour. Would you like to spend the rest of the day with him?" Lakhe: "Of course. I'd love that. I'll clear my diary. At about what time will Sandile be done? I can pick Lam up from there. I don't want you stressed after this accident." Me: "I'll ask him." Lakhe: "Okay, get back to me. I'll be here at home today. Also, Chris has a parent meeting today. Will you be able to attend?" Me: "Yes. You'll send me the time." Lakhe: "Perfect." Me: "Okay, goodbye." Lakhe: "cool." I hung up. I didn't have much to do except rest as I was told. I got out the bed to fetch Lam in his cot also starting to wake. Me: "Hi baby." I picked him up. Me: "Who made a poopoo? Is it you honey?" I sniffed. Me: "euuww." he smiled. Me: "That's really nasty babe. Let's get you washed up. You know you're seeing uncle and daddy today? You're about to be pampered like a king. Are you excited? Of course you can't even hear me." I kissed his cheek going out to the bathroom. Mama was already mixing his bath water. Me: "hello mama. Unjani?" Mama: "I'm fine angel, how are you?" Me: "I'm okay." Mama: "I'll be done in a few. Should I put this tub in your bedroom?" Me: "Yes mama." I walked out to the kitchen. My dad was mixing something in a bowl. Porridge. Me: "Hello tata. How are you?" Khaya: "I'm fine. Baby's porridge is ready." Me: "Thanks." Khaya: "Did you say hi to sir?" I rolled my eyes. Khaya: "Don't do that. Go in there. Go." I pushed my body to go to the lounge. Me: "Morning sir." Kom: "Don't be silly. I'm not sir to you. How are you?" Me: "I'm okay thanks. You?" Kom: "As usual. I brought Kompany here to drive you anywhere you need to go." Me: "Pardon?" Kom: "I didn't stutter." I closed my mouth before I said something. Kom: "Can I hold him?" Me: "Who? Kompany?" Kom: "Sarcasm?" Me: "No." Kom: "Can I hold Khayalam?" Me: "So you can hold my son but can't hold me? Not happening." Kom: "It is impossible for me to hurt or affect Lam in anyway. Its actually the opposite." Me: "So you'd risk getting hurt, just to hold him?" Kom: "Yes." Me: "Well, he made a poopoo now so maybe after he's washed up." Kom: "baby poopoo isn't real poopoo. I can handle it." Me: "I can't let that happen. Imagine 18 years from now when you're giving a speech on his birthday and you mention that the first time you held him, he had made poopoo? You know how embarrassing that is? My son will never forgive me for not washing him first." Kom: "Really? You've thought that far in less than a second?" Me: "Yes. He'll be back in 30 minutes." I went to the bedroom to wash my baby. He would wear his white Balmain onesie today. Me: "Your grandparents are just extra. You know they bought you designer everything? An entire set of Baby Gucci, Balmain onesie and a Louis Vuitton

blanket." after his bath, I got him dressed. He smelt so good. Why is it that babies smell this amazing? Me: "My goodness. Now I can't let go of you." I kissed him. Time to eat. Mama brought his porridge, which of course he hated with a clear passion. After two small spoons, he just refused to take anymore. I had to give him the breast checking his diary. He had doctor's appointment this week. Today was Uncle and later on daddy. Me: "You're fully booked, pumpkin. Tomorrow, your grandparents are visiting. Look at you, Mr CEO." I closed the diary and burped him once he was done. After wiping his mouth and making sure he looked beautiful I took him to the lounge. Me: "Here you go." I gave him to Komander. His hands were shaking. Me: "You're sure you can manage?" Kom: "Yes." he held Lam mid air and just stared at him. Me: "bring him closer. He doesn't bite. Yet." he put him on his chest. Lam found this exact opportunity to burp a little vomit directly onto his grandfather then smiled. Komander stared at the white goo on his clothing. Me: "Blessings." Kom: "Its not funny." I left them in the lounge with my parents and went to bath. When last did I wear my apple bottom jeans? I was so ready. At least the training did a lot to tone and firm my body back to its shape before. I wore a white body suit and my jeans that made my butt pop. I thought it was kind of funny for a second. White sneakers or flurry slides? I took my all white Stan Smith. Brushed my weave back and put on a black cap. I packed Lam's baby bag with extra onesies. Warm and cool. Vests. Diapers. His travel toiletry bag. (Gucci, grandparents.) and a lot of things he'd need. I took my handbag and his bag out to the lounge. Lam was sitting on Khaya's lap relaxing. Komander did not look happy at all. Me: "Is everyone okay?" Zama: "He threw up on his grandfather twice." I looked at Komander. Me: "You do know its blessings right?" Kom: "I smell like him. I have to walk around all day, smelling like him." Me: "Well...we have to go. I'm sorry." he had two throw up stains on his jersey. Khaya: "You'll be taking my car. Kompany will drive." Me: "Okay dad. Let's go little Lammy." I picked him up. Kom: "Where you going?" Me: "To Sandile then Lakhe after." Kom: "Oh..." he grinned. Me: "Why are you doing that with your face?" Kom: "Doing what?" he had a weird look which I couldn't really put my finger on. His hands were folded on his lap. Me: "What's wrong?" Khaya: "Nothing. Its time for you to go Spho." now I was confused. Did Lam do that to his hands? Me: "Okay." I stepped out the house, covered Lam with his blanket and into the car. Kompany greeted and drove. Me: "Kompany, can I ask you something?" Kompany: "Yes maam." I can never get used to his grouchy voice. Me: "Does sir get physically hurt by touching the baby?" Kompany kept quiet. Me: "This conversation will not leave the car." followed by more silence. Kompany: "The baby is pure light. Nothing evil can harm him but he can weaken anything. So yes, the baby physically breaks him." Me: "Then why does he insist on holding him if he

knows that?" Kompany: "He loves the baby more than he loves himself. He would rather sacrifice his power just to feel his touch." Just when I thought Komander couldn't feel love. Me: "Is there anyway we could work around this?" Kompany: "Unfortunately not. This is the way it should be. As the baby grows, his energy and his purity will enhance. Eventually wearing down on his black bloodline, completely destroying it. The black bloodline is the evil ones." Me: "Including Komander." Kompany: "Yes maam." he never told me this. He never said that the baby would kill him too! I was quiet the rest of the way to Sandile's apartment.

Upon arrival, Sandile came to fetch us from the door and into the place. He really did baby proof. It looked so cute. Sands: "Grab a juice. How you doing?" he took Lam from me. Me: "I'm fine." I took juice from the fridge Sands: "Okaaay. That does not sound fine. Hi Titty man." Me: "Its just the family stuff. How is your girlfriend?" Sands: "She's great. I can't wait till you meet her." Me: "I'll be going to her dad's company for a meeting today. But you must set up something." Sands: "I will. Anyway, I was speaking to Gerard yesterday and he wants us to host a few events during the year at the hotel. Like a masquerade party, a boxing match, and and and. I told him I'd speak to you about it." Me: "That would be great. Its something I'm definitely interested in." Sands: "The hotel is picking up real great and there's one more thing I want to ask you." Me: "What?" Sands: "I want you to be my partner." Me: "What?!" Sands: "We'd be great together Spho. Look at how we did the Private Opera show? Imagine more of those. I've got a contract ready that you can go through." Me: "I don't have money to buy shares Sandile." Sands: "What are you talking about? You're a millionaire." Me: "No, I'm not a millionaire." Sands: "Well, you divorced Lakhe, so you getting half of him. That gives you about R150 million odd and that's just the money. There's the estates, the company shares. Child, if you weren't my sister, I would marry you today at home affairs." Me: "I didn't take his money. Nothing of his." Sands: "Why on Satan's land would you do that?" Me: "He's moved on and I heard him telling his girlfriend that he didn't want to fight about money no one helped him earn. Besides, I never loved Lakhe for his money. I always did my own thing. Bought my own car with my own savings, which by the way have dried out. I've always done everything myself that's what my parents taught me. I'm going to do it again." Sands: "I'm proud of you Spho. Not a lot people would give up that amount of money so easy. I guess you and I are the same. Money really doesn't mean anything if you have love." Lam was fast asleep in his arms. Sands: "and then? Hayi fondin suzohlola apha. Vuka." Me: "Khayeke umntana alale." Sands: "Sooo... Boyfriend?" Me: "Huh?" Sands: "Since he's moved on.

Will you be getting one too?" Me: "No. Between Lam, the training, trying to keep alive and not going into bankruptcy, I really don't have time." Sands: "Siyanda has always liked you. He's a doctor, he's part of your fam culture, he'll keep you alive and he has a lot of guapandale." Me: "What is guapandale?" Sands: "Money. Every one who works for Komander makes a shit load of money. He's technically half Lakhe's worth." Me: "How the hell did you find that out?" Sands: "I find everything out. Its my job." Me: "His financial records? Sandile that's illegal." Sands: "It would be illegal if I wanted to use them." Me: "but I don't want Siyanda." I wanted Lakhe. Sands: "I know you don't, but it would drive Lakhe batshit crazy." Me: "I know. I just don't have the energy for it all." Sands: "As long as you promise to not shut yourself out from relationships. No man deserves that kind of power not even my brother." my phone rang. Me: "Speak of the devil." Sands: "Urgg..." Me: "hello?" Lakhe: "Hi, I'm still waiting." Me: "Silapha kuSandile we'll be at your place in an hour." Lakhe: "Oh." Me: "Yeah." Lakhe: "Guess I'll see you then." Me: "Sure." I hung up. Me: "anyway. Tell me how you met my superhero." Sands: "Who's that?" Me: "Anyone that can make you fall inlove and be a boyfriend is officially my superhero." he laughed. Sands: "Her name is Liz and she came to the event that night. With her dad though." Me: "Wait....Mel Thomas was at our event?" Sands: "Yep. Anyway, we got in contact few weeks later and had lunch. I like her." Me: "I'm happy for you Sandile. I really am." a message came through my phone. Lakhe: "I'll need Lam's schedule when you come" But that is obvious nje. Sands: "Come see Lammy's nursery." we walked to the little room. One wall was covered in Burberry wrapping paper. Something I've never seen in my life. Sands: "I wanted white LV but it would take a while. So I'll change it in 6 months." Me: "this is beautiful Sandile." there was a big rocking chair and a Burberry fleece on it. His cot had a changing station attached to it and drawers as well to store his diapers and clothes. Sands: "Incredible right?" Me: "Thank you." I hugged him. In the corner were a few boxes of wrapped presents. Sands: "So I went a little crazy. He'll open those when he turns 1." Me: "Yeah that sounds crazy." another message came through: "Are you done? When are you coming?" You cannot be serious. Me: "No, I told you." I responded. I couldn't even focus because every two minutes he sent a message until my battery actually died. ***** After over an hour, I said goodbye to Sands and made our way to the car downstairs. Kompany drove us to Lakhe's house who happened to be waiting outside. I took the baby and bag in. Me: "What's going on?" Lakhe: "Nothing. I'm just gardening." When has he ever done gardening? He hates gardening. Typical example when I picked those white roses. Me: "Okay." I gave him the baby once we entered the house. The milk I'd pumped earlier today, I packed in the fridge. I put the baby's porridge on the counter and all his other favorite things. The

rest were clothes and diapers which needed the bedroom. I turned around and found Lakhe standing behind me staring at me. Me: "What's going on with you today Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "Nothing. I just wanted to know how to make the porridge. I thought you were making it." Me: "So you're gonna sneak behind my back?" Lakhe: "Can't sneak in my own house." Me: "the instructions are in Lam's journal. Literally everything about him is in there." Lakhe: "I've decorated his nursery." Me: "Really? That's good." Lakhe: "Come see." I followed him down the passage. The door was Blue with white blocks hanging on it written King Lam. My heart fluttered. He opened the door and we walked inside. The walls were pure white even the carpet on the floor. Lakhe: "Leave your shoes at the door." Fancy. His bed in the middle, looking like a large white nest with a big soft flurry pillow. Lakhe: "I just need to bring in his toys and chest of drawers. Look up." he closed the windows and it was darker now. The ceiling was magnificent. It was the midnight sky with sparkling stars and in the corner a short bolt of thunder. Me: "You did this?" Lakhe: "Well, I designed it. The company I hired put it together. I wanted him to feel more at home when he's here." he put the baby down in his little bed. Me: "This is beautiful Lakhe. Thank you." Lakhe: "Anything for Lakhelam." Me: "I guess you have everything under control, let me get going." Lakhe: "Already?" Me: "The whole reason I'm here is to give you the baby to spend time with him." Lakhe: "Yeah. You're right. I just thought maybe since he's asleep you could get me up to speed." Me: "Everything is in his journal. Literally everything. Even the lyrics to his lullaby." Lakhe: "Oh. That's cool then." Me: "Is there something you needed?" in my heart I really wish he said me. Asked me to stay. And just spend time together. Lakhe: "How are you? After the accident. What happened?" my heart sank. If I told him grandfather was trying to kill me, it would repel him all over again. Me: "I don't know, I just hit a curve and the car spun around then burnt up." Lakhe: "Then why is it a write off?" Me: "They're exaggerating, its not that bad." Lakhe: "I saw the pictures." Me: "Of course you did. Can we not talk about this?" Lakhe: "Okay." I took my handbag and gave him Lam's journal. Lakhe: "You gonna kiss him goodbye?" Me: "He hates that. He's a very light sleeper. Just one peck will send him into a breakdown. Just as dramatic as you." he laughed. Lakhe: "I'm not that bad." Me: "Excuse me? You scream when someone so much as breathes while you're sleeping." Lakhe: "That's because you don't just breath. You start a full on conversation by yourself!" Me: "What must I do when I'm bored?" Lakhe: "You realize I walk around like a ninja when you're sleeping?" Me: "Ubuthanda nawe." Lakhe: "Now who's being dramatic?" I smiled. Me: "I have a meeting I need to get to. I'll see you later? Should I fetch Chris from aftercare?" Lakhe: "Yes please. They're gonna sleep here today right?" Me: "we haven't discussed that." Lakhe: "I'm asking." Me: "Fine. They can sleep here, but you'll

need to keep a very close eye on Lam." Lakhe: "You're not gonna do it?" Me: "How can I do that from home?" Lakhe: "You're right." Me: "goodbye then." Lakhe: "Spho?" Me: "Yes?" Lakhe: "I haven't broken our vows. I haven't slept with her." Me: "What are you waiting for? My permission?" Lakhe: "No. I said I'd never cheat on you, and I won't." Me: "If you're in a relationship, its cheating actually. Doesn't need to be sexual." Lakhe: "Its not a relationship. I was lonely and needed someone to talk to and that's it." Me: "That's nice. I'll see you later." Lakhe: "and you?" Me: "what about me?" Lakhe: "I know you and Sandile are together." I laughed until I almost fell. I couldn't breath. Are you serious? Lakhe: "Why is it so funny? I heard he's in a relationship, and he did say he might marry you since I'm failing and You've been spending a lot of time together. I just need to know was this happening in my house while you were pregnant with my child?" Me: "Lakhe, stop. Seriously." Lakhe: "I am being serious." Me: "Is that why you were bombing me with messages and staring at me this whole time." Lakhe: "no." he looked away. Me: "I have to go. I don't wanna be late." I laughed all the way outside to the car. Me: "Oh Kompany. We can go." Kompany: "Not until you eat." he gave me a lunch box. Me: "My father gave you this?" Kompany: "Yes maam." Me: "I'll eat it inside the house." I got back out and knocked on Lakhe's door again. He opened. Me: "Hi again. I need to have my lunch, is it okay if I sit?" he moved out the doorway and I stepped in. Eventually settling down for my lunch and eating. He just stared at me. Me: "I'm not dating Sandile!" Lakhe: "Then who are you dating?" Me: "No one." Lakhe: "I don't believe you. Look at you. You barely ate when we were together. Now You've got pre-packed meals. Your stomach has flipped back to its place and your thighs... You look better than when we were first started dating. Who is he?" Me: "Thank you." I finished eating. Lakhe: "Siyanda right? My God, that snake. He was literally waiting like a scorpion. He makes you meals and takes you to the gym? Does he make you happy?" Me: "You're acting crazy." Lakhe: "You said to me You'd never go for him." Me: "How many times must I tell you I'm not seeing anyone? I only saw Siyanda yesterday when he got to the accident scene. Never again. Why are you acting so crazy?" Lakhe: "So no one?" Me: "mxim." Lakhe: "Spho, I won't be mad if you're dating someone. You're allowed to move on. We're divorced." Me: "When I'm ready, I will come tell you that I'm ready. Maybe then you can pick me a man. How about that?" he frowned. Me: "You just said you wouldn't be mad." Lakhe: "I'm not mad." Me: "Then what's with your face." I stood up and faced him. I was done with my food. He stared at my breasts. Me: "Masilakhe." he swallowed and looked away. Lakhe: "your milk is coming out." I looked at my top and saw the wet stains on my nipples. Me: "Great. I didn't even bring an extra top." he looked again. Me: "You wanna kiss them don't you?" Lakhe: "Leave me alone." he folded his arms. Me: "Then stop

looking." I took a paper towel and patted my nipples. He was still staring at me. Me: "You've got a bit of a....." I pointed at his pants. Lakhe: "You're doing this on purpose." Me: "Let me leave." he held my arm. Lakhe: "No-" a loud knock banged on the door. I know for a fact that wouldn't be Kompany. Lakhe: "Who are you?" the door opened and in walked his girlfriend. I hate to admit this girl was super gorgeous. I pulled away my hand. Onika: "What's going on here?" Lakhe: "What authority do you have walking into my house?" Onika: "I am asking the questions here. Baby mama, what is your purpose here without the child?" Lakhe: "Onika." Onika: "I have been trying to call you all day Lakhe! But you're sitting here with Miss big wet titties, your ex!" I laughed. I'm Miss big wet titties? I loved that name to be honest. Lakhe: "Onika." Onika: "No Masilakhe. You'll never find me in my ex's house with him for any reason. Why would you do something like that?" Me: "Yeah. Why Masilakhe?" he looked at me, clearly irritated by my amusement. Onika: "Excuse me, I'm not talking to you." Me: "You're right. How rude of me. Anyway, baby thank you for today. I really enjoyed it. See you later?" I blew him a kiss and walked out. The minute I got into the car. I heard yelling. Kompany: "Is everything okay ma'am?" Me: "Oh Yes. Everything is perfect. Let's leave before Lam wakes up because he's about to cause a hideous storm. This lady has officially angered the heavens." Kompany: "Is that safe?" Me: "For everyone but her." he started the car and drove.

#150

I was changed and ready for my meeting. This time I had breast pads to stop my leaks before time and even before I put them on, I pumped some milk and stored it in the fridge. I didn't need to start leaking in the middle of my presentation. I went to the car with my laptop bag and purse. Kompany drove me to the Oracle building. I was a bit nervous, so I kept rehearsing. Kompany: "You'll be fine ma'am." Me: "Thank you Kompany." I turned the page and read one more time then closed my file. Everything that happens, happens. Me: "Kompany do you ever eat." I heard a grunt. Or was it a chuckle? Kompany: "No." Me: "Okay." I needed to keep my mind occupied really and the only way was a conversation with him. Me: "Do you think grandfather could harm Lam?" Kompany: "Everyone knows he can't. Its you he wants. You are Lam's source of life, if you're dead, the boy won't grow up to his destiny. Therefore won't be a threat." As long as Lam was safe. I just had to get this out my mind now. Me: "What do you do on your day off?" Kompany: "I collect souls." Me: "Oh my." This conversation was not going the way I thought." Kompany: "I do a bit of garden work also." Me: "Let me guess,

you plant the souls there." Kompany: "That's hilarious but no. I plant flowers."
Me: "Really? Which are your favorite?" Kompany: "Lilies." Me: "Oh... That's a really nice flower." Kompany: "It is." Me: "You have your own house or?"
Kompany: "No. I live with Sir. He lets me plant in his back yard. I'll show you."
he parked the car. Me: "Thank you Kompany." I got out the car and walked into the building. At reception, I signed in and a lady walked me up to the boardroom. I was really hoping for an audience. Many minds have different opinions and if I can at least spark an interest in two, I'd have gotten through. Mr Thomas walked in the room. He was a short plump man with a sweaty forehead. His spectacles sat on the tip of his nose and his large gut led the way. He looked like an orange with limbs in an oversized suit. Lol. Me: "Good morning Mr Thomas." I shook his hand. Me: "My name is Sphosenkosi Sobukwe-"
Thomas: "I know who you are. I want to know why you're here." Me: "Alright. I thought your directors would be joining us." Thomas: "Do you think you deserve directors on your first meeting? Does your husband know you're here?" Me: "My husband isn't part of my work." Okay so this guy was rude. I stood in front with my head held high and started my Powerpoint presentation. Halfway through he asked a dozen of questions throwing me completely off. It took all of me to continue again. Thomas: "Spho, is it? Listen. You have a great vision but this does not look like its going to make me money soon. It takes too much resources and too much time. Both of which I don't have. Sorry but we're done here." he got up. Me: "I'm not even done."
Thomas: "Yes you are. I have another meeting in 5 minutes. Look, I've been in this business for over 25 years. I know what works and this won't be it. You're great at your job, just not this one. Rosetta will show you out." he walked out. I packed my laptop and file and left. Kompany was still where I left him 15 minutes ago. Yes that's how short it was. I hopped in the car. Kompany: "Where to?" Me: "Day care." he started the car and drove. Kompany: "I take it didn't go well?" Me: "No. It didn't. He was so rude and barely even listening to me." Kompany: "You want me to do something?" Me: "No Kompany, its okay. I'll find something." I sunk in the backseat and looked at the road. Me: "How is Sibuh? I haven't seen him in weeks." Kompany: "Your brother is still in safety. Until your father says its okay. He's in training too just far away from your grandfather." That thing is not my grandfather. Once we got to Chris' school I went in to fetch him. Stacy reminded me of the parents meeting later today and stressed it in capital letters that both parents must be there. I took Chris to the car and drove around for ice cream. I was really hurt but I had to keep it in me for Chris' sake. Chris: "Mama, taste my vanilla ice cream." I tasted his ice cream. Chris: "now let me taste yours." Me: "are you trying to trick me?" he licked my ice cream. Chris: "I didn't taste it properly." he licked it again. Chris: "Are you sure you like it?" Me: "Of course I like it." Chris: "I saw your eyes dance

when you licked mine so you can have it. I'll take yours." I laughed. Christian though. Me: "Why didn't you just say you wanted Strawberry?" Chris: "Because I don't. I'm just saving you." Kompany parked in front of Lakhe's house. Chris: "You'll share that one with daddy. Come." we got off the car walking to the house. Chris: "Tata!!" he opened the door. Onika: "Hi Chris." Chris: "what do you waaaaannt." he whined. Onika: "I made you a healthy snack, would you like some?" Chris: "When you look at me, do I seem like a want a healthy snack? Maybe there's a vegetable dancing on my forehead." Me: "Christian, hayi." he walked to the bedroom. This was awkward. For about five minutes. I stood there eating ice cream. Lakhe: "you're back. I just put Lam down." Me: "Stacy was literally hounding me about the parent meeting. Both parents need to be there." Onika scoffed. Lakhe: "Okay. No problem. We leave together or...?" Me: "Its in three hours." Lakhe: "Oh yes. I'll come pick you up." Me: "No, I have a driver." Lakhe: "Is everything okay? You look.....off." Me: "You know Mel Thomas?" Lakhe: "Yep. Good friend of mine. We play golf when I'm in joburg." Me: "That's nice. Is that why he shut down my presentation? Because you told him to?" Lakhe: "I didn't but what were you expecting going after my client and friend?" Me: "Do you even know what the project is about?" Lakhe: "Do I have to?" Me: "Okay." I threw the ice cream in the bin. Me: "I'll see you at Chris' school at 5. Christian!" Lakhe: "haibo Spho, are you mad at me now?" Me: "Did you do something to make me mad?" Lakhe: "No!" Me: "Then I'm not mad. But if you did, then I am." Lakhe: "What and what?!" Chris: "Yes mama?" Me: "I'll see you later okay?" Chris: "Do you have to go?" Me: "Yes sweetheart, but I promise I'll tuck you in. I love you." Chris: "I love you too mama." I kissed his cheek. Lakhe: "Spho." Onika: "Lakhe." Me: "What is it?" Lakhe: "I didn't do this." Me: "I heard you. I need to go rest." Onika: "Masilakhe I'm talking to you." Lakhe: "What!!" Me: "Can I see Lam before I leave?" he nodded. Onika: "Why can't you make up your mind?" Lakhe: "Onika this is my family and if you don't like it, Leave." I went to the bedroom and watched over my baby. Me: "You really love your sleep baby. Just like your big brother. I want you to know that I love you my love. God is watching over you. Surrounding you with His angels protecting your every breath. Hopefully I'll come back to you awake and smiling at me to give me an ounce of strength. See you soon pumpkin." I tip toed out the room and down the passage. Mr and the new Mrs Sobz were still at it. Me: "Excuse me. I'm going to say this once. Two children are inside this hous-" Onika: "And who are-" Me: "I'm not done. Those children are mine, one of which is an infant. This ridiculous power struggle happening in your head better come to a standstill and soon. Masilakhe is your man not your child. Nobody is here to steal him. If you have no way to speak or can't seem to shake your anger off, walk out that door unless you want me to make something that will

encourage you. You don't speak with that type of voice around my children. Ever. I hope for your sake, I am crystal clear. You'll find me at the school Masilakhe." I walked out to the car.

My day was spent resting my body and taking a nap. I had one more day before I went back to training and it was going to hit me harder than before. My reasons for living were only limited to two at this point and that was Chris and Lam. If it weren't for them. I really don't know. I got up and dressed for the parents meeting in just an olive green bodycon dress and sandals. Kompany was always waiting outside for me. He drove me to the day care and I found Lakhe in the parking lot waiting with a baby car seat on top of the car and Chris sitting next to it as well. Me: "Hi." I kissed Chris on his cheek. Chris: "No mama. Not here." he wiped it off. Me: "Okay. I'm sorry." Chris: "and also don't call me sweetie and honey." Me: "Alright swe- I mean Chris." Chris: "I'll find you inside." he ran off. I peeped in the covered car seat. Me: "pumpkin, do you still want mommy's kiss? Yes, you do." I took the seat in the school. Lakhe: "Spho." he held my arm. Me: "Now's not the time." Lakhe: "I'm sorry about earlier." Me: "Okay." Lakhe: "I get that you hate me-" Me: "I actually don't. We're going to be late." I walked in the school. After the meeting, I had to go look for Chris who seemingly found it exciting to play in his school playground in the dark. When I looked up, I saw Kompany standing outside the car. Me: "Chris, go to your dad." the boy ran inside. I went to Kompany. Me: "What is it?" Kompany: "I feel his spirit around. All of you have to come with me." Me: "Okay." Shit, how do I tell Lakhe? I went inside the school, pulling him aside. Me: "So we have a problem." Lakhe: "what." Me: "Kompany senses grandfather's spirit around here. He says we have to ride with him." Lakhe: "You are fucking kidding me. There's kids with us!" Me: "I know. I'm sorry." Lakhe: "Are you? Mxim!" I collected Chris and we walked out, Lakhe carrying Lam. Obviously pissed off. So basically this meant I can't go anywhere. I'll just lock myself indoors forever. After getting in the car. Kompany drove us back to Lakhe's house. Kompany: "I will build a wall of salus around here so nothing can get through. Will that be fine with you Mr Lakhe?" he growled. Chris: "What is he saying?" Can't blame Chris, you really wouldn't hear Kompany unless you listen carefully. Me: "He says he's going to protect you." Lakhe: "Its fine." he snapped. We stopped outside the house and took the kids inside. Chris: "Mummy. I'm hungry." Now this was not my house. I can't just start whipping up a storm in the kitchen. That would be really weird. But Lakhe just relaxed in the lounge with Lam on his lap. Chris: "I want chicken." he was staring up at me with his big eyes. Me: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "The child is hungry." So why have attitude? I took out the chicken and

defrosted it. On the side making some stir fry. Chris was still standing leaning on me while I was cooking meaning he was really hungry and probably wanted me to hurry. Me: "Chris don't you want a sandwich." Chris: "my name is sweetie." Me: "but you said you weren't at school." Chris: "at school, not at home. I'm Sweetie at home." Me: "Okay sweetie. Do you want a sandwich?" Chris: "No. I want chicken." Me: "the chicken is gonna take a while." Chris: "I'll wait." shame, my baby probably misses my cooking yazi. Me: "Okay. Tell me about school." Chris: "Stacy has a new boyfriend." Me: "Wow. Really?" Chris: "Yes he comes to school with his tomato face all the time." Lakhe: "his name is Alex and has wet hair." Chris: "See? I told daddy." Me: "What does Alex do at your school?" Chris: "he stares at us obviously. What else can he do, he can't even read." Me: "That's not good. Lakhe, did you speak to Stacy about this? I'm not entirely comfortable with a stranger hanging around the kids doing nothing but staring." Lakhe: "Listen to the whole story." Chris: "So Alex, decided he was going to play in the playground with us but he's too big. I kept saying it but nooooo. Now I had to do something. The last time the jungle jamboree broke, it took two weeks to fix and I'm not having it. That's my favorite place after home. So, I poured glue on the slide and told everyone to stay off it because I've painted it. Everyone except Alex." Lakhe burst into chuckles. Me: "Then what happened." Chris: "I encouraged him, I said, Hey Alex? Do you know how to slide? He said yes. I asked him to show me because I'm scared of falling. He got on there, pssst idiot and I watched him sit. Then, I asked him to explain the process before sliding. Letting the glue settle in. Its quick glue so it needed like a minute. He sat there and stupidly explained to a four year old how to slide down a jungle jamboree. I said okay then I let him be. When he moved, stuck. What's wrong Alex? I thought you're supposed to SLIDE." he had his hands on his hips. I couldn't stop laughing. Chris: "he said he's stuck. I asked, is that how its supposed to be Alex? Are you sure you're not too big for the jungle jamboree for four year olds? He said no. I said okay, then slide." I had tears running down my cheeks. Chris: "he couldn't so he had to get up, which he did but his pants stuck to the glue and tore off. Mr didn't even bother wearing underpants. Everyone was laughing at him running around with a big hole in his bum. So we haven't seen him in three days now. Isn't it amazing?" Lakhe: "its incredible." Chris: "Stacy has had a wig on since Tuesday. I think she cut her hair again. So I gave her a flower and didn't laugh this time. She was upset already." Me: "You think?" Chris: "Yeah. She's always upset these days. You need to talk to her ma. I'm running out of flowers." Me: "I will talk to her baby, I promise." I continued cooking and Chris went to play with Lam. I finished the succulent grilled chicken after 45 minutes with steamed corn on the side. I'd made grated carrot fried with onion and two spices. It was crispy and tasty. Lakhe's favorite. I'd made creamy spinach as

well. Me: "Dinner is ready." I dished up for three and covered mine. I had to feed Lam first before he fell asleep. I gave Lakhe his tray. Lakhe: "Thank you." I gave Chris his as well. Chris: "Thank you mama. Yuh. It smells like heavens." Me: "Close your eyes." they closed. Me: "May the good Lord, Our Father, bless us this evening, bless the food we are eating and the family that we have; protecting it from all disturbances. Amen." "Amen." Chris was already eating with the amen. I took Lam from Lakhe's lap and fed him. Lakhe's phone rang. He increased the volume on TV. It just kept ringing and ringing. After I'd finished with Lam and burped him, I wanted to bath him. Chris was done eating. Chris: "Mama, may I please have another plate?" Me: "Okay baby." I dished him a second and gave to him. Me: "Lakhe, there's some more if you want, I need to bath the baby." Lakhe: "Thank you babe." the baby nursery had its own bath station. That was just too cute to be called a bathroom. I mixed Lam's water and started to bath him, then massaged him with lotion, dressing him as well. He was falling asleep. Lakhe: "hey." Me: "shhh." I put the baby down in his cot, kneeling next to it. He finally drifted off to sleep. Me: "What's up?" Lakhe: "I just want to say thank you for the lovely dinner and helping me with the kids." Me: "They're both our kids so I don't mind." we walked out the nursery. Me: "Sweetie?" Chris appeared from his bathroom buck naked. Chris: "I'm ready." I took him back in and washed him. He was singing his usual duck parade song which I was convinced it was because he was happy. After his bath, I massaged him too and dressed him up warm for bed. Lakhe: "I'll read him the bed time story." he took him from my arms. I went to the kitchen and washed the dishes quick, sweeping the floor and putting everything back in place. Lakhe: "Done." Me: "Yeah. Me too. So I should probably leave." Lakhe: "Spho. This is what I wanted for us. Just a clean, relaxed environment. Raising our kids just overall being happy. Don't you feel how good this is? Without interruptions, especially from demons." Me: "I do, its just that Lakhe, I can't remove my blood from my body. If I could, I promise I'd do it in a heartbeat." Lakhe: "I get it. I just cannot accept it, I'm really sorry." Me: "I guess this is how its supposed to be. We're different people. I don't think I would've been able to accept it either." Lakhe: "You're much stronger than me emotionally." Me: "Maybe I'm not." Lakhe: "So this is it. We're officially divorced?" Me: "Not until the judge says so." Lakhe: "Little more difficult than I assumed. I thought I'd be with you forever." Me: "I feel the same." Lakhe: "Spho, I don't hate you. I need you to know that. I do love you. I just -" Me: "I know. I understand Lakhe. You don't have to worry about that now. This isn't just any ordinary disagreement, this is a lifetime and you're allowed to say no." Lakhe: "Then why is everyone making me feel like I'm an ass?" Me: "Since when do you care about what everyone thinks? You don't share your life with them. Should something happen to you, they won't be

part of it." Lakhe: "Thank you for that. So we can be friends?" Me: "For the kids, yes." Lakhe: "Cool. I'd like that." Me: "I have to go. Its late." Lakhe: "Do you have to go? You just had an accident yesterday, I can't let you drive out now especially that your grandfather is out there lurking." Me: "he's always lurking. Besides, Kompany will drive me." Lakhe: "I have a bottle of your favorite wine here. I think there's two." Me: "I'm breastfeeding." Lakhe: "there's enough pumped milk in the fridge to feed me, Chris and Lam for the next three days." Me: "I don't want to be drunk while my kids are sleeping." Lakhe: "Who said you'd be drunk? Aren't I here?" Me: "tell me the real reason you want to get me drunk." Lakhe: "I don't. You can have juice then. Damn. Plus you haven't eaten your food. Let me warm it." he took the plate to the microwave. Me: "I'm only staying one more hour with one glass of wine." Lakhe: "That's perfect. There's a nice movie starting in 7 minutes." I sat down and waited. He brought the warm plate and glass of wine to me. Lakhe: "here you go." I ate my food watching the movie quietly. Lakhe: "I got it sent in from France. A whole case of it. I'm the only person in the country that has it." Me: "Its really good." Lakhe: "I know." I took another sip and relaxed. He was staring at me again. That seedy look. Me: "What?" Lakhe: "Nothing." I finished my glass of wine. Me: "This is some good wine." Lakhe: "I knew you'd love it. One more?" Me: "For the road." Lakhe: "Got it." he poured for me and himself. Me: "How's the company doing?" Lakhe: "fairly okay. Its been difficult but getting more used to it now." Me: "Onika the new MD?" Lakhe: "Yes." I took another gulp. Lakhe: "tell me about your project." Me: "The one you told Mel Thomas and his ugly belly to shut down." Lakhe: "I didn't. I wasn't even aware." Me: "Right." Lakhe: "Tell me." Me: "I'm reviving the original idea I had before our wedding. Running a program for the youth. Taking them through entrepreneurial training then funding the business they choose. Obviously we'd own 51% stake in their companies, helping them with tenders, attracting clients and succeeding in overall business management. Once they're doing fine on their own, they can buy us out of their company and carry on independently." Lakhe: "What did Mel say?" Me: "That it would take too long and too many resources plus it won't make him money soon." Lakhe: "Why didn't you come to me?" Me: "You mean, you and Onika?" Lakhe: "I'm the owner of that company. What I say and approve goes." Me: "I don't want it to be awkward though. Working with my ex and his girlfriend? No." Lakhe: "I know you're a smart businesswoman. That's not an obstacle for you." Me: "You want to control this project, don't you?" Lakhe: "no." Me: "I know you. You want to be a part of it so you can limit it just like you did with my Telkom contract." Lakhe: "You need an independent company. I need a new project. This is a win-win." Me: "You need my project more. I can build my own company." Lakhe: "It would take at least 2 years to get it to lift off. Let alone the fact that something this big

needs a well established company to put it out there. How about you register your company under mine?" I laughed. Me: "Wow Lakhe. You are a great dad, but you're ruthless when it comes to business. I know if I'm registered under you, you literally own me and everything I do." I laughed and took another sip. Me: "You're a little too pythony for my business. But thanks." Lakhe: "You're taking this personally. Business wise, your company will lift off the ground immediately and you'd make more money by association. Think about it, GoldenCell is global. Any company under it is already a given to be international." Me: "Its still a no. I'll make a plan." Lakhe: "Fine. Heard from the insurance company?" Me: "They're still investigating a way not to pay me." Lakhe: "and if you were working with me, you'd drive a Porsche in a week." Me: "I'm not materialistic. I can drive a Tazz for all I care." Lakhe: "but a Porsche sounds better right? I can order it right now." Me: "You are unstable." he poured me and him another glass. Lakhe: "Or am I persuasive?" Me: "No, you're actually unstable. There's by no way I can agree to that." Lakhe: "No way?" Me: "I am not about to put my integrity on the line. Get outa here." I took a sip of my wine again and rested my head back.

I woke up the next morning a little groggy. I was naked and in familiar surroundings, just not sure where. I looked next to me and saw naked Lakhe still fast asleep. Shit! Shit! Shit! I slipped out of bed and just stared at him. We had sex? I looked for my underwear and dress but I couldn't find them. What the hell happened last night? Then it all came rushing back. I was getting ready to leave, getting up and heading for the door. He held my arm and bit on his lower lip making my head spin. Lakhe: "stay." he said. Me: "I can't. I have to g..." he kissed my lips holding me closer to him. Me: "Lakhe..." he pushed me against the wall and held my ass, squeezing it. He let out a groan. Me: "Lakhe we can't do this." Lakhe: "Why not." Me: "You're drunk." Lakhe: "So are you." he pulled off my dress. Lakhe: "fuck..." Me: "No...give that back." he kissed my neck shutting me up immediately. He slipped off the red lace thong. Lakhe: "Why do you got to look like this..." I clipped off the bra and he stared blindly. Lakhe: "My breast friends." I giggled. Me: "I have to go." I slurred. Me: "give me back my dress and panty." Lakhe: "No." he threw it on top of the fridge with my thong. Lakhe: "You cannot leave. Not until I've tasted every bit of you baby." I snapped out of my thoughts. My God. My dress was on top of the fridge? If only you knew how tall that fridge is and how short I was. I needed a ladder, except I had a specific phobia of ladders. I tip toed out the room and climbed up the counter, finally able to retrieve my clothing. I got down and dressed quickly. After that tip toeing to Lam's room. My baby was sleeping peacefully, arms spread wide like he was

flying. I went to check on Chris, him to was fast asleep. I fixed his covers and walked out again. I took my bag and slipped out the house to the car where Kompany was. And yes he was awake. He doesn't sleep so. Me: "Hi." Kompany: "Good night?" Me: "I guess you know what happened." Kompany: "No I don't." Me: "I'm just having a moral dilemma. Is it bad that I'm leaving like a thief?" Kompany: "Do you want to leave?" Me: "Yes. I'm embarrassed." Kompany: "then what's the problem?" Me: "My kids. They were supposed to spend the night with him yes but I feel bad leaving." Kompany: "then go back in there. You will feel worse if you leave." Me: "but I have to face him." Kompany: "What if he doesn't remember?" Me: "Is it possible?" Kompany: "I wouldn't know." I got out the car and back in the house, starting to make breakfast. Chris woke up first and watched his cartoons. Lakhe woke up after him. Lakhe: "Hi." Me: "Hi." he looked confused. Me: "I need to check on Lam." Lakhe: "I just did. He's fine. What happened last night?" so he doesn't remember? Me: "Uhm...I was kind of skeptical of leaving the baby so I slept on the couch." please buy it. Lakhe: "Oh. Did he give problems?" he stretched and yawned. Me: "no he didn't. He was a sweet baby." Lakhe: "Guess he feels at home. I'm starving." Me: "Here's your plate." Thank God. He sat on the kitchen stool. Lakhe: "thank you." I had a quick flash back of me sitting on the island and him eating in between my legs. I'd squirted. Twice. Lakhe: "What?" Me: "You can join Chris in the living room." I took a damp cloth and wiped the island. Shit, the couch. That's where the doggy happened. I needed to get out of this house. Lakhe: "My head really hurts. What did I drink?" Me: "Wine. Uhm...I hear the baby." I rushed to the nursery. Lam wasn't even awake and I wanted to wake him now. Me: "baby?" I whispered. Me: "You need to wake up and occupy mommy. Come on please?" Lakhe: "Spho." he walked in the nursery. Me: "Yes." Lakhe: "I found this under the bed." I stared at my bra in his hand. Me: "That's not mine." Lakhe: "Are you serious? I bought this for you before you got pregnant. You wore it once only. And who else could leave their bra under my bed?" Me: "Your girlfriend perhaps?" Lakhe: "What are you whispering to the baby?" Me: "nothing." Lakhe: "What happened last night?" Me: "nothing. I told you." Lakhe: "I think you're lying." Me: "I think its time for me to go." Lakhe: "did we use a condom?" Me: "I don't know what you're talking about." Lakhe: "I found your bra under my bed and when I made my bed yesterday morning it wasn't there. Spho, I swear to God. I am not crazy, tell me the tr-" Me: "Yes we had sex! I don't know how! I just woke up this morning and I started remembering and I'm having flashbacks and I don't know!" Lakhe: "Okay. Fine. Uhm...we need to be calm. First we need to get you a morning after, so you don't get pregnant again. And then we'll be fine. There's no need to stress. Its just sex. Right?" Me: "Yeah. Right. Its nothing." I sighed in relief. Me: "Maybe I should leave now." Lakhe: "Yeah probably. I

wouldn't want to....it was a mistake." Me: "It shouldn't happen again. I think it was the wine." Lakhe: "definitely the wine. Should I walk you out?" Me: "No. Its fine. Thank you." I walked out the room and said goodbye to Chris leaving the house after....

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The rest of my day was annoyingly long and I was drained with all these flashbacks. I needed to go fetch the kids and that meant facing Lakhe again. I bucked up and got dressed. It was really hot on this particular day, just getting out of the shower I was already sweating. I wore a white short bodycon dress and beige lace up boots with a 6 inch heel. I brushed my hair back and took my phone heading to the car. Kompany drove me to Lakhe's house. The reason I didn't attend my meeting today was because it was postponed. Which I thanked God for because I need to rest again tonight I was back in strength training. I got out the car and knocked on the front door. The time was around 3 in the afternoon. I wonder if he fetched Chris from after care. He opened the door and stared at me. Me: "Hi." Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "Uhm, did you fetch Chris, or should I fetch him on my way home?" Lakhe: "You'll fetch him on your way home." I stepped him inside the house and he locked the door behind. What's happening? Me: "What's" he held my face and kissed me hard. It took all of me to stop that kiss. Lakhe: "I want you." Me: "No. You're not having me. I am not going to be your side chick." At this point I didn't know what I wanted to be but his cologne was wetting my panties. I needed an intervention really. Lakhe: "No...you're not." I pulled away from him. He ran his hand through his face. Lakhe: "fuck." Me: "I came to fetch Lam, can you get him ready?" Lakhe: "What goes into this ini-" a loud knock interrupted him. Lakhe: "WHAT!!!!!" the knock persisted. Me: "Okay. This girl of yours is actually beginning to piss me off." I walked to Lam's room. The baby was asleep as usual. Lam slept like nobody I knew. Last night was his first night he slept through. I took his journal and wrote it down. Onika stood by the door of the nursery. Onika: "Spho." Me: "I like Miss big wet titties better." Onika: "Look, I'm sorry if I offended you. I really didn't mean it. Its just..." she walked in. Who the hell said she could walk in the king's room? Me: "Take your shoes off please. Nobody is allowed in his room." Onika: "Oh. I'm sorry. Uhm, I just want to apologize to you. You're Lakhe's ex but still the mother of his children. I am not going to stand between that. The kids are welcome here anytime. My childhood insecurities can chill. Its just....I remember when my parents divorced and my dad got a new woman. He barely paid attention to me and she was cruel. I'd never let a child go through what I went

through. Your children are safe here." Well now I feel guilty. Me: "Thank you." she nodded and took her shoes. She must really love Lakhe to swallow her pride like that. I know for a fact, no ex of my man would be allowed in my house. Now I felt really bad. Lakhe is only going to want to keep sleeping with me because I'm around a lot. I had to limit my presence here. One thing I can't do is make another woman uncomfortable in her man's house. That is not me. I picked up Lam's packed bag and hung it on my shoulder then picked him up. He stirred in my arms still fast asleep. I walked out the nursery. Me: "I'll be on my way guys. Enjoy your night." Lakhe: "Sowuhamba..." Me: "Yes. I'll fetch Chris on the way home." Lakhe: "Are you going to bring him back later tonight?" his eyes dance a little. Me: "No I won't. You should write down a schedule for the visitation and email it to me. The boys only spend one night a week here. Every other visit is during the day. You'll send it when you're done." Lakhe: "What if I want three nights?" Me: "Can you breast-feed?" Lakhe: "No." Me: "Then you get one night. Goodbye. Bye Onika." Onika: "Bye Spho." I walked out to the car. Kompany drove us to fetch Chris from day care and then home. He was unusually quiet today. Me: "Sweetie what's wrong?" Chris: "I got a letter." Me: "What's it say?" Chris: "I'm still learning how to read." Me: "Oh. I'll check it when I get home then. Why does it make you sad?" Chris: "Its not a good letter." Me: "Why do think that?" Chris: "Nobody ever gets a good letter from Teacher Suzie." Me: "Is that the new teacher working with Stacy?" Chris: "Apparently." Me: "You know the word apparently but you can't read." Chris: "I know. Its tragic." I giggled. When we reached my mom's house, we got inside and he gave me the letter, nobody else was home. Me: "Honey this is addressed to me." Chris: "I didn't notice." he went to the bedroom. I sat down with an awake Lam on my lap. Me: "Hey little pumpkin. How was your nap?" I kissed his face and opened the letter. 'Dear Mrs Sobukwe. This is a notice, to serve as a warning for the behavior of Christian Sobukwe. He has been warned several times about his misconduct and he fails to comply with rules despite the maximum 3 disciplinary actions I have granted him. This notice is the first of two, which will have him expelled should he receive a second. I hope I have been clear. He is instructed to issue a speech on Friday to apologize to the class, Stacy Stormberg and Alex Degenian for his behavior. I thank you. Kind Regards, Teacher Suzie.' MAN, this lady needed to get laid. Its a damn pre school not the military!! Why is she so stuck up and why the hell must Chris apologize to Alex who is not allowed on school grounds by law? I am not trying to be angry but this letter is testing. I got up to look for Chris. Me: "Sweetie." I peeped in his room. He looked up from the desk. Me: "What you doing?" Chris: "I'm making a sorry letter for Teacher Suzie, Stacy and Alex." Me: "You're not saying sorry to Alex. He's not allowed there in the first place." Chris: "I have to mama, I like my school." Me:

"No you don't. You will apologize to Stacy and Teacher Suzie. Alex is not a member of staff or child minder. I will speak to the principal." Chris: "Please don't mama." Me: "Christian, I am not going to let you be bullied into a corner. You did wrong by disobeying orders and whatever You've done but that Alex needs to go." I walked to my room to change Lam's diaper.

Later that evening I woke up from my rest. I had to prepare for my next stretch of strength training again. I ate my supper while looking through my emails, I had like three already from Lakhe alone. I skipped it and went to the other emails. My insurance company telling my they would be in contact in a few days. I went back to read Lakhe's email. "Hey, Why does it seem like you're avoiding me?" the second one read: "I've attached the schedule to this email." the third one was: "Am I gonna have to come to your house now? Why aren't you responding?" I picked up my phone and found messages as well. Still him. Message 1: "I remember. All of it." Message 2: "Why did we wait so long to make each other happy like that?" Message 3: "I miss you." Message 4: "Reply to me." Message 5: "Woman." I laughed. Did he really just send the word Woman? Was it a threat? Another message came through. Bank Notification. R15 000 000. For a second I couldn't count the zeros so I took a piece of paper and wrote it down before I even finished another message came through. My God! Message 6: "Did you get it?" I decided to just call. Me: "What's your problem." Lakhe: "Finally." Me: "What do you want Masilakhe." Lakhe: "a thank you." Me: "For what! I don't want your money." Lakhe: "You don't want it but you need it. This is enough to start a company, bring in influential directors and build your project without help. You're welcome." Me: "Masilakhe. I'm going to say this once-" Lakhe: "I know. You don't love me for my money but this is a gift. You bore me a son Spho. My first born. He's more of an heir to your bloodline but still, he's part of me and I am grateful for that. Nobody and nothing has ever given me more joy I swear." Me: "You're giving me R15 million for giving birth to MY child?" Lakhe: "You're making this too personal. Its just a thank you." I've never met a man this frustrating. Me: "What's your game?" Lakhe: "I'm not playing a game." Me: "You want a stake in my company that's why you're buying me. Lakhe you are such a snake." Lakhe: "I just want a seat in your board. Is that too much to ask-" Me: "You don't want the seat, you want the whole damn table! Good God Lakhe. Why can you not swallow that I can be a success without you?" Lakhe: "I can swallow it. Isn't it evident as to the reason I'm buying myself in? And why are you acting like its the first You'd heard of this? Every possible investor will come running once they kn-" Me: "Once they know I am capable without you. You are such a python." Lakhe: "Thank you. Spho, I want you to

know I will be on that board whether you approve it or not. I will be a part of it. Its not because I'm a snake but because I believe you will be successful. I didn't make money by being a puppy." Me: "You will not be on my board and you will not buy anything in my company!!!!" I screamed. Lakhe: "Fine. I suggest we schedule a meeting and discu-" Me: "I will not schedule a meeting! Leave. Me. Alone. You will not touch my company with a ten meter pole. Do you understand me!!" Lakhe: "I hope you know resistance actually does turn me on." Me: "MASI-" my father grabbed the phone from my hand. He clicked the end call. Khaya: "What is this about?" Me: "Dad. Masilakhe is really frustrating!! Can you believe he wants to buy me now? My company? He doesn't think I can do this!!" Khaya: "Do you believe you can do it?" Me: "Yes!" Khaya: "Good. Now, fix your attitude, and your face. Go out in that lounge and speak to the only man who has the knowledge of crushing Lakhe in business." Me: "Komand-" Khaya: "Not your dad, his dad. Robert Sobukwe is a self made billionaire. Your father in law adores you. The man that raised your frustrating man and groomed him. Masilakhe is half of his father. Go out there and do what you do best." Well I'd be damned. My father was a smart man. I fixed myself right up and went out to the lounge where Lam's paternal grandparents sat. The baby was in Robert's arms. He stared at him with a look of pure happiness. Me: "Molweni tata nomama." Stella: "Darling!" she hugged me. Stella: "You bounced right back! Look at you! You look spectacular!" Me: "thank you mama." Rob: "How are you angel?" Me: "I am fine tata, and how are you?" Rob: "I am doing well despite being single." Stella rolled her eyes. Rob: "I've found an amazing little house in Lovemore Heights. You are welcome any time." Me: "I would love to visit tata and I'm sure Lam would too." Rob: "he would. He's such a sweet boy." he stared down at the baby. Stella: "Can I hold him now?" Rob: "No." Stella looked helplessly jealous shame. Me: "I'd like to have a word with you tata." Rob: "Sure honey." Me: "a private word." Rob: "Sounds serious." he handed the baby over to Stella and followed me to the kitchen. Rob: "What is the problem?" Me: "There is no problem. I wish to propose a project to you. Would you be so kind to offer a date and time?" Rob: "Most certainly. Tomorrow I'm available. Well, I've got golf at 11 but nonetheless available before then." Me: "Thank you tata." he gave me his new address. Rob: "I'm looking forward to seeing you." Me: "I promise I will not waste your time tata." Rob: "I'll hold you to that." during the remainder of the evening, Lam and his grandparents. All four of them, bonded. My poor baby was being passed around like sausage eventually he would get tired and start screaming. As if on cue, he started. Zama: "There we go. Its mommy time." I went to fetch him and he quieted down immediately. Me: "he's sleepy. I'll bath him. Would you like to say goodbye to your grandparents pumpkin?" His eyelids were heavy for him, he would be asleep by the time I

started bathing him. Stella: "He is such a drama king. Literally Lakhe." Rob: "He really is." Me: "I agree he does take after him. He wants no disruption with his sleep." I went to bath him and feed him then put him to sleep. Me: "My beautiful king. A gift from God Himself. My joy and peace. Sleep well my angel. The angels of heaven are watching over your sleep. God is protecting your every breath and moment. I love you my son." I had to leave for my training soon. This was really going to hurt but I had to do it.

Early Thursday Sunrise. I was kneeling on a bed of leaves. They crackled as I stood up, finished from my first day of recovering my strength. I was exhausted but I could not will my body to rest. Not until I've met with Rob then gone to the bank to return Lakhe's money, gosh he was so annoying. Then I could sleep. Kom: "You Are dismissed." he announced. I walked to the car with Kompany before me. He drove me home quietly. I couldn't do quiet. Quiet would make me sleep. Me: "So, what's new?" Kompany did that grunt thing again which I was now convinced was a chuckle. Kompany: "I am not sure what you mean, my queen." Me: "Please call me Spho." Kompany: "I am unable to, my queen. From this day forth I have been ordered to address you as queen." I rolled my eyes. Komander is a real piece of work. Me: "Tell me about something you like." Kompany: "I like gardening." Me: "When is Sibuh coming back?" Kompany: "When you're done with training. He will be your right hand man." Me: "He tried to kill our uncle." Kompany: "You will be much stronger than he is. You will have full power of his mind, body and soul if you will." Me: "I am not interested in his soul. He is my brother and I am not a demon." Kompany: "Yes my queen." Me: "Have you met grandfather?" Kompany: "Yes." Me: "What's he like." Kompany: "Like Nightmare. He is the midnight nightmare. He carries screaming souls when he walks. Drives them out of humans as he pass. He is anything beyond the sir. El Diablo." Me: "The Devil?" Kompany: "Yes my queen.." Me: "How will Lam defeat him." Kompany: "Lam blood, pure blood. His existence is enough." he parked in front of my house. I went in to go change. I showered thoroughly then dressed up in a maroon two piece. High waist fitting Skirt and crop top. I made my face and hair. The wore maroon stilettos. Kompany drove me to Rob's house and parked at the gate of the so called little house which was actually a mansion. Rich people are really annoying ne? I went in after a knock. Rob: "Mrs Sobukwe." Me: "Mr Sobukwe." Rob: "I took the liberty of ordering us breakfast." Me: "Thank you sir." we sat down. Rob: "Talk to me." I gave him an insight of my project and how it came about. He actually let me go on and on. Rob: "Your project needs funding and an independent company behind it. You never asked Lakhe?" Me: "unfortunately he wants a stake of the project to be

his and me to register my company under his." Rob laughed. Rob: "He knows a good investment when he sees one. Tell you what, put together your lawyer and manager, set up an appointment with mine so we can draw up a suitable contract for the both of us. Register your company, just understand that you will be building it alone without the help of this project." Me: "Noted." Rob: "I'm looking forward to our business venture partner." Me: "Likewise sir." we had our breakfast, discussing more of the project and jotting everything down. After our breakfast meeting, I headed out for the bank. My phone rang then. Me: "Masilakhe ikhaya Killian Sobukwe." Lakhe: "Heyy." Me: "What is it now." Lakhe: "You got my schedule last night and I'm waiting for my child." Me: "What?" Lakhe: "Yes. I sent the schedule. You approved it." Me: "Its only effective from next week-" Lakhe: "Was that part of our agreement or did you tell me to draw up a schedule and work with it?" Me: "I didn't even look at the schedule." Lakhe: "Is that my problem?" Lord have mer-.... Me: "Fine. I'm coming." I hung up. Kompany stopped the car. Me: "We're going to fetch Lam for Lakhe first." Kompany: "As you wish my queen." he drove to my mothers house in haste. While he was driving I looked at the schedule Lakhe sent. Me: "He is just ridiculous. This is everyday! Does he ever work?" Kompany: "he wants to spend more time with the baby I assume." Me: "You're right. I'm being silly." I went inside mom's house to fetch Lam and his bag. Kompany drove us to Lakhe's house safely. Kompany: "My queen, there is an errand I need to run very quickly for the Sir. I shall not be too long." Me: "That's okay Kompany." As we arrived, I took the baby and his bag to the front door. Lakhe opened with a smile on his face. Me: "Kompany is running an errand. I'll wait for him here." I gave him the sleeping baby. He walked down the passage staring at his son. I sat on the couch to rest. I hadn't slept and I needed to so badly. Lakhe: "You look tired." he stood near the couch. Me: "Where is my baby?" Lakhe: "Our. And he's in his room." he moved closer. Me: "reverse that money back to you." Lakhe: "Nope." Me: "Fine. I'll do it myself. I don't want your money." Lakhe: "Would you like a massage instead?" Me: "What's up with you?" he took off my shoes and massaged my feet. Rubbing in small circles. It felt so amazing I had to make him stop. Me: "No Lakhe. We can't keep doing this. We're divorced." Lakhe: "Not until the judge says so. You're still my wife and I will massage your feet, feed you, and fuck you if you want." Me: "No. I don't want anything. Move. I'll catch a cab." I stood up, he stood before me. Me: "All this, JUST for a seat in my company?" Lakhe: "I believe in y-" Me: "You didn't believe in me when I was working for you! You didn't believe in me when I was working for Sandile. I never failed neither of you!" Lakhe: "Hence, I trust you." he held my waist. Lakhe: "you have a six pack better than mine." Me: "Shut up." he kissed my lips. I pulled away. Me: "No. You're not going to keep dipping in my pussy everytime you're horny

convincing yourself I'm still your wife when I'm not. You did not want to-" he kissed me again. Me: "If you can't go through with the initiation, you're not getting me." he bent down and kissed my stomach pulling down my skirt. Me: "Masilakhe!!" Lakhe: "I miss you Spho!!" Me: "I don't care! You will either go through with this or you're not having me. Absolutely not!" he bit his lower lip but I stayed strong. Lakhe: "Fine. I'm sorry. I don't know what came over me." Me: "Can you just be normal now?" Lakhe: "Fine." he stared at my breasts. Me: "mxim." I crossed my arms over my chest. Lakhe: "Spho I am your husband, are you really denying me?" Me: "we're getting a divorce. Why don't you sleep with Onika? That's what other men would do." Lakhe: "I'm not other men." Me: "Or she's not that type. I am not going to let you use me Masilakhe. Forget it." Lakhe: "How am I using you if you're enjoying it?" Me: "You are a piece of work." my phone beeped a message. I stared at the screen, reading it slowly. It was Kommodus.(Babalo.) : "All Bloodline required. Urgent meeting in underground quarters." I was told the underground quarters were only used for trial. When someone did something wrong, i.e betraying Komander. Might as well have committed suicide. Who the hell would be that stupid?

#152

Me: "I need you to do me a favor." Lakhe: "As long as you know you'll owe me." Me: "Are you serious?" Lakhe: "Of course. Why is it that you can ask and I can't?" Me: "Fine. Take care of Lam. Please. I have a meeting. Someone decided to write their will today." Lakhe: "meeting? For what?" Me: "family." Lakhe: "Oh. You'll be back?" Me: "No, I need to rest after this. I haven't slept. I just came back from training." Lakhe: "You can come rest here. Lam will be here, he needs you." Me: "I can't. Lakhe, Onika loves you. She swallowed her pride and accepted me as the mother of your kids. Putting her insecurities aside to let you be happy. You can't do this to her. I am not letting you hurt another woman. You chose her and left me. Stick to that decision. If you can't, let her know." Lakhe: "I don't know what I want, okay? This is confusing. Spho we were married, I was comfortable and I'm in love with you. I can't just let it go." Me: "Maybe we should spend some time apart then or just move on. Gather your thoughts and feelings and know what you want. I love you but I cannot force you to accept this life. Lakhe, I am not a demon. Lam is not a demon. What we do, is to bring down that side. Not for control or reign but for peace. I can't let grandfather hurt any more people and destroy the world we live in." Lakhe: "I get it." he looked more annoyed again. I took my shoes and wore them. He went to the kitchen and poured himself water. Me: "before Onika walked in yesterday you wanted to ask something." Lakhe: "I

don't remember." he gulped down the glass of water. Me: "Lakhe..." Lakhe: "I said I don't remember Spho." Me: "Very well." I stood up and gathered my purse. Kompany parked the car outside. Me: "I'll come fetch the boys later." Lakhe: "Sure." I walked out to the car with my heart hanging heavy again. Maybe the sex fooled us into thinking everything was fine. He thought he was fine. Talking about it made it scary again which was a clear indication that he wasn't ready to accept it. Kompany drove me to the quarters in silence. I was so tired and pissed off for some reason. Who the hell could be so irresponsible? Once Kompany parked he led me to the underground quarters. Komander, Kommodus(Babaloo), Komodity(Khaya), Komfort(Siyanda), Komary(Zama), Komissle(Hlumi, because she was quite fast and finished her training on time.) were all here. I walked in and Kompany stood next to Komander then knelt with his head down. Everyone else followed suit except Komander. Me: "What is going on?" he stared at me. Kom: "Komfort." Komfort: "Yes Sir." Kom: "Address your queen." Komfort: "My queen." he moved toward me and knelt again. Me: "Stand up." he stood up with his head still low. Me: "What is going on." Komfort: "My trial for not following procedure and putting your life in danger, my queen." I looked at Komander. Me: "You're serious? You called me here for this?" Kom: "This is a serious crime which he needs to be held accountable." Me: "He was following my orders." Kom: "Even so. He is your security, his first job before your orders is your safety and health. He eats the food before you even touch it. What he did, is punishable by death." Me: "You are not going to touch him. Komfort's first job is to listen to me, I am not a child, I know when I'm fine-" Kom: "Your ribs were broken, and in pain." Me: "and I healed. There is no trial." Kom: "You cannot be a soft queen. There are rules here." Me: "and the rules belong to me. Or else I wouldn't be here now would I? You forget that I'm not a demon and I don't follow your ways. No one, is to be punished by death so long as I live." Kom: "That is not going to happen-" Me: "Bet." His eyes were blaze in anger. Me: "From now on, Komfort will only take orders from me, seemingly you already have too little to do. The trial is over." Kom: "No." he growled. Me: "Is there another item on the agenda?" Kom: "Follow me." he stomped to a private section and I followed him. Me: "This isn't right. Why are they on their knees. They are my parents! My family!" Kom: "You are their queen. Spho this is how we do things here. If you weren't what you are, I'd....." he breathed. Kom: "There are rules to follow. As queen, you have high ranking until Khayalam is of age." Me: "Khayalam will not be part of this. My son is pure light." Kom: "A pure light Komander. He may be of light but he still is a King and will serve as such." Me: "See, I'm gonn stop you right there. Lam is a child of God. He is NOT, do you hear me, NOOOT going to serve you. Not now, not ever." he just stared at me. Me: "Say something." Kom: "There are two

bloodlines that run through the Komander name Spho. The pure and the evil. The pure was the beginning, things happened and the evil overruled. This is the time to make things right. All of this blood is mixed and that is not how it should be. If I could do it, I would but I'm more of the dark side because of the way I grew up. Babalo is half. But your son, Lam is the only full pure. If he does not reign, Sphosam, hell will be your daily bread. It is Your job to make sure he makes it. If Father gets him, it will be the ugliest thing You've ever witnessed. Have you seen pure light being turned into evil? It is outrageously powerful and dangerous for every living thing. The baby is our only hope. Me and your uncle."

I woke up from my nap later that day. It was after 4 in the afternoon. I needed to fetch the kids from Lakhe. One swipe from my phone indicated that the bank had done as I asked and returned the 15 million back to the account it came from. I got dressed in stone washed jeans and a loose white t shirt plus pink fluffy slides. Kompany waited for me outside. Mom was cooking in the kitchen and dad sat in the lounge. Me: "Molweni Tata." he didn't respond. Okay so he was mad at me. Good for him. Me: "Mama." also silence. Must be nice. I took my phone and left the house. Kompany drove me to Lakhe's house. Me: "Kompany, why is my family not speaking to me?" Kompany: "It is a different view for them my queen. You questioned and disobeyed their master." Me: "I didn't disobey him. I was simply stating facts. I am not a demon and I do not follow their ways. They knew this before, why act up now?" Kompany: "Law is law, my queen." Me: "Kompany, law needs to be justifiable. You're trying to tell me you would kill an innocent person just for following orders, you know what, don't answer that. I am not going to allow that to happen. If its disobeying to refuse killing then so be it." Kompany: "I hear you, Your excellency." Me: "Please Kompany, don't say that. Even queen is much better than that." Kompany: "Yes my queen." Me: "So how long will they not talk to me?" Kompany: "For a while, my queen." Me: "How is Komfort?" Kompany: "Not well. He was really touched you took his side but you've cost him his job now. So what is there to live for?" Me: "Take me to him." Kompany: "As you wish, my queen." he drove to Siyanda's house instead. It was only 10 minutes away from Lakhe's house anyway. I got off and went to knock on the front door. Siyanda opened for me and I walked in. This was really a beautiful house indeed. Me: "Hi." Siya: "What are you doing here?" Me: "Okay, I don't understand why you're angry at me. Why would you think I'd let you die?" Siya: "because it is a punishment I deserved! I apologize for my tone, my queen." Me: "what the fuck is going on!!! And stop this queen shit please!! Where does all this come from! Just yesterday I was

Spho, now all of a sudden I'm being called queen! Siyanda, we're friends. Talk to me!" Siya: "With your permission-" Me: "I just gave you permission!" Siya: "Sir had a visit from the Queen Mother. She was very strict on orders and upset. For you to have the queen title is a level of respect for her. It is supposed to strengthen you in your training." this had to be a joke. Me: "I don't want to be called queen, I don't want people kneeling to me. It is embarrassing. My parents aren't even talking to me. I can not let anyone die for anything. I serve God and He is the only One allowed to create and destroy. Nobody else. This is just basic human rights." Siya: "I've lost my job Spho." Me: "The hospital can't fire you." Siya: "Not at the hospital. I mean with your father. I've lost my title. I'm not allowed near him or anyone else for that matter. You should've just let me die." Hayi ke sathana. Me: "Can you do me one favor and stay alive?" Siya: "Just know that it won't be for long. Nobody is stripped off their title in the elites and survives normal living. In the end, I am a liability and I have to be dealt with." he opened his door. I walked out the house to the car. This Komander shit was giving me a headache. I wanted my old life back. This, was just ridiculous. Kompany drove me to Lakhe's house. I got off the car and went to the front door to knock. Chris opened for me and I stepped in. Chris: "Hello mama." Me: "Hi sweetie. How are you?" Chris: "I am fine." Lakhe and Onika were on the couch semi cuddled up. Lakhe: "Hi." he got up. Me: "Molweni. I came to fetch the kids." Lakhe: "I'll get them ready." Me: "Don't worry, I got it." I went through to Lam's room and packed his essentials. Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "Yeah." Lakhe: "I've thought about what You've said before about moving on. You were right. I don't think I'll fully be able to accept you. I'm just being greedy." Me: "Nice of you to actually be honest." Lakhe: "I'm really sorry this didn't work out Spho." Me: "Same." Lakhe: "Okay I feel like you're really mad at me." Me: "I'm not. Just a bad day." I picked Lam up. Me: "Can we revise the schedule? I can't come here everyday. Perhaps three times a week." Lakhe: "Sure." Me: "Chris, get your things baby. Let's go." Chris: "I'm done." he was standing by the door with his back pack. Me: "alright then. Tell daddy and Sis Onika goodbye." Chris: "Bye." Me: "Properly." Chris: "Goodbye Sis Onika. Bye daddy." Onika: "Bye Chris." Lakhe: "Goodbye my boy. I'll fetch you from school tomorrow." Chris: "Okay." he hugged him. Me: "goodbye guys." Onika: "Goodbye Spho." I left with my kids back to my mom's house.

I arrived with the same tension still lingering my mom's house. It was kind of annoying now. After putting Lam in his cot and Chris playing with him, I went to my parents. Me: "Tata can we talk." Khaya: "About what?" Me: "About why I'm being ignored." Khaya: "You were disrespectful." Me: "I promise tata, I

wasn't. How was I supposed to let a man die because he listened to me." Khaya: "It is our law. Siyanda knew this but he was too blinded to follow procedure. He needed to be punished." Me: "No wonder Lakhe wants nothing to do with this. This is actually sick. Tata, you KNOW I'd never let a man die for no reason in the world. That is not our decision to make. It is God's decision only." he looked at me with a coldness in his eyes. Khaya: "Under Sir's name and team, you follow his rules. You do not question it. You may be queen but he is still above you. Do you understand me?" Me: "No tata. I don't. I will NOT follow murderers." Khaya: "Be that as it may. You might have overstayed your welcome in my house. I would suggest tonight being a suitable time to leave." Me: "Are you being serious right now? You're kicking me out?" Khaya: "You're still questioning me?" I looked at umama, who was quiet. So this was it. I disagree and I'm kicked out. I went back to my room and packed my belongings. I couldn't go to Lakhe because he was with Onika now. I couldn't go to Zingi, she had her own new baby and was patching up her marriage with Dumi. Sandile had his own girlfriend too and I couldn't go stay there. I had to book a hotel with my kids. Who would look after them while I was in training? Because even after this whole dramatic argument, I had to finish. Who would look after my little kings? I swallowed my pride and called Lakhe. Lakhe: "Yes?" Me: "Hi. I'm sorry to ask but can you look after the kids tonight?" Lakhe: "Is there a problem?" Me: "No. Parents are busy." I heard him whisper on his side then came back to me. Lakhe: "Okay. Bring them over. We had plans but Onika is willing to cancel, said it is okay." Me: "Please thank her for me. I'm really sorry." Lakhe: "Alright. See you soon." I hung up. I had to admit it did sting that he even asks her permission but clearly he's serious with her. At least he was happy and that's all I wanted for him. Happiness. The worst part is that it wasn't happiness brought by me. I took all the bags to the car, then followed with the kids. Kompany drove us back to Lakhe. The bags were strategically packed. The two belonging to the kids were packed for only one night. The rest of their clothes I'd packed in a suitcase, taking them with me to the hotel I'd book. Lakhe's house----- I knocked on the door carrying the baby. Chris standing beside me with their small bags. Onika opened the door. Onika: "come on in guys." I was a little salty to be honest. This woman had not only been blessed with my man but also my house I shared with him, now she's getting my kids too. Even for one night, that hurt. She was normal. From a normal family with normal problems and normal blood. I had to be this freak from a demon rigged family on top of all the baggage I already possessed. Lakhe came from the kitchen wearing an apron. Me: "Here's Lam's pumped milk. His journal too. I'll be back in the morning." I gave him the baby. Lakhe: "Is everything okay?" Me: "Yeah. I got to go." I kissed Chris and Lam then rushed out to the car before I broke

down in that house. I seriously felt like shit. Kompany: "Where to, my queen." Me: "A hotel." Kompany: "I don't know of hotels, my queen." I set the GPS to direct him. Kompany: "My queen." he asked on the way. Me: "Yes Kompany." Kompany: "I will be taking back this car tonight. I will accompany you by foot from tomorrow on." Me: "He asked for it back?" Kompany: "No. He did not. But nobody disrespects my queen. I am your security now." Me: "No Kompany, you're Komander's security. You're only on loan to me. Return the car back to my dad though. If he can kick me out of his house then he'll surely want it back too. We'll make a plan." we arrived at the hotel and I went to check in. On my way to my room, I called uDubs. She was the one person I trusted who could take care of Lam and Chris. She would help me with prayer too. She agreed to arrive the next day. Bonanje the parents I have can sometimes get on my nerves. I settled into my room, ate my ordered supper and prepared for training. Kompany drove me to our location. Kompany: "I will be back soon, good luck my queen." I chuckled. Me: "Why would I need luck Kompany? You're being silly now." I got off the car and walked toward the forest. Komander, Kommodus and Komodity waited for me there. I heard a growl somewhere from inside the woods and my knees began to buckle. I wasn't entirely sure, but I'd say that was a bear. Kommodus and Komodity kneeled down. "Queen." two wolves walked out of the woods. Dear God. My bladder became instantly full. What the hell was this now? Kom: "It is time to begin. Ut maneat vobiscum in aetheres." Kommodus: "Confirma fulgur viribus." Komodity: "Ecce regina vestra." a loud crackle of thunder erupted above me. The wolves howled behind them, stinging my hearing. The lightening illuminated the skies to bright light and switched off immediately again to darkness and silence. In that second of light, looking at them in fear, I knew right then, my life was over.....

#153

I opened my sore eyes unable to make out my surroundings. It felt like there was sand in them. My entire chest was on fire. My hands in stiff freezing cold. Was I dead? I couldn't move, talk or blink now. "You're awake." I heard a dizzy voice in my head. "Thank God." No, that was not in my head. A face finally accompanied the voice. Siyanda. Siya: "Hi." Me: "h...!" Siya: "I'm glad you're alive. Try and swallow a bit of water to clear your throat." he helped with the straw and I swallowed what felt like crushed glass and grit. Siya: "it will get better." Me: "what..happened." Siya: "Well.....let's just say, you pushed them too far. Its a miracle you're even alive. When I found you in the woods, you were barely breathing." a slow tear escaped my eye. My dads actually tried

to kill me. Actually, they weren't even my dads anymore. They were animals that I wanted nothing to do with. Siya: "No. This is part of your training. Survival is your only hope." Me: "I... almost... died Siyanda!! What.... about... my kids!" I coughed. Siya: "I promise it will get better. Just rest." Me: "I can't do this anymore.." Siya: "Yes you can and you will. You've only got a week and a few days left to finish. After that, you'll be done. You'll never have to do it again." Me: "What if I don't make it? What if I die? Its not worth it." Siya: "I won't let you Sphosenkosi. You will make it." Me: "How can I when they let wolves chase after me? Look at me!! My chest is ablaze, I am barely audible and what the fuck is wrong with my hands!!!" Siya: "You were lying in the cold for a while." Me: "They left me there to die." I sobbed. Siya: "They left you there to survive and you did Spho. Leave all this negative energy and rest your body. You have a lot to work through in little time." Me: "My aunt. She's coming from East London. Take her to Lakhe to fetch the kids then the hotel." Siya: "I already found your aunt. She's downstairs with the kids. Like I've said, rest." I forced my eyes to close. My life had taken a very dramatic turn and it was spiraling out of control that I didn't know what to hold on to. Siya: "I know its hard. I'm going to be here though. To make sure you survive this. To make sure you stay alive for Lam and Chris." Me: "Siyanda, its not easy. I already feel my grip loosening. How could my life just swift into a different gear like this? Just a year ago, I was in a relationship, ndihlalisana, with Simphiwe and his son Buhle. Next thing I leave him because he cheats, then I date and marry Lakhe, fall pregnant and boom divorce. On top of that, Komander and his ridiculous requests." Siya: "Its a lot to take in. I really don't know what to tell you other than its going to be better. I promise you that." Me: "Won't he look for you?" Siya: "He can try. Don't worry about me. I'm going to hire a second car for you, Kompany will drive you anywhere you want. I'd say take my car but I wouldn't want your father to know you're with me here." Me: "Thank you Siyanda." Siya: "Its the least I can do, my queen." Me: "Stop that." he smiled. Siya: "Lala. I'll wake you later."

1 Week Later.

I only had two more nights left of training. I looked nothing short of shit to be honest. I had battled sleeping this past week because of the pain. Every time I closed my eyes, my dreams were riddled with nightmares and spirits, fighting and harassing me. I was beginning to understand Lakhe's refusal more and more. This wasn't normal, it wasn't right! No human being should have to live like this. My lawyer and I were meeting with Rob today for the signing of our contracts. I'd be given an entire section in his building to work with my team.

I'd already drawn up employment contracts. Once I signed with Robert, I could start recruiting my team. The meeting was in two hours and the venue only 15 minutes away. So I could sleep for one hour and 30 minutes. I set my alarm and dozed off. It felt like two minutes in, when it rang again. Me: "what the fuck!" I sat up and stared at the phone. Are you trying to tell me that I slept that quickly? A light knock disturbed me in my thinking process. Me: "come in." Dubs walked in. Dubs: "Hi ntombi. Uziva njani?" Me: "I'm fine Dabawo, unjani wena." Dubs: "Ndiphilile babes. Ndiphekile. Phakama uzotyia." (I'm fine babes. I cooked. Get up and come eat.) Me: "I have a meeting dubs, but it will be a quick one. I just need to take a quick shower. I'll eat when I'm back." Dubs: "Okay." I got out of bed. Dubs: "Spho." I looked through the wardrobe. Siyanda had packed my things neatly in there, a week ago. I haven't even seen him that much. He only comes to say hi and ask if I ate that's all. I didn't want to get comfortable here plus I didn't tell Lakhe that I live with Siya. I know he would freak out. Me: "Yes Dubs." I took out a white long pencil skirt and a white slim crop with off the shoulder long sleeves. Dubs: "Tonight, mna ne babies siya kwi visit kwa Lakhe. Sizolala khona." (we'll be sleeping over at Lakhe's.) I had a lump in my throat. My kids were the only thing I looked forward to seeing when I came back in the morning after training. Although they hadn't seen their dad in a while, I guess I had to suck it up. Me: "Okay dubs." Dubs: "uzohamba nathi?" (are you coming with us.) Me: "Dabawo Lakhe is in a relationship. I can't do sleep overs at his house." Dubs: "Oh." I went to shower and I came back to dress. I quickly brushed my hair and dabbed a bit of make up on. Kompany drove me to Rob's new office. The setting was glass, white and light blue. Absolutely gorgeous. It felt like an ice castle. I got off the car and stared at the tall building, proceeding toward the glass doors. As I reached the handle, a hand clutched it first. He pushed it open. Me: "thank you." I stepped in the building with the stranger behind me. I turned to look at him and he had a stupid smile on his face. Me: "Do I know you?" Him: "No. I'm....Lwando." Me: "Oh, hi. I'm Spho." Lwando: "You work here?" Me: "Kind of. Partnering in a new project. I'm here for a meeting." Lwando: "I think we're here for the same meeting." we signed in and headed for the boardroom. Rob was waiting for us there. Rob: "Lwando, how are you?" Lwando: "Superb tata. Yourself?" Rob: "I'm Great. Have you met my daughter in law? Spho Sobukwe." #sighs. Lwando: "In law? Sandile is married?" I could literally see his face deflate. Rob: "No. She's married to Lakhe." Me: "Was, tata." Lwando: "I didn't notice a ring." This was so awkward. Me: "We're divorced." Lwando: "Oh." Rob: "Well.....yeah. Anyway, I guess I should just call you my grandson's mom then." hebethuna uRob. Lmao. Lwando: "Nice." thankfully my lawyer and two other men came in and we were seated. Rob: "Alright, ladies and gentlemen. I welcome you

all. As you all know, I'm Robert Sobukwe. On my left seated here is Sphosenkosi Sobukwe, the founder of this project, on my right seated is Lwando Jamane, my new investment banker. On his right, it is Reynold Sentico, my lawyer, opposite him, Gregory, Spho's Lawyer and last but not least, Quinton, my business manager. We may begin." he sat down. We went through the contract thoroughly. No concerns were raised, both our lawyers were pleased so we signed. Lwando was staring at me as he was sitting opposite me. I looked back at him with the 'What' look. He quickly looked down, shuffling his papers. A bottle of Dom P was ushered in the boardroom with glasses. Rob: "I'd like to propose a toast." we each got a glass. Rob: "To the succession of this project, and many more to come. Congratulations Spho." we all clapped. Rob popped the champagne and poured for them. I opted for juice. It was a relaxed atmosphere talking about the vision of this project and other business factors. Eventually Lwando sat next to me like he hasn't been lingering and not paying attention to Robert. Lwando: "So...tell me. What drove you to start a project like this?" Me: "Unfortunately I don't have a sob story that propels this kind of dream. Its not one of those Dear Black child stories. I kinda grew up comfortable financially and emotionally." Despite the mess I'm in right now. Lwando: "I'm still interested." Me: "I've always wanted to help people. Its my thing. One day, I was driving with my husb...ex, and we saw this young man carrying a cardboard with his qualifications written on it. After that my mind was reeling. Not all graduates get jobs. Others start businesses and later fail because of either lack of knowledge or lack of clients. We can't keep making the rich richer and opening opportunities for only the people we know. There's something so fulfilling in positively helping another human being." he just stared at me. Me: "Am I boring you?" Lwando: "No! Actually the opposite. I've never met someone who was this passionate about building another person's dream. Its incredible." Me: "Thank you." Lwando: "So what's the first step of your project." Me: "Well, I've gotten in contact with three trainer specialists. They test applicants on their competency whether they are likely to be entrepreneurs and in which sector. The second step is to divide the applicants and put them in groups for tasks to complete together. The third step is then leadership testing and decision making. This is where we short list our first batch of entrepreneurs." Lwando: "This is the first I'm hearing of this. I am literally in awe." Me: "Stop it." I blushed. Lwando: "Do you realize how many lives this will change? Families will be fed and kids schooled because of this program. Its brilliant." Me: "Thank you." Rob: "Lwando." he stood near us. Rob: "I thought you had a meeting with the bank." Lwando: "Uhm..yes. Goodness, I almost forgot." we stood up. Lwando: "It was lovely meeting you Spho. I wish you the best of luck with this project." Me: "Thank you Lwando." we shook

hands. The awkward part was that Rob was still standing here and I'm not sure why. Lwando: "I will update you by the end of the day sir." Rob: "Thank you Lwando." Lwando took his bag and walked out. Rob: "He's such a scatter brain. Incredibly smart too." Me: "Sir, I should get back to Dabawo no Lam." Rob: "Dabawo? Nomonde is here?" Me: "She arrived last week tata." Rob: "Oh. She didn't say." Me: "I'm sure it slipped her mind." I gathered my stuff. Me: "Enkosi tata. With everything." Rob: "You're welcome my child. Drive safe." I took my bag and left the building. Perhaps, I could create a website for applicants instead of applying straight to Rob's company. The website will make things so much easier. All I had to do was hire people from IT, Marketing, Finance and someone for office admin work. I got in the car and Kompany drove me back to Siyanda's house. At least by next week I'd move out, I got a place I liked, affordable too. I walked into the house where Dubs was feeding a screaming Lam. Me: "Let me, Dubs." I took him and pulled out a breast. The immediate silence was almost deafening. Me: "Uyabawa mos yena iLamlam ka mamakhe." he sucked on the breast quietly, his eyes still glistening with tears. He really hated that porridge. Me: "He hates it Dabawo. I'm gonna give it away. I'll buy purity and yogurt. Maybe I'll try another porridge he might like." Dubs: "Idea is the good mntanam. My head do the spins and falling ngulomntanakho." I held in a laugh. Me: "I'll pump enough milk for overnight. I'll rush to Spar right now for the purity." I burped Lam and handed him over to Dubs. I did a quick pop in at Spar for Baby Lam's essentials and came back. Dabawo packed them in the bag. I packed for Chris. Lakhe would fetch him from school that day. After pumping for Lam and finishing up packing. Siyanda walked in. I hadn't seen him in two days. Me: "Hi." Siya: "Hey. How are you?" Me: "Uya awta ngoku Siyanda." he laughed. Siya: "hayi ke Spho. I'm a doctor. Chief of surgery at that. There's a lot happening at work so I slept there. I'm sorry. I should have called." Me: "I was joking with you. You don't owe me any explanation." Siya: "Still." Me: "Don't worry about it." Dubs: "Okay. Time for goings. Bye bye mama ka Lam." Me: "Goodbye Dabawo. Goodbye my angel. I love you sooooo much." I kissed my baby. My heart tore a bit every time I had to spend time away from him. Me: "Safe drive Dabawo. Call me." Dubs: "Okay mntanam. Goodbye bhut Siyanda." Siya: "Bye mama." she walked out to Kompany with Lam and their bags. Siya: "You haven't slept." Me: "I did sleep and are you spying on me?" Siya: "You're spying on yourself. You're dressed up like you're going somewhere." Me: "I was attending a meeting. I just came back." I looked at the door. Siya: "Its just one night. Lam will be fine." Me: "I know. Dabawo is so good with him. She prays while she feeds him, bathes him. She's wonderful. I just miss him already." Siya: "Its not even 2 minutes they're gone. The car is still in the driveway. Come on Spho." Me: "You're right. I need to stay strong." Siya:

"Or you could go with them." Me: "I can't. The fact that Lakhe is in a relationship and quite happy does upset me, if I see them together I don't think my sanity will be as intact as the last time." Siya: "Must be difficult. Seeing someone you love, love someone else." Me: "It is. What do you want for dinner?" Siya: "Nothing really. I'll order pizza. You need to sleep, you have two more nights of training to go. All the strength you have, you'll need." Me: "Not until I tell you about my meeting today." I pulled him to the couch. Me: "We signed the contracts. Now, my next step is developing a website. Do you know of anyone who can do it for me?" Siya: "I'm a doctor." he laughed. Me: "Yeah, but you know people right?" Siya: "I know patients and other doctors, Spho." Me: "I've got training specialists ready but I want to change the application process. The sooner the website is launched, the sooner the youth apply." Siya: "I'll see what I can find." Me: "You're the best!" Siya: "what else happened at the meeting?" Me: "Nothing much other than meeting the banker and lawyers. He was weirdly interested in the project." Siya: "Who?" Me: "The investment banker." Siya: "He probably likes you." Me: "but you know Whats even weirder?" Siya: "I cannot imagine." Me: "Rob IS an investment banker why would he hire another investment banker to handle his finances when he can do it himself?" Siya: "Rob OWNS an investment company, he can hire people to do the job he doesn't have time for or possibly can't do at all." Me: "What are you saying?" Siya: "I'm saying, most billionaires don't have time for their own money. Spho you need to eat and go rest, please. You're stressing me." Me: "I'm not sleepy." Siya: "Its not about being sleepy, its about resting your body. If you don't rest and eat, you'll hurt yourself on the field." Me: "Fine Siyanda." Siya: "I care about you, I don't want to see you hurt. You're almost done, I just need you to focus and complete this once and for all." Me: "I hear you." he sighed. Me: "I'll eat something and go sleep." I got up from the couch to walk to the kitchen. He held my hand, halting my movement, himself standing up. I looked up at him and quickly away. Siya: "I'm not trying to punish you. I just need you to be strong. We can't lose focus when we're almost at the finish line. Look at me." he pulled up my chin with his index finger. Siya: "I want you to succeed. You already make me proud. Being a great mom and great businesswoman." Me: "Thank you Siya." I looked down. Siya: "What is it" Me: "I know this is weird to ask but ever since I got here, you haven't even tried to get close to me let alone talk to me. Do I also disgust you?" Siya: "What? No! Absolutely not. I'm just respecting your boundaries that's all. Besides that, I can't interfere with your training. You do not disgust me at all. I.....you want me to hit on you?" Me: "No. I don't. I just...never mind." Siya: "Tell me." Me: "I don't know if I'll find a guy that would accept me for everything I am. I have revolting DNA and a demonic family. No man will want to stay for that." Siya: "You worry about the most

insignificant things. I'll make you a sandwich." I watched him shuffle around the kitchen making the sandwich, my mind drifted off to a place where I wish I could be.....

Dabawo arrived at Masilakhe's house and carried Lam in. Lakhe: "Hello dub-" Dubs: "Nyello Dubs. Nyello Dubs. Into yaziyo Ku dabulula oko." Lakhe: "haibo. Ndenzenton ngoku Dabawo?" Dubs: "Uzazi wedwa noThixo wakho." she put the baby on the couch. Lakhe picked Lam up and kissed his baby boy. Lakhe: "I missed you so much." Dubs: "Hee Masilakhe'ikhaya." Lakhe: "Oh hayi Dabawo. Ude ulibize lonke." Dubs: "Uzimisele ntweni mhlawmbi?" Lakhe: "Nganton Dabawo?" Dubs: "Wohlukene no Spho. Ngoba kuthen? Nithini ngabantwana benu?" Lakhe: "Dabawo its a long story-" Dubs: "Long story neh? I hope ubude bayo bucothisa njengo Siyanda xa ezokushiya ke sana." Lakhe: "Andiva Dabaw-" Dubs: "Andithintithi Masilakhe." Lakhe: "What do you mean Siyanda uzondishiya? Akamfuni mos uSiyanda uSpho." Dubs: "Ingaske ndibe nale yakho ingqondo ingathi ikwi vacation eNgqushwa. Uwoach. OoMasilakhe bethuna." Lakhe: "Dabawo. What's going on? Is Spho dating Siyanda?" Dubs: "Ungakulinge undikhumshela mna. Andazi Nto." Lakhe: "Dabawo." Dubs: "Masilakhe njebe ulibele udlala umphumphuthela, abanye abantwana bathe poropop. Spho uhlala noSiyanda. Faka aircon ke wena kwelakho ikhwapha uphole, uyawzibona." Lakhe: "W-what do you mean, bahlala kunye. What...what does that mean?" Dubs: "Yuh ha.a andidibani nezithulu ke mna. Tshin thiza." the front door opened, Onika walked in with grocery bags. Onika: "I'm back baby. Who's this?" Lakhe: "My aunt." Onika: "Oh. Hello ma." Dubs: "Hi." Lakhe: "Onika can you give us a minute? We're having a family discussion." Onika: "I'll be in the bedro-" Lakhe: "I need you to leave." Onika: "Uhm...excuse me?" Lakhe: "I'll call you later. This is important, family stuff." Onika: "I thought you said I was your family." Lakhe: "You are-" Onika: "Then I'll be in the bedroom. I'm not going anywhere." Dubs: "Yes wena girl. Tell him. Thanga slap wena baby." Lakhe: "Onika, I'm asking you this one time. Can I just sort out my family problems?" Onika: "Of course you can. I won't interfere while I wait in the bedroom. Have you decided chicken or beef for supper." Lakhe: "I'm not hungry." he gave the baby to Dubs, grabbing his keys off the counter. Onika: "Where are you going?" Lakhe: "To fetch Chris." Onika: "Its 10am. He comes out at 12-" he closed the door behind him. Dubs: "Siiiiilent night, hoooly night. All is calmmmm, all is briiiight." she rocked the baby back and forth. Dubs: "masiyok'lalisa mntanam." she stood up and looked for Lam's bedroom, finally settling him in.

Lakhe knocked on the glass door of Siyanda's house. Siyanda was in his lounge, eating an apple. The knocking was persistent and got louder. Siya got up and looked for his shirt then remembered he'd left it in the bedroom. The sun was too hot already even when the house air conditioners were on full blast. He opened the door and stared at Lakhe. Siya: "What do you want?" Lakhe: "What do you think you're doing?" Siya: "Relaxing. In my house. What do you think you're doing?" Lakhe: "Siyanda. I'm not going to fucking argue with you!! Spho is still my-" Siya: "EX wife." he smiled. Siya: "You left her. Now she's here, with a man that can actually handle her." Lakhe: "Don't you-" Siya: "Or what Lakhe? You'll hit me? Haha. Try." Lakhe: "Siyanda, you came to my house as a snake knowing fully well what you wanted!!" Siya: "A man always knows what he wants and always makes a plan to get it." Lakhe: "If you think I'm going to let you get away with taking my family-" Siya: "Such a sad loss to be honest. I hope your new girlfriend is worth it. I myself wouldn't dream of trading a girl like Spho. What kind of fool are you? And I used to think Sandile was the dumb one." Lakhe shoved a punch in Siya's face. He pushed him back and held his throat. Lakhe: "Don't you dare talk to me like that. I swear if you so much as touch her-" Siya: "I already did. What a pleasure it was." Lakhe threw him on the glass table and it shattered to pieces. Lakhe: "You bastard!!!" ***** I was in my room upstairs when I was woken up by glass breaking. My immediate thought was Komander coming for Siya. I sprung up and sprinted downstairs. I saw Siya laying in the glass on the floor. Me: "Siyanda!!!" Siya: "Don't step on glass." I pulled him up. Me: "You're hurt." he had bruises and cuts all over his body. Me: "What the hell is wro...." I stared at Lakhe. Me: "YOU? What's the meaning of this!!!" Lakhe: "You're fucking HIM!!!" Me: "What!!! How is that any of your business!!!" Lakhe: "You're living with him and my damn kids!!!! That's how its my fucking business Spho!!! My new born son, is living with your boyfriend!!!!" Me: "YOU'RE the one that left me!!!! You're the one that started dating Onika!!!! You can have our kids over with your girlfriend and I can't do the same?! Uphambene Masilakhe." Lakhe: "You're living with him Spho. You share an entire house with him...and my kids." Me: "What was I supposed to do? You're the one that told your girlfriend you didn't want to fight about money nobody helped you earn. So I left you alone with your money Masilakhe. I left the house too because YOU taught me how to depend on you. I don't have a job. I don't have money. My parents have kicked me out of their house. What was I supposed to do?" Lakhe: "You could have come to me-" Me: "You Are In A Fucking Relationship!!! How desperate would I look? The poor ex wife still groveling for a man that doesn't want her." Lakhe: "So you chose HIM? Of all

people!" Me: "He accepts me for who I am. He supports me. He risked his life. Just for me. So yes, I choose him." Lakhe: "You can't do that." he breathed. Me: "I just did. So you are going to get out of my man's house and never return unless you're here to apologize to him. And bring me back my kids." he kicked through the glass door and it shattered to pieces. Lakhe: "Fuck the both of you!!!!!" he stormed out. Siya: "Wow. I never knew he was so dramatic. He was damn near burning my house down." Me: "I'm sorry. About all this. I'll pay-" Siya: "Don't be silly. This is nothing. I'll get the company to repair it quick and a cleaning service. Its really just glass, nothing major." I looked at him. Me: "About what I said..." Siya: "I know. You were just scaring him. I don't take it seriously. Don't worry. I can be your pretend boyfriend to drive your ex crazy. I haven't had a good fight in a while." Me: "Siyanda please. You're a.....you'll kill him." Siya: "You don't want me to? Not even a little bit." Me: "No!" Siya: "Then I won't." he kissed my forehead. Siya: "Go to bed." Me: "No, let me check your wounds." Siya: "You know what they say about doctors. Plus I can heal my own wounds." Me: "Yes, but not on your back. Where's your first aid kit?" Siya: "You need your rest." Me: "I'll go to sleep once I'm done with you. Sit. Your queen orders you." Siya: "As you wish, Your Excellency." I laughed. Me: "uyadika ke." I sat behind him and cleaned the cuts. Me: "Why do you risk your life for me." Siya: "If not for you then for who. I don't have anything else to live for. Knowing you're safe, is the only thing that calms me down." Me: "But Siya you know there's nothing in return for it." Siya: "I don't do it because I want to be repaid. I do it because my heart told me to. There's a piece of glass stuck in that wound, you'll have to pull it out." Me: "NO!" Siya: "Please. If I could, I'd do it myself and if Kompany was here he would help....well, kind of. Take the tweezers." Me: "It looks so painful." I flinched. Siya: "Its still numb so I can't feel. Do it Spho." I gripped the piece of glass with the tweezers and pulled it slowly. The glass was actually half my pinky finger. I showed him. Siya: "You'll have to stitch it." Me: "I can't!" Siya: "You can and you will." he talked me through the whole process until I finished. Siya: "Done. See? Easy being a doctor." Me: "That was nowhere near easy and I think nurses do it. Your heads are too big for you to do anything other than 'diagnose' someone." he laughed. Siya: "Sphosenkosi suxoka. We stitch." Me: "Your interns, the nurses or you?" Siya: "Only because I don't have time between surgeries." Me: "Exactly." Siya: "My queen is insulting me." Me: "Your queen can do a lot more than insult you." I stood up and packed away the supplies. Siya: "Go to bed Spho. Why do I have to nag you like this... Goooo." Me: "Okay!! But be careful." I went back to my room. It actually felt good to see Lakhe go bat shit crazy. For a second it looked like he wanted to cry. "You can't do that." Priceless.

Sandile in his hotel room, sitting at the dining table with an empty plate and his laptop. The doors flew open and he looked up to see Lakhe barging in. Sands: "I could have been fucking. You don't just barge in peoples' houses. What's wrong with you?" Lakhe: "How could she???. How dare she!!!" he paced back and forth. Sands: "Before you tear a hole on my carpet, can you tell me what's going on." Lakhe: "She tricked me. I thought she loved me. But NOOO, fuck NO." Sands: "Lakhe. When you look at me, do you see Harry Potter? Wizard of Oz? A Psychic? Perhaps even a Sangoma? How the fuck am I to know what or who you're talking about and for the love of God, could you stand still! Pick a spot! I literally just had these carpets cleaned this morning!" Lakhe: "Spho is dating Siyanda. They live together." Sands: "What?" he covered his mouth. Lakhe: "Why are you smiling?" Sands: "I'm not. I'm just thinking of a joke the chef told me." Lakhe: "Share it." Sands: "Okay, I'm laughing at you. Seriously. Why are you worked up like this?" Lakhe: "Spho was my wife Sandile and he took her from me!!!" Sands: "YOU. LEFT. HER. Does that ring a bell?" Lakhe: "I didn't leave her for her to also leave me!!!" Sands: "You mean she followed your example." Lakhe: "Who's side are you on?" Sands: "I didn't make that clear? I'm on Siyanda's side. Don't you have a whole girlfriend also? Khome ke ngaley, brother have you seen Spho? Like recently. Heeee, was she really pregnant? Seems as if little Lam was doing push ups in there because-" Lakhe: "Shut up!!! I am going to kill him." Sands: "Good luck, oh and side note; Siyanda is a half demon, so when you do succeed in being dragged to hell, do me the courtesy of giving a wave or high five to brother Lucifer. Its been a minute." Lakhe: "You are going to help me." Sands: "Did he hit you? You seem a little light headed and delusional." Lakhe: "What do I do then!!!" Sands: "Accept defeat, what else!!!" Lakhe: "I do not succumb to fear-" Sands: "I'd advise you to. This is the same fear you're running from. Demons. He's got a whole pack of them bhuti. You touch one Komander Elite and they all rain down on you. I was warned and I take warnings very seriously." Lakhe: "Sandile this man is raising my children. They live in his house. He can't do that." Sands: "He kinda did already. Look, right now you're in the eye of a tornado, you can't see anything but your entire life spiraling around you. You're scared. You'll need to take a deep breathand die." he fell down laughing. Lakhe: "You're a piece of shit." Sands: "Yeah but andishiywanga Li demon." he laughed. Sands: "If I were you I'd just offer to plan their wedding and pay for it just to apologize. Even throw in a honeymoon. What strength do you have to fight with an entire board of Satan's directors." Lakhe: "You are supposed to be my brother. You're supposed to help me." Sands: "I did help you. When I told you that I would support Spho if she found another man. When I told you months back that if you left her, I wouldn't forgive you. That should've given you a head start.

Now that we've reached this point, I again am helping you by telling you to forget it. You really haven't spent time with evil, have you? Every time you scream your pain, a demon rejoices. They have power over your agony. When Siyanda sees you angry and hurt, you're only making him stronger. Just ignore it. And Spho isn't dating Siya, maybe fucking him, I mean have you seen the guy? I'm not gay or anything. Anyway, there's no love there." he looked at his brother. Sands: "I just made it worse, haven't I." a lone tear escaped Lakhe's eye. Sands: "You're not going to do that here. Masilakhe I know you love her but let her go. You can never win this fight now." Lakhe: "I need to kill someone. Meet me at the docks at 8pm." he walked to the door. Sands: "I'm bringing Siya if you think you're going to kill me." the door banged shut. Sands: "bad joke. I'll probably pay for that later... Oh well."

Midday.

Lakhe carried Chris in the house. Chris ran to his room instantly when he stepped on the floor. Onika: "There you are. I've been trying you all day." Lakhe: "I need a drink." Onika: "I'll get you some wat-" Lakhe: "Why would I go drink water?" he took a bottle of whiskey from the cabinet and sat down. Onika: "Lakhe, is your aunt spending the night here?" Lakhe: "Yes." Onika: "I thought we'd have discussed this first-" Lakhe: "Oh, do you pay rent here?" Onika: "No but I do buy the food and I don't appreciate your tone!" Lakhe: "Nobody asked you to buy the food. They're my family and they'll stay as long as they feel." Onika: "I don't care about the food Masilakhe but I'm disputing the insinuation that I don't do anything here to have a say. We share the expenses so I get to be included in decision making." Lakhe: "You think I need your permission to invite my family?" he gulped the first shot. Onika: "You went to see her...." Lakhe: "Onika, just shut up. For once. Let me be! You're always in my ear nagging me!" Onika: "WOW." Dabawo walked out the bedroom to the lounge. Dubs: "Uright?" Lakhe: "I'm fine." he gulped another shot. Dubs: "Ukuzintyintya ngotywala akuzonceda nto ndikxelele." (Alcohol won't help you.) Chris: "When are we going home?" he walked in the lounge with his bag again. Lakhe: "You're sleeping here." Chris: "Really? Why?" Lakhe: "Because I missed you." Chris: "Is mama coming? She can make me the chicken again." Lakhe: "no." Chris: "Why not? She was here the last time we came and she made me breakfast in the morning." Onika: "Excuse me?" Lakhe: "Your mother is busy. Go find something to do." Chris: "I already have something to do tata. Dr Siyanda teaches me gardening and we were gonna plant potatoes today. My favorite. So I have to go." Lakhe gulped another shot. Chris: "Tata!" Lakhe: "What!!!" Dubs: "Hayi Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Christian you're not going

anywhere! Put that bag back in your room." Chris: "I want mama." Lakhe: "Well you're not getting her. March." Chris: "No..." he sobbed. Dabawo picked up Chris and carried him to the room. Onika: "I'm gonna say this once. Just because you fought with their mom doesn't mean you have to fight with all of us. He is a child for pete's sake. And quit drinking alcohol in front of him! You are scaring him!" Lakhe: "This is not your house-" Onika: "I don't care but I will not let you emotionally hurt your child because your ego is bruised. Grow up!" Lakhe: "No child of mine is going to learn how to garden like a peasant!!!" Onika: "Well Excuse the fuck out of me King Lakhe!!! Our Fathers grew up gardening for a living to raise us! Unlike you who actually hired them! We're not Sobukwe's. Our parents don't own banks and billions. And instead of looking down on a child's interests. How about you actually teach him something! Like how not to be an idiot!!! Like YOU. Shit you piss me off!" Lakhe: "Get out of my house." Onika: "Make me." she switched off the stove. Onika: "Today you are going to fight me. I have been taking your shit for weeks!!!! I am tired. And If I need to leave, I will fight you first." she rolled up her sleeves and took off her ear rings. Lakhe: "You're fucking crazy." he took his keys and walked out. Onika: "I thought as much-" Lakhe: "Get out of my house!!!" he yelled and drove off.

I woke up in the evening. My room was dark and a little cold. I got out of bed to switch on the light and check the time. Just after 10pm. I needed to shower and eat. It was almost time to leave. I took a quick shower and dressed then ran downstairs. Siyanda was sitting in his lounge watching TV. The glass was swept up and removed. The door was just covered with plastic, I was so embarrassed this happened. Siya: "the door will be fitted tomorrow. Leave it." Me: "You didn't wake me." Siya: "I did. You're awake, aren't you? Your supper is in the oven." Me: "I'll have pizza." Siya: "You'll have your supper. You need strength." I took out the food and ate it. After my healthy meal, I drank almost a liter of water. Me: "I'm ready." Siya: "Kompany will be here in a few minutes." I sat on the couch. Me: "Aren't you afraid Kompany might rat you out?" Siya: "If he wanted to he would but Kompany is loyal to you now." Me: "Yet he belongs to Komander." Siya: "A demon like him does not feel pain. There's nothing he can do to him so there's no point. If the situation gives, Kompany would very much die for you, like I would." Me: "but why... Sir has been your leader for years." Siya: "True, a leader. Not our queen." Me: "I'm touched Siya. This is beyond anything I've been gifted with. Your loyalty is enough." Siya: "and it is with pleasure." He shifted a little farther away. Me: "What." Siya: "Keep your strength for these two remaining days." Me: "Its that bad?" Siya: "Yes. Go well Spho. I believe in you." Me: "Thank you. Please be

safe Siya. Promise me." Siya: "I can't promise you anything but your safety. That I'll make sure of even with my last breath." Me: "Don't say stuff like that, you're scaring me." Siya: "A queen should not be scared but be courageous." Me: "then I guess I'm not a queen. Siyanda, promise me you'll do anything to stay alive until I come back." Siya: "I can't promise you Spho. I really wish I could but, the life we've chosen is not our own. I'm sorry." Me: "Sit still." Siya: "Why." I held his face and kissed his lips. Me: "You are one brave man." he kissed me back, holding my hair. I held his chest and gently pushed him back. Me: "Stay Alive." Siya: "I promise." I saw the car lights outside and walked out. Kompany drove me to our location. My mind was mush, I couldn't even think properly. It was probably a bad idea to kiss him but he was just ready to die. I couldn't take it. At least now he has something to fight for, right? At least until we have a plan. We arrived at location with no sign of life whatsoever. Me: "Are we early?" Kompany: "No. Right on time my queen." Me: "Where's everyone?" Kompany: "Stay in the car, my queen. It'll be safer." Me: "No, Kompany. This is my battle. I'll do it." You know shit is real when Kompany himself does not even know what's going on. Kompany: "I come with you, my queen." we got out the car and looked around. I went into the woods with Kompany on my tail, we searched and went back to the car. Me: "That's odd." Kompany: "I think we should go." Me: "Oh shit. Siyanda!!" I jumped in the car. Kompany got in and drifted back to the house hoping it was not too late.....

#155

Kompany parked in front of Siyanda's house and we went to the door. He held me behind him. Kompany: "I go in first." he pushed the plastic aside and walked in. He started talking in their language again. Siya: "babe?" I stepped in the house. There he was carrying a cup in his hand. Siya: "What's going on?" he had a look of concern in his eyes. I just hugged him tight. Me: "You're alive." Siya: "Yes. I believe so. Kompany." Kompany: "I wait outside." he walked out. Me: "They're not on location. I thought they'd come to kill you without me around." Siya: "They're not coming here." he sipped his beverage. Siya: "I guess your initial training is over. The last two sessions will be kind of a surprise. When you least expect it. More like a practical. So you need to be alert at all times." he sipped again. Me: "What are you drinking?" Siya: "Strength mixture. Its for my cuts. Want a taste?" Me: "it smells funny." he smiled. Siya: "Kompany does not want to leave your side." Me: "he has to. I don't want him to get into trouble." Siya: "We're already in trouble." he laughed. Siya: "Spho, in case you don't know, you Are the enemy. You fight for good, your father fights for bad.

You're obviously not going to get along now." Me: "What do we do now?" Siya: "We wait. Want some hot cocoa?" Me: "I can't be drinking hot cocoa. While I'm this stressed!" I sat on the couch. Kompany came in and sat on the other. I've never seen him sit on the couch before. He's always in the car. Siya handed him another filled cup. Siya: "Okay. Let's play a game then. Since you can't sleep." he opened the cupboard. Siya: "We have 30 seconds, Twister, Monopoly and Empire. Choose." Kompany: "Empire." Siya: "That's his favorite." he took it out. Kompany plays board games? WOW. I received a message on my phone. "Why would you do this Sphosenkosi? I mean it could have been anyone else but Siyanda! You promised me!" I put the phone aside making sure I read it. Another message came in. Then another. Siya: "new boo?" I laughed. Me: "No. Your arch enemy." Siya: "Can I respond?" I tossed him the phone and the phone rang. Siya: "Baby's phone. Hello?" he put it on loudspeaker. Lakhe: "Give her the damn phone!!!!" Siya: "She's in the shower....its hot th-" Lakhe: "You fucking -" he hung up. Kompany: "That's not right." Me: "I know. But I like it." Kompany: "Mr Lakhe love the queen. He would kill for the queen." Siya: "Awww. Its a shame." Kompany: "Its not." Me: "I know you're his biggest fan but he's in a relationship now. Why can't I be?" Kompany: "He still love the queen more." Me: "I don't think so Kompany, otherwise we would be together but no, we're not." Siya: "Since when do you like Lakhe?" Kompany: "I like no one." Siya: "Not even me." Kompany: "Yes." Siya: "So you do like me?" Kompany: "No." Siya: "You just said yes." Kompany: "Yes. Not even you. I know English." I laughed. Siya: "You mean the English I taught you?" Me: "Let me go get snacks." I went to fetch the chips from the kitchen. I saw in the kitchen window a shadow standing in the far distance. I stared at it as it stared back at me then disappeared. Siya: "What's wrong?" he stood next to me." Me: "Just saw a shadow." Siya: "That's your dad. Don't worry yourself too much about it. Come." Me: "He wants to hurt you." Siya: "He won't." we went to the lounge and carried on with our game night. ***** Hours later. I went up to bed. It was almost 4am. I undressed and sported pajama shorts and a vest then relaxed on my back. A light knock sounded on the door. Me: "come in." Siyanda pushed the door open. Me: "Hey." he closed the door behind him. Siya: "Hey." I moved to one side of the bed and he sat down. Siya: "I know you don't love me Spho. Not the way you love Lakhe. You probably never will." this was very much true. Siya: "You don't need to feel sorry for me. And I don't need you playing with my feelings either. I just.... This thing of making him angry is going to get to a serious point where he wants blood. Now I need to know, what exactly would I be fighting for? For your entertainment?" Me: "No. You won't have to fight him. If Lakhe was serious, he would have called the divorce off and taken me back but he wants to keep me as his side chick because its less work. We made the

mistake of having sex and that was it. He still stays away. The divorce will be final today. I'll be a single woman." Siya: "How single?" I looked at him. Siya: "Don't do that." Me: "I want to." I held his gorgeous jaw line covered by a healthy nicely trimmed beard. Siya: "Spho..." Me: "Does anyone ever tell you how beautiful you are? I mean, seriously beautiful. Your face. Your Body. Your heart." Siya: "I wish." he turned away. Me: "now don't do that." Siya: "I don't want you playing me like this." I climbed on top of him. Me: "Like what?" he swallowed. Siya: "Spho." Me: "Isn't this what you wanted Siya...its right on top of you." he sat up. Siya: "I do. Not like this. I want us to be comfortable first and jus-" Me: "get to know each other? Date? You cannot be serious. You've known me for years." Siya: "We've changed. Both of us." I got off and sat next to him. Siya: "I'm not the type for one night stands or rebounds. I'm not going to avail myself like that either. If you want me, it will have to be true." Wow. And here I was wet as the sea. He pulled me to him. Siya: "Does anyone ever tell you how beautiful you are? I mean, seriously beautiful. Your face. Body. Your heart." Me: "Stop that." he kissed my lips, drowning me more. Me: "Siyanda." I pulled away. Siya: "What?" Me: "Uhm...you need to give me a minute to calm down." Siya: "You need to sleep and stop thinking dirty. I'll take you out for breakfast. Is that okay?" every time he opened his mouth to talk. I just drenched even more. Me: "Okay." he kissed my cheek. Siya: "sleep." he demanded. I closed my eyes, wrapping body in his. His thigh was in between my legs. His strong, smooth, meaty thigh. Siya: "Stop it." Me: "I want you." Siya: "Learn how to resist." Me: "Maybe if you left my room then." Siya: "I'm not going anywhere. Sleep." I swallowed and diverted my thoughts, shifting to my side of the bed. Siya: "Don't even think about touching yourself. I'll tie your hands above your head if I have to." I grunted and closed my eyes once more. Mxim. Me: "You're mean." Siya: "I'd like to think of myself as a nice guy." he cuddled me. Siya: "I have to go to work in the afternoon." I turned to look at him. Me: "Is it safe?" Siya: "Yes. I've got an op for the rest of the day and half the night. I'll be back before midnight." Me: "I'll come pick you up. We'll drive around for ice cream." Siya: "You like to entice the devil, don't you?" Me: "He tried me once and didn't succeed." he kissed my hand. Me: "Let's skip breakfast and sleep in. You need to rest. I haven't seen you sleep." Siya: "Yes." he closed his eyes, breathing lightly. He looked angelic in his sleep. Just imaginary type of beautiful. Like I was hallucinating. Siya: "What." his eyes were still closed. Me: "nothing." Siya: "Why do you hate sleep?" Me: "I'm not used to sleep. Lam usually keeps me company. Where is Kompany?" Siya: "You're not going anywhere. Sit still and sleep." I closed my eyes and finally drifted off to sleep.

Sandile knocked on Siyanda's front door mid morning. Kompany opened the door and stared at him. Sands: "Do you ever take off your helmet? I mean mask. Hi, by the way, Where's Siya?" he stepped inside. Kompany: "Siya sleeps." Sands: "Really? Its 11." Siyanda walked out the passage fully dressed. Sands: "There he is." Siya: "Came to finish me off?" Sands: "I wouldn't dream of it. I came to give you a hug." Siya: "What?" Sands: "I love my brother but for the first time ever, he lost. Like, genuinely defeated. Its the greatest thing I've ever seen. So I brought you cookies." he gave him the box. Siya: "I don't eat cookies." Sands: "Good. Which brings me to my next agenda. I need you to back off. Ultimately leave Spho alone. And to be honest I'm not scared of you, I would literally go into initiation right now just to fight you. You've had your fun, now its time to end it. Thank you." Siya laughed. Siya: "You think....." he put the box on the counter. Siya: "You can come into MY house. And threaten me? Stultus Es Valde." Kompany groaned. Sands: "You know it won't be a clean fight if you have demonic advantage." Siya: "Here's what we're gonna do. You're gonna leave my house, take your cookies too. And if you do come back, for anything other than apologizing. I can and will use demonic advantage. Go for initiation. I'll still be 10 times stronger with every last breath of you. Now, if you'll excuse me. My queen awaits." Sands: "Siyanda. I am warning you for the last time. You need not even know the lengths I'd go through for Spho." Siya: "Oh I know and I don't care." Sandile walked out. Kompany: "Komfort." Siya: "Yes Niny." Kompany: "Kompany hate the name Niny." Siya: "Kompany will get used to it." Kompany groaned. Kompany: "Mr Lakhe's little brother?" Siya: "Yes." he made himself coffee. Kompany: "He smells of death." Siya: "He's probably fresh off a kill. That family is one twisted secret after another. From the father to the sons." Kompany: "What about the queen?" Siya: "Spho doesn't belong in this world. Not with them, not with us. But I will make her belong with you and me. She's our queen and we will protect her from anything and everything. We will respect her and follow her orders. Do you hear me?" Kompany: "Yes." Siya: "Good." Kompany: "Komfort?" Siya: "Hm?" Kompany: "You love the queen." Siya looked at him and sighed. Kompany: "Queen love Mr Lakhe." Siya: "I know." Kompany: "How you make the queen love you? Like you love her?" Siya: "I don't know Niny. I guess I'll just have to be patient. It'll happen on its own." he drank the coffee in one gulp. Siya: "Take care of her. I'm going to the hospital, I'll be back late." Kompany: "Ok." Siya walked out.

I got out from bed and went to take a shower. Today I wanted to go check for cars since the insurance company was done with the investigation and would be paying me soon. I also needed to pay a visit to Komander. I hated

this uncertain animosity. If he wanted us to be enemies then I needed to know and be prepared. After my shower, I got dressed in my ripped skinny jeans and one of Siya's white shirts which was a loose on me a bit. I tucked in only one side of the shirt and let the other hang. I chose my black Christian Louboutin stilleto for this occasion. After making the bed and tidying up, I left the room. Kompany was waiting for me downstairs. Me: "Hi Kompany." Kompany: "My queen." he nodded. Me: "Let's get going. I need to see your other friend. Please take me to him." Kompany: "Who is my friend?" Me: "Sir Komander." Kompany: "I don't think that is a very good idea, my queen." Me: "Must I take a cab?" Kompany: "No my queen. As you wish." we walked to the car and he drove us to Komander's house. I closed my eyes in the backseat and prayed internally until the car stopped. I got off the car and walked to the gate, waiting for it to open. Kompany stood right behind me. We walked in and to the front door. I knocked. "Enter." There was an eerie cold in the air. Kompany pulled me behind him and entered first. Kom: "Kompany." Kompany: "Sir." Me: "Komander." Kom: "Spho." he said icily. Khaya came from the passage and stood next to him. Then the awkward silence. Kom: "Why are you here." I kept quiet. Kompany kneeled down. Kom: "Well?" I really wasn't gonna say nothing. Kom: "Khaya." Khaya: "She is a child." Kom: "and is your queen." Khaya kneeled down. Khaya: "Queen." Me: "Hi dad. As you were." they stood up. Me: "My first request-" Khaya: "You don't get to make requests." Me: "Oh? Komander is that true? I don't get to make requests?" Kom: "What do you want Spho." Me: "Two things. One, Kompany. I want him to work with me." Kom: "Kompany is a demon. Full demon. He's not even human." Me: "I like him." Kom: "There's plenty of loyal servants to choose from." Me: "I've already chosen Kompany. And I'm not changing my decision. I'll work on Kompany, don't worry." Kom: "What are you going to do to him." Me: "Just good things." Kom: "What is the second." Me: "Komfort. You leave him alone. I want you to know and understand if any kind of harm comes his way, it will be a cold icy, Wintery day in all seven hells for the both of you. I don't have to say this twice. Leave him alone. Now and forever." Khaya: "You don't-" Kom: "Watch your mouth." he stood up. Kom: "I'll give you what you want. But Kompany stays mine. You change nothing in him." Me: "Those were the two conditions." Kom: "I am not changing your conditions, I'm adjusting them. You don't just snatch my security and make demands." Me: "I just did." I looked at Khaya. Me: "If I see you like I saw you last night. Lurking and watching us, especially near Komfort, I swear it will be the last thing you see....." I looked back at Komander. Me: "I guess this is it. The least you could have done is tell me the training was over instead of not showing up but nonetheless, thank you for the lessons. I do hope we can come to an agreement or middle ground one day." Kom: "Good luck." Me: "Kompany."

he followed me out. Komander looked at Khaya. Khaya: "She needs to be disciplined!" Kom: "You did that last week and how did it work out? She just got stronger, you fool!!!!" he paced the lounge. Kom: "I should have never trusted you. The more you push, the more aggressive she will be!!! I already lost two elites in one week. I will not hesitate to get rid of you too." he sat down and stood up again. Fire blazing in his eyes. Kom: "Zama!!!!" she hurried to the lounge. Kom: "Is Spho is dating Komfort?" Zama: "I wouldn't think so Sir." Khaya: "They live together. I saw them." Kom: "She was very adamant about his safety. Something is brewing. If Komfort marries Spho, he will be King which means he will rule over us since he's already - Shit I can't even think it!!" Khaya: "That can't happen sir. Siyanda cannot be on the throne." Zama: "He won't! Siyanda is half demon, she would never marry let alone date him." Khaya: "Then why is she protecting the son of a bitch!" Zama: "Kodwa Khaya, Siya is a lovely sweet boy-" Khaya: "He can't marry her. Not when she knows who she is and the power she has. Its too dangerous Zama!" Zama: "You're the one that introduced Spho to this life in the first place! Had you protected her-" Kom: "Both of you, Shut up!! Khaya, get me Masilakhe. Now!"

Very late that day, just after 10 at night I drove to the hospital and waited for Siya. He walked out casually and stood by the driver's door. Siya: "Hi." Me: "Hey. So how much is it for the night?" he laughed. Siya: "Mxim. Just move over." I climbed on to the passenger seat and he got in the driver's. Siya: "I'll fetch my car in the morning. So where to miss?" Me: "You owe me ice cream remember?" Siya: "True." we went to purchase ice cream and parked at the beach. Me: "So, I went to see them." Siya: "I can imagine the tension." Me: "like iron." Siya: "What did you say?" Me: "Told them to leave you and Kompany alone." Siya: "and you think they would?" Me: "I threw in a bit of a threat, I don't think they're that dumb." Siya: "hmm... anyway," he put down the ice. Siya: "I don't wanna talk about them." Me: "How was your day?" Siya: "Bad. I lost the patient. I feel like I failed him. He was so excited and talking to everyone telling them I was going to make him better. He praised me and I failed him." I held his hand. Me: "I'm sorry." Siya: "I can't help thinking what I did wrong. I don't know what it is." Me: "You did the best you could Siya, this isn't your fault. It was his time. You need to accept it." Siya: "Is that how its supposed to be? God just decides its your time and takes you from your loved ones so suddenly. Leaving them in pain." Me: "Yes. God needs his strongest soldiers with him to spiritually take care of the ones left behind on earth. He doesn't take loved ones from their family to hurt them but to give them a personal guardian." Siya: "how do I explain that to the mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and even children of my patients when they're

distraught and shaken beyond repair? The most painful ones is the spouses. I see myself in them. If I was someone's husband and I was told my wife has passed. Right then and there, I just forget to even breath." I kissed his hand. Me: "You've got such a kind heart. Why did you become a doctor?" Siya: "I was passionate about medicine. Healing people." Me: "I hear the past tense, was." Siya: "Every day, the passion dies with each patient." Me: "and what about the ones that survive? That should build it back up and motivate you." he looked at me resting his head on the head rest and smiled. Me: "What." Siya: "Nothing. You just make me happy." he kissed my knuckles and leaned over to kiss my lips. I felt the soft vanilla tasting lips on mine and shuddered in pleasure. Both my hands holding his face. Our tongues dancing in a slow rhythm. He softly bit my lower lip and looked in my eyes. I'd never so dizzy and taken by just a kiss. Siya: "the things you do to me." Me: "what about them?" he kissed me again with his hand gently resting on my thigh. Then finally, he pulled away. Taking my breath away in the process. Me: "You're really respectful hey." he smiled. Siya: "This is how I was raised. Besides, you're a queen. I can't do just about anything to you." Me: "and you're a king, but I'll do just about anything to you." he chuckled. Siya: "I should get you home." he started the car and drove toward his house which was five minutes away. He held my hand close to his lips as he focused on the road. We approached the house and I saw a car parked outside. That was Lakhe's Audi RS5. This man does not give up. Honestly. This was just ridiculous. Its a quarter to midnight! Siya chuckled and parked the car. Siya: "Wow." Me: "I'll get rid of him." we got out the car and Lakhe got out of his too. It was dark but I could see in his hand a bunch of white roses. What game was this man playing? Lakhe: "Baby." Me: "I'm going to call the police Masilakhe, this is harassment." Lakhe: "You don't have to do that." he stepped closer. Siya stood next to me. Lakhe: "Can we talk?" Me: "Talk." Lakhe: "I've come to the realization that I've acted a fool. I wasblinded and just hurt. I felt as if I was losing my place in your heart and being replaced by your family. I acted out when I left you. I made a mistake Spho. I love you. We're a family. I spoke to your dad and he told me the process of this initiation thing and its not that bad actually. I can do it. I want to, for us. For our kids. Please come home my wife."

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I just looked at Lakhe standing right before me. Me: "Where did you get the flowers." Lakhe: "I picked them from our garden. They look absolutely beautiful." Me: "You hate gardening." Lakhe: "Not anymore." Me: "I know it repels you. You cannot stand working in a garden. Where did you get the

flowers?" Lakhe: "I bought them." I smiled. Siya walked into his house. Me: "What is your game." Lakhe: "There is no game baby. Can we get your bags from inside? Our kids are waiting for us at home." Me: "Its midnight. The kids are asleep." Lakhe: "Then it will give us some time together." Me: "I'll think about it. We'll talk properly in the morning Lakhe." Lakhe: "You can't seriously go into that house and sleep with him again!" Me: "Why not? You did it multiple times with Onika." Lakhe: "So this is about revenge?" Me: "Its about me falling asleep and waking up in the morning with a fresh mind. I'm too tired to figure out your tricks." Lakhe: "Promise me Spho, that you won't touch him. Please." he held my arm. His hands were blazing hot I almost jumped. Lakhe: "What?" Me: "We'll talk in the morning." Lakhe: "I love you." I nodded. Me: "Leave the flowers." he gave me the bunch of roses and walked to his car. Lakhe: "I trust you." he said as he drove off. I went inside the house. Siya was with Kompany, chatting. Or were they. Siya: "Bother." Kompany: "Botter." Siya: "Bothhhher. Your tongue must touch your front teeth." Kompany: "Botthher." Siya: "That's Better." Me: "What's going on." Siya: "teaching him English." he clicked on his phone. Siya: "Say, disappoint." Kompany: "Kompany know disappoint." Siya: "Really, what does it mean?" Kompany: "Let down." he looked at my direction. Siya: "You're very smart, Niny. Say, disappear." Kompany: "Dis-sap-pee?" Siya: "phiya." Kompany: "dis-sap-phi-ya. Disappear." Siya: "Good. To vanish, to make go away." Kompany: "Kompany make disappear." he got up and walked out the house. Siya: "You mean to say goodbye." he yelled after him and stood up. Siya: "Goodnight." Me: "Siya." he looked at me. Me: "Why are you running from me?" Siya: "I'm not. I'm going to sleep, I had a long day." Me: "Can we talk?" Siya: "I already know, its okay. I knew it would happen sooner or later. I'm just glad you decided now before I got my hopes up. He's your husband after all. I didn't stand a chance." he proceeded to walk away, I held his arm. Siya: "Spho, uMasilakhe is waiting for you." Me: "he left." Siya: "Okay. Kompany will drive you then." Me: "Why? Are you kicking me out?" Siya: "Why would I kick you out when you're already leaving? Why would I even kick you out to begin with?" Me: "I'm not going anywhere." Siya: "So you want to live here with me just to torture him?" Me: "No. I want to live here with you." Siya: "You have his flowers in your hands." Me: "Just something I need to see." Siya: "Spho. You don't need to feel sorry for me. I'm a grown man. I can take rejection. Please don't make it harder on me. I asked you nicely not to play with my feelings. You wanted him back anyway with the mistake that happened but he didn't act on it, you said so last night. Now that he's back, I honestly don't understand why you're still here." Me: "Siyanda. I know you're hurt but there's no need to be salty." Siya: "Salty? I'm now salty for being hopelessly in love with you? I wish, Spho, I wish I can have the heart to go around changing women but I don't! I wish I didn't

care but I do! This is the second time in my life you've rejected me! We were in love. I asked you to be with me. To be My wife. To elope with me and you refused then months later you dump me in an email. Of course you won't remember that because of your accident and for a split second I wish I was the one who couldn't remember and wipe it out my memory too. I still have those emails Spho. I shake every time I read them. Sphosenkosi, I began to move on. I found a woman and had a child. And everyday I wished it was you. When my only son passed away, I thought of you every single moment. I just..." he caught his breath and leaned on the wall. Siya: "Just go." Me: "I don't want to go." Siya: "Then what do you want? I don't have the energy. My heart cannot take it anymore. Please Spho, go." he climbed the stairs by two and shut his bedroom door behind him. My heart broke instantly. It was more than just hurting him but it was doing it over and over again. I climbed up the stairs and opened his door. He was taking off his shoes turning his face away from me and walking to the shower. Nothing broke me more than seeing any man cry. Now I want to cry too. I sat on the bed and waited until he was done which was 15 minutes later. No steam meant an ice cold shower. Lakhe did that when he was angry. Was it a man thing or? Siya walked out with a towel on his waist and wore his boxers. Siya: "Where am I to rest if you're just going to sit here and torture me." Me: "You haven't given me a chance to talk." Siya: "A chance to hurt me you mean? I'm giving you an easy way out. You don't have to explain yourself." he put on lotion. Me: "I want you to tell me about the Komander bloodline." Siya: "I don't know anything about that." Me: "What happens when you're compelled to do something?" Siya: "What's this about?" Me: "Just answer." Siya: "Sir usually does the compelling. It lasts longer if its him. I really shouldn't be sharing this with you. Its punishable by death." Me: "Everything there is punishable by death. I got you off the first time and I will do it again. Tell me." Siya: "He speaks to you just a normal conversation about anything. When you look in his eyes, you're locked in them and can't move. He will move closer and breath in your mouth. Once you inhale him, he can ask anything of you. And you will do it. Without hesitation. Why do you ask?" Me: "How do you know someone has been compelled?" Siya: "Their eyes are usually very focused, very determined, very sure. Their body temperature is sky high. Sometimes scorching hot." WOW Komander, you are a class act. I just laughed unexpectedly. Siya: "What." Me: "Lakhe was compelled to come here." Siya: "Why would he be compelled." Me: " One, Lakhe hates gardening. He had freshly picked white roses. Two, he was screaming on the phone last night at you. Three, he hates demons and does not get along with my dad. Why now all of a sudden?" Siya: "Oh." Me: "Why would he do that?" Siya: "He thinks you and I are together." Me: "That threatens him how." Siya: "That's because if I were to marry you, that would

make me King, and obviously rule above him. That he will not allow." Me: "What!" Siya: "That's how it goes. If a Queen marries, her husband is automatically a king also vice versa. Their children will be princes and princesses. Its never happened before though. So your father won't let it happen." Me: "So they compelled Lakhe to come back to me, in order to stop me from seeing you." Siya: "Probably. Look Spho, I need to sleep. I've got work in the morning." Me: "Siyanda, I don't want to go back to Lakhe. I want to stay with you." my mouth was shocked itself from the words that poured out. Siya: "You can't say that." Me: "I have to." Siya: "There is a way, you can get Lakhe out of compulsion. I can do it for you." Me: "Why would you do that?" Siya: "I don't like him but I know what its like to not be in control of your own mind. You have to be back with him. They won't stop tormenting him until you do." he got into bed. I got in after him. Siya: "Don't do this." Me: "shhh...yathand uthetha." I cuddled him. Me: "You don't want to be a king." Siya: "Why do you say that." Me: "I can feel it. Why." Siya: "Its not that." Me: "What is it." Siya: "Khaya is more like a father to me. I love them. They've taught me a lot." Me: "Teaching you how to kill and slaughter people." Siya: "I don't slaughter people. That's not my job." Me: "but you can." Siya: "If its absolutely necessary." Me: "Have you before?" Siya: "yes." his voice was more like a whisper. Me: "Rey?" he turned to the other side. Me: "You had no choice, did you. It was either him or you." he kept silently still. I couldn't even tell if he was breathing. Me: "Siyanda." Siya: "I didn't kill Rey." Me: "but you were there when it happened." Siya: "Please. Can we not." Me: "Khaya did it. He wasn't even in Cuba, was he?" he turned around to look at me. Siya: "Spho, you need to let this go. Please. Its not safe to know this kind of information." Me: "Then why won't you be king." Siya: "You're pure blood, I'm half dark, its not going to work!!! We will end up killing our kids and each other! Dark and pure do not mix! That's why we're in this predicament in the first place! That's how grandfather exists. He's of half pure but his father turned hi....." he stopped talking and closed his eyes. I sat up. Me: "Siya!!" he breathed and his eyes shot open, their color pure white. Siya: "Stay. Away." he growled. I jumped up and stared at him as he closed his eyes again.

Sandile stood in his kitchen and poured himself a double shot of cognac. Sands: "After the day I had, mans need to chill has climbed up a ladder. Boogie? You want a shot?" the puppy ran up to him and wagged his tail. Sands: "You a little drunkard, aren't you? My pretty little alcoholic." he poured half a shot in the dog's water bowl. Sands: "So, let me tell you." the puppy tasted the brown liquid and jumped back. Sands: "Oops my bad." he took appletizer and poured a little in the water bowl. Sands: "There you go. Sorry

bout that. As I was sayin-" Lakhe: "Speaking to yourself again?" Sandile jumped off the couch. Sands: "How the fuck did you get- he looked at his door and then at Lakhe. Sands: "That door was locked!" Lakhe: "I used to own this place remember?" he took the bottle and drank the cognac. Sandile stared at him. Lakhe: "That hit the spot." Sands: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Awuna bhuti?" he stared at him. Sands: "What the fuck happened to you." Lakhe: "Nothing. I went to go get my wife." he smiled. Lakhe: "She'll be back in our house by morning." he sat down. Sands: "Something really weird is going on. What did you do?" Lakhe: "I simply went and asked her to come back." Sands: "Mas- Bhuti, what happened." Lakhe: "Khaya called and requested a meeting with me so I went-" Sands: "The Khaya that despises the shit out of you?" Lakhe: "but you more, yes that one. We met up and talked, just guy talk. Even K joined us." Sands: "Let me get this around my head, its not that big don't worry. You went to hang out with two incredibly dangerous demons, all day long?" Lakhe: "They're not that bad really." he drank again. Sands: "Father God. What did they do." Lakhe laughed. Lakhe: "Nothing. We just chatted about my company and all. Then about Spho. Then about initiation." Sands: "What about it." Lakhe: "Well, K said, if I do it, I'll get Spho back. We'll be together and our kids. Then he explained the process, that its just strength training and enhancing your senses, getting in tune with your natural self and blocking spirit and entities." Sands: "So you think, K-man, is going to teach you how to block him and his commands?" Lakhe stared at him coldly. Sands: "Say he does. Won't you be a part of their....I don't want to say cult but, that's what it is." Lakhe: "Are you disrespecting K? Or just me?" Sands: "I was asking a question. What did Spho say?" Lakhe: "She said she needed time to think and that we'll talk in the morning." Sands: "And you're sure she will come back to you." Lakhe: "She loves me." he boldly stated. Lakhe: "We will be remarried and back together. She as queen, and I as king." Sands: "King? I'm confused." Lakhe: "Spho is a queen, in the Komander bloodline. Whoever she marries, becomes a king. Basically, a king is first place, queen after. I get to make decisions, huge decisions. I will be more powerful in business. Obviously making streams of more money. I'd be a multi billionaire by the end of the year." Sands: "Okay. I'll tell you the part your little friends decided to leave out." he got up and went to the bookshelf and pulled out an old book. Sands: "After I confronted Siyanda. I went to the library-" Lakhe laughed out loud. Lakhe: "He scared you into literature?" Sands: "Very funny. Anyway, the woman who manages the library spoke to me for a while sharing her history books and all. I asked if she knew anything about the K bloodline. She was shocked and asked why do I need to know. I said to her I found it interesting. Long story short, she said she possessed a certain book. There's only two of those books in the universe. And she had the

one. I gave her my address and she promised to send it on condition I bring it back. So here it is." Lakhe: "You're going to read that stupid book now?" Sands: "I already did. I may not have finished it but I got far enough to be shaken." he opened the book. Sands: "This bloodline, has been running for hundreds and hundreds of years. A man and woman, gave birth to two children. A boy and girl. These two kids grew up and fell in love with each other, they ended up killing their parents and continued their love together. Girl falls pregnant, gives birth to identical twins. Boys. This is when karma decided to pay a visit. At age 12, one of those boys experimented with a spirit that enticed him to kill his parents." Lakhe: "Okay, right here. What is the whole point of this?" Sands: "The boy grew with that spirit whereas his twin went the opposite way, not knowing his purity was granted by the universe. He met a woman, pure as he was and fell in love. They married and continued together. So did the evil twin, he found his match and married, also equally satisfied. For the longest time, they just existed without interrupting each other. Until the son of the dark twin, provoked the daughter of the pure and the war started." Lakhe: "Sandile, this is boring." Sands: "the dark side won and reigned. But the pure side wasn't entirely defeated. There was a child they'd missed who hadn't been killed. He grew silently and went about a way to teach them the holiest lesson of all time. You just don't mess with God's soldiers. Purity reigned once more. Now purity does not kill, so nobody died, but he still reigns successfully. He was introduced to a woman and he ended up marrying her. Unfortunately, the dark side had formulated a way of disguising her as pure so that she can destroy him from within. Which is what she did. Pure and dark do not live together in harmony. Dark will always provoke the light. ALWAYS. The problem is, the children bred by dark and pure are the strongest. That combination is astounding, especially the female children. For the longest time, dark has reigned, they have killed all the girl children to keep that dark blood-line going. That is why grandfather took an innocent Christian woman and bound her underground to rape her for years. That is how K was born. Babalo too. K didn't realize he still held the purity seed so when he conceived Spho, he was none the wiser. He just fell in love with his kids. But then his father reminded him. This is why Sibulele and Spho were sent away. Spho was not supposed to be alive. Not from birth. Not only is she queen, but she is Queen of the Pure. That is the strongest Komander in their blood-line. If you go half demon, she will be required by law to get rid of you. None of them know how to handle her, so they want to do it through you. Khaya played you." Lakhe: "Where did you say you got that book?" Sands: "Bhuti, If you want to be with Spho, she can be the only one to initiate you." Lakhe: "I asked. Where. Did. You. Get. That. Book." Sands: "I already told you." Lakhe: "Burn it." Sands: "No." Lakhe: "Get rid of it!" Sands: "I

will. If you promise me you'll stay away from them. They're using you." Lakhe: "You better get rid of that thing or else it will permanently disappear with its original owner." he walked out.

I woke up early the next morning in my own bed. I'd left Siya alone last night and I was worried if he was okay. After I made my bed, I went to shower, then I got dressed in a long white bodycon dress. It had half sleeves and the length was to my calf. I wore metallic stilettos and brushed my weave into a ponytail then applied some make up. Making my way downstairs, I could hear some voices. Kompany and Siya. Siya: "I promise Niny, I'll be back before 5pm." Kompany: "Are you sure?" Siya: "Yes. I'm sure." Me: "Good morning." they both kneeled. "My queen." Me: "Stop this. Get up. What's for breakfast." they stood up. Siya: "I was teaching Kompany how to make a fried egg." Me: "How did it go?" Kompany: "Not good." he shook his head. Me: "That's okay. You'll get it soon." Siya: "You look stunning." Me: "Thank you. You don't look half bad." Siya: "You're too kind. Will you be needing Kompany? He will be driving me to the hospital since I left my car there." Me: "Not yet. You can take him." Siya: "Okay. Niny and I are making a special dinner for you tonight." Me: "That is really sweet. I have to go fetch the kids also. On Tuesday we'll be moving into our new place." Siya: "I'll miss you." Me: "You'll see me anytime you like." he kissed my cheek. Siya: "You're gonna make me late." Me: "Then go. I'll be here when you get back from work." Siya: "Okay. Let me fetch my bag upstairs." he ran up the stairs. Me: "Niny." Kompany: "No." I chuckled. Me: "Okay, Kompany then. Where is grandfather's building?" Kompany: "In Center of City. Why, my queen?" Me: "Just asking. I've never really thought about it." Kompany: "Most dangerous Place." Me: "Is it?" I poured myself some coffee. Kompany: "You no go there, my queen. Not without Niny." I smiled. Me: "Of course not." Siya came down with his bag. Siya: "Okay. I'm off. Let's go, my guy." he kissed my forehead and walked out with Kompany. I drank my coffee in silence. I heard a tap on a window. It sounded like it came from the lounge. I walked there to look and my mother was standing there, looking around her. I opened the sliding door and let her in. Zama: "baby I don't have much time." I couldn't help but notice she wasn't wearing any of her jewelry. Me: "What's going on ma?" my heart started racing. Zama: "Spho, its not safe. Nothing is safe. You cannot trust anyone of them. Lakhe was summoned and compelled into coming to you. He will be initiated in his compulsion which means he won't know what is going on until he's done. That's if he survives it." she looked around again. Zama: "Sphosam, your father loves you very much but he is not destined for love. It is in his nature to destroy your kind. That is why Lam hurts him when he's holding him. There will come a time where they

have to turn you...into them. Stay away from all of them mntanam. I don't have much time. I broke the rules by coming here and warning you. I love you." Me: "Mama, stay here. You can't go back there." Zama: "I can't! They will find me!" Me: "They can't find Siya though." Zama: "That's because of your warnings. You made a request and they have to honor it." Me: "I will do it again ma." Zama: "Not for me my child. Save your children. And yourself. A war is going to break. Find the book of your kind. I love you my angel, don't forget to pray. It is your true power." Me: "I love you too mama... Please stay. I can protect you." Zama: "Its too dangerous. Take care of Lam and Chris." she tiptoed out the back again. I was just dizzy all of a sudden. What did my mom mean? What book? Lakhe: "Who are you talking to?" I turned around and stared at him standing by the front door.

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I stared at Lakhe standing there. Me: "How did you get in?" Lakhe: "Door was opened." he moved closer to me. Lakhe: "I missed you so much." the hungry look in his eyes scared me to the bone but I held my ground putting fear aside. Me: "I thought we'd agree on a time before you show up unannounced. In another man's house." he stepped even closer. Lakhe: "You're my wife. Of course I show up wherever you are." Me: "Its rude. Plus Kompany will be here any minute." Lakhe: "We won't be here by the time he gets back." Me: "I'm not going anywhere with you." Lakhe: "Spho don't be difficult. You love me, and I love you. What I did was stupid. I should never have left you." Me: "Why now?" Lakhe: "I can't take seeing you with him. He helped me realize how much I can't let go of you. I can't let him have my treasure." he was finally standing before me. Lakhe: "I can't even think about him touching you. It just makes me wanna slit his throat and watch him bleed. Spho I can't live without you. If I'm to lose then I'll gladly give up everything else, just for you." Me: "Right now Lakhe. Can I just have some space? I love you but You've hurt me. Really hurt me. I'm not just going to jump at your request and forget what you've done. You need to prove to me that you're worthy of my forgiveness." my phone rang. Lakhe: "Okay, but you'll come home right?" Me: "Not yet." Lakhe: "So you're just going to live here? With him? Spho why do you have to emasculate me to prove your point?" Me: "Emasculate?? First of all, I'm not the reason we're in the predicament in the first place, excuse me." I swiped across the screen. Me: "Hi Sands." Sands: "Hey Spho. Where you at?" Me: "Siyanda's house. What's wrong?" Sands: "Uhm, I need to see you. Where is he?" Me: "He's at the hospital, working. Why don't you come over? Or do you want me there?" Sands: "No, I'll come to you. I

don't think my place is safe anymore. We'll talk when I'm there." Me: "Okay. I'll wait." I hung up. Lakhe: "So what's our next step?" Me: "I don't know yet. For now let's just co-parent and let everything happen at its own pace." he stared at his wrist watch. Lakhe: "I've got a quick meeting to get to. Can we meet up for dinner?" Me: "Not tonight. I made plans." Lakhe: "Fine. I'll call you." I nodded. Lakhe: "I love you Spho." he walked out the house. I went over to the table and looked at the roses he gave me last night. They had faltered and died. All life drained from them. This only happened because Komander had touched them. No other explanation. So Lakhe seriously went to go meet with him? What the hell was he thinking! Nxx. Literally turning my plans upside down. As I was washing my cup in the sink, I felt a great force surrounding me. I turned around and kneeled. It was the Mother. "My beautiful Angel." my mouth felt wired shut. I couldn't even peep a whisper. "A great war is coming. You need to prepare yourself spiritually. You need to save those you love. Protect your son. You will need great support from him. Now. Is the time." she disappeared again. I stood up feeling a little dizzy and dialed a number on my phone. Me: "Dabawo?" Dubs: "My baby? What is wrong!" Me: "Dabawo, I need you to keep an eye closely on Khayalam. I need you to pray. Something bad is coming. It is riveting everything in its way. I don't know if I'll make it on time. Please Dabawo. Pray with my son. I beg this of you." Dubs: "Spho uyandoyikisa ngoku! Yinton Le uthetha ngayo!" (Spho you're scaring me now! What are you talking about?) Me: "A war Dabawo. It has just begun. PRAY." I dropped the phone. This must be the last of two sessions of my training right? Why was I feeling like this? Where was Sandile now? He should've been here by now. His hotel was not that far and considering the way he drives, by the time I hung up his call he should've been parking the car outside. That's just how crazy fast he is. For a second, I actually missed him. Maybe he'd be here in a few minutes. No need to panic over nothing.

Siya was busy with his admin work in his office. On his last report, he felt the presence of his leader. With his eyes closed and head tilted to the right. His left ear twitched in response to the presence. Komander walked in. Siya got out his seat and lowered his head. Kom: "Good morning Komfort." Siya: "good morning sir." Kom: "Not doing so well with your patients I see. How many dead now? Is it 6? Wow. You've never had much of a death rate and it seems to be piling up this week. Are you okay? Is everything fine at home?" Siya: "I'm fine sir." Kom: "Alright. Anyway, That's not why I'm here." he took the wooden ornament off the table and stared at it in his hand. Kom: "Komfort, its not a secret that you're one of my favorites. You're an Elite. Everything you touch

turns to gold. Its crazy. You've taught masses how to respect me. You have served me so well." Siya: "Yes sir." Kom: "I want to reinstate you back to your position. You were my left hand man. Since Komodity is the right. You're the second person I can count on for my life. I understand you may have some reservations about us now because we tried you but it is over. Komodity has forgiven you. I have forgiven you. We decided perhaps, it would be best to let you back in. Its a once in a lifetime opportunity. Nobody ever escapes me....nobody but you." he put down the ornament. Kom: "Ask." Siya: "Sir, you wanted to kill me because I followed the queen's order not because I didn't take her to the hospital." Kom: "You've always been a smarty pants. Komfort, Spho is my child but I am the heir of the dark blood. She is not supposed to be alive. She will hurt us. You and I." Siya: "Spho will never hurt you." Kom: "Not intentionally no, but her powers would destroy everything that I've worked for." Siya: "I see." Kom: "You're in love with her." he smirked. Kom: "She doesn't even see you, does she?" Siya looked away. Kom: "Don't you worry. It will be over soon. We'll all get back to normal." he moved closer to him. Kom: "You know what I'd do to you if you did something stupid, correct?" Siya: "Yes sir." Kom: "So, you're going to sink this in and meet with us on location tonight. Its the full moon." he stepped around him and stood at his side, whispering in his ear. Kom: "A lot of people know my name but can't picture my face. Those that can, don't live long. I am Kadir Komander for a reason. And I need not explain any further." he stepped away and walked out. Siyanda sat on his desk, trembling. He knew what the full moon meant. This was the one that would turn Komander into a full dark Komander. He would be his father's duplicate from today onwards. Not even a shrewd of humanity will be left. Not a single dose of care. Everywhere he stepped in or walked past, he would collect souls and drag them around screaming. There would be no turning back for Siya and he knew it. The whole fact that he was invited was a clear indication. This would be the day, he'd be turned full demon too. His pager buzzed dangerously. He checked and sprinted out his office, running down the passage. He took the stairs by two and took off another hallway. Before even reaching ER, he saw four of his colleagues rolling in a stretcher. "Car Accident. We need an O.R right now!! He's bleeding out." "There's no next of kin, no famil-" "He is going to die!! MOVE!!!" "Dr Kusile?" They all stared at him. He looked at the patient laying on the stretcher. Siya: "Oh God, No..." he fiddled in his pocket, taking out his phone, his heart racing faster each second. "Dr Kusile? Its your call." Siya: "Take him to the OR. I'll take this one. RUN. And make sure he does NOT die. Do you understand me!!!" "Yes Doc." they whizzed past him with the bed on wheels. He dialed Spho's number, his hands shaking uncontrollably. After listening to the ringing, her voice picked up. "Hi Siya." Siya: "Spho I need you at the hospital right now!!" Spho: "What's

happening." Siya: "Its Sandile. He had a car accident. You need to come here right NOW. Don't tell nobody. Just come. Spho I don't think he's going to make it and he needs you." Spho: "WHAT!!!!!!!" he looked around him. Siya: "Please. Just come alone. Don't bring Kompany. Just catch a cab. Be careful Spho. Please!" Spho: "On it." he hung up and ran to prepare for the operation.

After the call from Siya, I just started shaking. Looking out the window hoping to God he was joking and Sandile would pull up any minute and laugh it off. After gaining some strength again I requested an Uber and ran up to fetch my bags. I couldn't stop shaking holding back my tears. "Spho I don't think he's going to make it and he needs you" those words kept echoing in my head. My cab arrived and I took my Bible running out the house. I climbed in and he drove off. Me: "Please be quick." he stared at me in the rear view mirror. "He will be fine." the air got stuck in my throat. Me: "what." I whispered. Driver: "I'm saying I'll be fined. Should a traffic officer stop me that is." he looked back on the road. Me: "Who are you." Driver: "Pray." I held on to my seat, trembling violently. The tears finally slipped down my cheeks. Me: "I can't lose him." Driver: "Then Pray." he stopped the car. Me: "What are you doing!!!!!!!" I looked up and there was no one in the seat. Me: "Bring Me Lord to the place where you are, I wanna see you, I wanna feel you..." I sang over and over again. My chest cleared and I could breath. Every pain, every feeling, every thought was lifted. I felt light and out of body. Me: "You are the living God. Answer me when I call to you, my righteous God. Give me relief from my distress, have mercy on me and hear my prayers. I'm giving you my all!! I worship at Your feet. Let the voice that I have, and the songs that I sing and the hands that I lift, to your praises bring, Forever and Ever!" the car started moving again, swiftly past all the others on the road. Me: "Away from me, all who are evil!! For the Lord has heard my weeping. All my enemies will be overwhelmed with shame and anguish! Take over my Lord." the car stopped in front of the hospital and I got off to walk in. The moment I stepped through the doors, a calm still came over the entire building. Me: "We Bless Your name and we worship You Lord." I took another step. I walked with stillness down the passage. Me: "Ndikhokhele Yehova. Ndiphethe nguwe. Enter this place and shake it off its hinges. Let all my enemies hear You reign. Let them feel Your presence, bring them to their knees Oh God!" I heard a scream around me and she fell down. I kept on walking. Komander is really trying me. Stationing his people in a hospital to collect souls? Me: "All of those who turn their back on you God, bring them on their knees to worship Your name. Father I'm giving You everything I have. I ask you to use me as your vessel and reach out to your people. Emperor of the Universe. You are God!!!!"

screams and cries were deafening the hallways, I was not shaking in my spirit. Me: "Let the voice that I have, and the songs that I sing and the hands that I lift, to your praises bring, Forever and Ever!!! Forever and ever!!! And EVER!!!!!!!" I threw my hands up and everything shut down. Me: "Sandile....." I whispered. Me: "Take Over, my God." I walked toward the operating room. Spreading my hands on the door. Me: "I need more strength to make it work. I need you God, please come through." the doors opened. Siyanda stumbled out holding on the wall and fell down. Me: "I give you his soul dear God, reach into his heart and revive his faith in You." I walked in and found Sandile on the operating table. Me: "Hae Dume..." (Let it roar) he groaned. Me: "Hae Dume!!!" the room shook, rattling the equipment. The nurses and two doctors stood in the far wall with their eyes closed. I stood by his head, the life was slowly draining from him. His heart beating slower each moment. He wasn't operated on yet, just in preparation. His body lay on that bed faint and losing life. I closed my eyes conjuring my God to reveal His power over this life. A loud drumming noise echoed throughout the room. It got louder, my head dizzy and blurry. I opened my eyes receiving his angels surrounding us. They stood tall and smiling. I bent down to Sandile's right ear. Me: "Mamuri ndawana zororo. Mamuri handina kutya." I took a step moving my face over his to his left ear. Me: "Muma papiro enyu. Ndaka chengetedzwa. Mamuri ndawana zororo. Mamuri handina kutya." I moved back to his right ear. Me: "Muma papiro enyu. Muma papiro enyu. Ndaka chengetedzwa!" I stood up and straight Me: "HAE DUME!!!!!!" I roared. The drums stilled instantly and black smoke erupted from his mouth aggressively. His chest arched up as the dark entity filled itself out of his body and into the room. Me: "Hae Dume!!!" I screamed. The smoke fought tirelessly in the air bouncing off the walls screeching. The room shook once more and the drums carried on. I looked up at it and smiled. Me: "I serve the ONLY LIVING GOD. Your darkness will never win and you will kneel to worship our God. You will not hurt this soul. Nor any other soul." "I will take YOURS!!!" it spat. Me: "I hear you." I signaled to the angels. Me: "My God." I laughed. Me: "You are Here moving in our midst, I worship YOU. I worship You. You are heeere, working in this place, I worship You. I worship You." they hummed all around me. Me: "I mark you with the torch of light!!!! Your entity and its spirit will demolish and break into piles of ash!! I burn you with the fire of Jesus Christ!! You will return to your sender!!! FIRE!!!!" "That won't work." Me: "LOUDER." the angels sangs louder, the drumming more aggressive. My arms were shaking. Me: "Break it down My God!!! Burn it with the fire of the Holy Spirit!! Nobody delivers us like you can! Nobody can heal us like You can Oh God!!! Deliver your Son Almighty!! Bring back the life he shares on earth with us dear God!! We give You the honor!!! We give you the praise! We give you eeverything that we have!!!!

EVERYTHING that I am Oh God!!! I am because of you My God!!! You are our way maker!!! My miracle worker!!!! You keep your word dear Father!!! Destroy this entity Dear God!!! Destroy his owner dear father!!! Burn him with the fire Oh Lord!!!! As it is said in Psalms 2 verse 4, The One enthroned in heaven laughs, the Lord scoffs at them. He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in His wrath! Terrify them My God!!! Rebuke them in anger as they mock you my Lord. I declare today that I serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling and put my trust in You. Therefore I am blessed. How many rise up against us!! Many of you are saying God will not deliver this soul. But You Lord are a shield around him, his glory, the One who lifts his head high!!! I heard a loud bang and I opened my eyes. The melody had stopped. The black smoke had disappeared and a pile of ash sat on the floor. A horrendous stillness engulfed the room followed by a loud....continuous beep. As we held our breath and turned to face it. It came from the life support machine.

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Finally the machine was plugged out. Sandile opened his eyes and stared at the ceiling. Sands: "I made it to heaven." he whispered. Me: "Not exactly." he looked at me and smiled. Sands: "Sphosam." Me: "Hi." his smile evaporated. Sands: "I saw them." Me: "Who?" Sands: "the demons. They wanted to kill me." Me: "Why?" Sands: "I found the book." he breathed. Me: "What book?" Sands: "Your bloodline." Me: "Where is it?" Sands: "Komander.... took it." his eyelids heavy threatening to close. Me: "He did this to you?" Sands: "Look for Lakhe....he isn't...." he breathed. Sands: "He isn't safe. They want to hurt you....through him... Find him. Go." Me: "I can't leave you alone here." Sands: "You summoned heaven here. Nobody else will come near." I nodded. Me: "I'll be back as soon as I can." I walked out and saw Siyanda still laying on the floor outside. Me: "oh honey." a small pile of ash lay next to him. I pulled him up in his unconsciousness, leaning him on the wall. "Do you need help?" a doctor came forward. "Is that....Dr Kusile? What happened?" Me: "He collapsed." Doc: "His pulse is weak." I held Siya's hand. Me: "You have to wake up Siya. You need to be awake for this part. I need you to help me help you." he stirred a bit. Me: "Siyanda?" Siya: "Spho....." he breathed. Me: "Hey...how are you feeling?" Siya: "Weak. Hold me." I sat next to him and held him. Doc: "I need to get him to a bed." Me: "Just a second." Siya was losing consciousness again. Doc: "What the hell happened in this place!!!" Me: "Father Lord breath life into Siyanda's lungs, hold his heart my God and release the spirit that still resides in him. Pour Your everlasting love in his faith in You. Siya, thandaza.

You need to connect to God right now." he opened his mouth and exhaled black dust that fell on the ground. Siya: "help me...." Me: "Help Your son God, he calls unto You. Continue to reign inside of him and save his soul for You, my Lord." he exhaled again, the black dust floated out and onto the floor. Siya: "better." Me: "You need to be next to Sandile. The energy that is around him will keep you safe." Siya: "What about.... you..." Me: "I'll be fine. You just need to get a little stronger." Siya: "Find. Lakhe." Me: "Yes, I'm going to do that now." Siya: "With Komander. He tookhim." Crap. Siya: "and Kompany too." his eyelids closed. I looked at the doctor who was still standing there confused. Me: "There's a patient in this OR. He is fine. I just need you to keep him and Dr Kusile together in the same room." Doc: "Why." Me: "Its his brother. He needs him." I had to lie because he would never let it happen. Doc: "Dr Kusile doesn't have a brother." Me: "They're estranged okay? This is a matter of life and death. They need to breath the same air. Nobody is allowed in to visit. Except me. Please?" Doc: "I will do it, for him." Me: Thank you." I took Siya's keys. The doctor and several other workers picked him up. I needed to find Lakhe. After dialing his phone and listening to it ring six times it cut off. Then he sent a message. 'In a meeting. Talk tonight.' You cannot be serious. I replied: 'I need you now!!' he responded: 'What's happening?' I didn't want to alarm him over the phone that Sandile is in hospital. I also didn't want him to come here. Also didn't want him at the house because of the kids. I needed to pick a place. Me: "Meet me at your dad's house." Him: 'Ok. Be there in 15.' I went to Siya's car and drove it to Rob's house. Stress was an understatement to be honest. I was tired, more than drained and just overall stressed. If I could get Lakhe and explain to him. Hopefully the compulsion has left his system by now. I finally parked at Rob's house just under 15 minutes and waited a few then climbed out, walking to the door. Rob opened. Rob: "Spho! Come on in. That your new ride? Its gorgeous." Me: "No that's Siya's car tata." Rob: "Siya?" Me: "Siyanda. The doctor." Rob: "Ohh...him." he poured a shot of whiskey. Me: "Tata, have you spoken to Lakhe. I'm sorry for arriving unannounced. I didn't know where else to go. We were supposed to meet here." Rob: "Its okay honey. You're welcome here. I haven't heard from him in a while." How do I even begin to tell him. Me: "he's supposed to be here by now." Rob: "Don't worry. He'll be here. Want some juice?" Me: "Being late is unlike Lakhe." Rob: "You're right." he dialed a number and listened to the ringing tune. Rob: "nothing. What was he doing when he said you could meet here?" Me: "He was in a meeting." Rob: "Then don't worry your pretty face." Me: "I have to tata. This time, its serious. If he shows up here, don't let him out of your sight and call me immediately. Please tata." Rob: "Will do so in a heartbeat my child." I made way back to the car and drove

Khaya walked in with the parcel he was sent. Komander sitting on the bench waiting. Khaya: "Sorry it took longer than expected. Not easy convincing a grown man to follow you." Kom: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Sir." Kom: "Do you know why you're here?" Lakhe: "No sir." Khaya: "He's still in compulsi-" Kom: "Was I talking to you?" Khaya: "No sir." Kom: "Oh." he stood up. Kom: "I lost Komfort to that little bitch of yours. Kompany is trying to die fighting me, I had to tie him up on chains, because of that little bitch of yours. What the HELL did she do to them!!!!!!!" he roared. Khaya: "i-i...I'm not sure sir." Kom: "Komodity. I pay you to be sure." Khaya: "Sir, you know first hand Spho's powers." Kom: "I did. And guess what your stupid self did? Do you realize that she just keeps getting stronger?" he looked at Lakhe. Kom: "She has taken what belongs to me. And now I will take what's hers." Khaya: "Masilakhe is human sir. He will not survive this." Kom: "Oh, if he knows what's good for him, he had better survive it. I will drag him from hell back to life every time he dies. Do you understand me Khaya? Prepare him for training. We start in an hour." Komodus(Babalo) walked in. Balo: "The field is ready." Kom: "Good. keep an eye on Komodity. I don't need to explain what I'd do if I come back here and he's gone. Lakhe replaces Komfort." Balo: "Kadir, Lakhe is human." Kom: "Well turn him into a demon then." Balo: "Okay, I get that you're hurt but this is not the way. Lakhe is not going to survive this, not under compulsion." Kom: "Did you not hear what I said?" Balo: "I did. Now you need to hear what I'm saying. Masilakhe's wife, will destroy every single piece of shred if she finds out what you're doing. You yourself, know what she is capable of especially when she's angry." Kom: "I don't care. If she's stupid enough to attack me when I have her most precious husband then so be it. I'll just kill him." he walked out. Balo: "Fuck. Me. Now." Khaya: "Never thought I'd live to see the Komander blood line war. Never thought I'd wish to die so quick." Balo: "I'll prepare the dark army." Khaya sat down. Khaya: "There's no point Babalo. Army or no army. We are fucked. In all wars, Dark only won once and that's it. Pure blood always wins and they didn't even have a queen then. Now." he shook his head. Khaya: "My bones are shivering." Balo: "There's only one way to win this." Khaya: "I'm afraid so. That's where he's headed right now." ***** Komander entered his father's building. Father was in his usual spot, training baby spirits. Father: "Oh. Oh. Look who decided to pay a visit. What is it now." Kom: "Nice to see you too." Father: "I can imagine. How is Sibubee? I miss my little bumble bee." Kom: "He's fine. I need your help." Father: "If its about that rebellious daughter of yours, don't even bother. I'm not going to be a part of that mess." Kom: "You know if she succeeds, she destroys us both." Father: "I told you to give her to me and you said no. That's what happens when you're selfish. Your own toys

poke you in the eye." Kom: "She is a child." Father: "Did you see what she did to that hospital? Or You've suddenly gone as blind as you are stupid." he turned to his spirit. Father: "Your big brother is stupid. Tell him." Kom: "Don't say that to him!" Father: "Its the truth. If you know what's good for you. Kill the bitch. Kill the son. You will live happily ever after." Kom: "Why don't you do it? Scared? Stupid?" Father: "Yes. Yes I am. What were you thinking training her? She's more powerful than YOU!!! You're an idiot." Kom: "I am not an idiot!!!!!!!!!!!" he knocked everything off the table. Father: "Oooh." Kom: "You will help me whether you like it or not. You will not kill her, just weaken her back to place or better yet, make her you!!" Father: "My son, I don't answer to you. Even if I did, this is literally your baby. You knew the rules and decided to disobey them." his mood changed to dark. The ornaments flew around him, the spirits biting and screaming. Father: "You disrespect me. Coming into my house, and commanding me. Who do you think you are." Kom: "Ego heredis Komander. Paenitet me Pater." Father: "Bring her to me."

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Khaya stood with Hlumi and Komodus. Hlumi: "How is he?" Khaya: "Lakhe will be fine as long as we find Spho." Balo: "That's where you come in. Call her. Tell her we're meeting with Lakhe and she should join us. That's where all her attention is directed to at the moment. She's distracted by him, its the time to strike." Khaya: "She knows this place. She'll know something is up, Spho is not that stupid." Kom: "No she's not." he walked in. Kom: "Get a location to meet her, perhaps their old house. Its nice and big. I can block her from using her power against me and everything she brings with." Khaya: "Dial." Hlumi dialed the phone and listened to it ring. Spho: "Hlumi?" Hlumi: "Hi Spho unjani?" Spho: "I'm good. Have you seen Lakhe by any chance?" Hlumi: "Yes, we're here at your old house. I was wondering where you were." Spho: "The mansion?" Hlumi: "Yes. Will you be joining us?" Spho: "He said he was in a meeting." Hlumi: "Well, he just got here. Maybe he's done." Spho: "Hlumi I can't... He's dating someone. What if she comes there?" Hlumi: "I doubt it. I heard him talking to Babalo about how he's so sick of her and wishes you would come back to him. He really misses you Spho. Come talk to him." Spho: "Okay. Fine. I'm coming." she hung up. Komander walked out. Hlumi: "Please don't hurt he-" Kom: "I'll do whatever the hell I want." he got in his car and drove off.

***** I arrived at our previous estate. Unfortunately, I didn't have the keys for the gate because they were in my bag which I left behind. I pressed the buzzer for the gate and it opened. As I drove in, I felt a shiver in my spine and an increasing headache. Me: "Dear G-" the words stuck in my throat. I

coughed and tried again. Me: "Father Al-" I got out the car and walked to the door coughing still. The headache was blurring my eye now. Me: "Lakhe? Hlumi?" I walked in. Me: "Guys, this isn't funny." Kom: "Is everything okay?" I fell on my knees as the pain blasted through my head. Me: "Stop it!!!!" Kom: "Not just yet." I shivered to a fetal position, barely able to see or talk and finally was met with silence. Kom: "I'm sorry sweetheart, this needs to be done for the sake of peace." he swooped her up in his arms walking to the garage where he'd parked his car. He looked at her, unconscious in his arms and pang of pain hit him hard. He shook his head and slid her in safely then drove out. He took Siya's BMW which was still parked outside and drove it in the garage, closing it. Kom: "There. Nobody will be here for months." he got in his car and drove off.

I finally woke up with cuffs on my hand, tied on a pole behind my back. I wasn't really that scared more than irritated. The room wasn't as dark as I'd imagined. Normally lit, just empty with no furniture. I waited patiently and only about 10 minutes later, I felt a cold presence around me. It could only be grandfather because I could always see Komander the son, but its this idiot that thought he was smart. Me: "So what do you want, grandpa." Father: "Ooooh. So you can feel me. That's cute." Me: "do you mind? The handcuffs are unnecessary. Its not like I can overpower you really." Father: "you know what's unnecessary? The flattery. Really. You know exactly what you're capable of." Me: "My capabilities are limited to my spirit and mouth. You did a good job blocking those." Father: "Your father trained you. I have no doubt in my mind, your capabilities have expanded to various physical activities." he winked. Wow. Subtle. Me: "Can I at least see your face?" Father: "Which one?" I chuckled. Me: "Your favorite." Father: "You are such a delight. Why didn't we do this slumber party earlier?" Me: "You've never invited me grandpa. That's why." Father: "True. If I could find you, I probably would have." If you were wondering, No I couldn't see him at all. I was speaking to air basically. Finally he appeared before me looking absolutely identical to Komander himself. The rage in my heart was doing all it can but I kept it in. Father: "Don't suppress it." Me: "Its all I can do." Father: "Father of Hell, you are gorgeous." he stood there with his mouth open. Father: "I can't I...." he took a step still staring at me. Father: "You're just.....beyond." Me: "Thank you grandpa. Beyond what?" Father: "Her." I figured Her was grandma, but obviously she was a little older than me so. Father: "You look exactly like her. Just more.....younger and.....powerful." Me: "Who's her?" Father: "Don't worry about that honey. Would you like some water? Juice? I have tea too, it is exceptional, I have my own farm that grows these special plants with the

best tea blend. You would love it." Me: "I'm fine thank you." he put his hands in his pockets with a huge smile on his face. He looked exactly like Komander, there was absolutely no difference. Like scary identical twins. Shit. Father: "I'm not him you know. I'm much nicer." Me: "I believe you." Father: "My son is a bit of.....a nut case. I blame myself obviously, maybe I shouldn't have been hard on him." Me: "All of us have hard lives and I'm not a nut case." Father: "He raped you. Your stepfather. Took away your innocence." that poked a bit of my rage again but I managed to control it and keep quiet. Father: "I understand your pain. It was selfish of him. I wish I'd known you then, oh I would've unleashed all kinds of demons to haunt him. Maybe 700. Just there to torment him day and night." Me: "How sweet of you." Father: "but your brother in law came to your rescue. He tortured your abuser and watched him die without even a speck of remorse. He is a real psychopath to be honest. And I like him. What boggles me twice is that.....it seems.....he has 9 lives. Like a cat." he smiled. Father: "I personally like cats. I have two. Sumi and Gore. They're very obedient." Me: "He is obedient, but only to me." Father: "I can imagine. I mean.....I would be too. Look at you." Me: "I'll take that as a compliment." he stared quietly and I knew then that something was brewing. He was thinking of something and it wasn't good. Father: "You're a good woman." he slurred. Me: "The handcuffs are hurting me." Father: "I like smelling blood." Ummm..... Father: "He loves you that one." he squatted down and looked at me in eye level. Father: "Loves you more than he loves himself. See when I was taking his soul....I saw everything in it. Oh Spho... It was the most beautiful fire of pure love. And you know what I don't understand?" Me: "Enlighten me." Father: "How the hell, does he suppress that feeling? Especially you being married to his older brot- oh I'm sorry, was." I knew he was trying to get to me and I had to keep calm. I remember all my lessons. For me to abandon my powers fully, I needed anger. I needed fear. I needed things out of order to let Satan in but guess what? This gate is closed. Me: "Sandile sees me as his sister. Nothing more. If you were used to being loved, used to loving someone, you would understand that fire. Its just natural and probably the most rewarding feeling on the planet. Tell me grandpa, have you been loved? I mean truly. Have you ever wanted to die for someone." he stood up straight again. Talk about turned tables. Who was touched now? Me: "That's what I give people. Love." Father: "Everyone except your husband." I sucked my teeth quietly, okay that statement did hurt. Father: "I understand though. He really is a nuisance, I mean seriously how the hell did you survive with that butt crack of a human being? Man he annoys the hairs off my head. I honestly don't know how you do it." Me: "He's not that bad." Father: "He... Who? Huh? NO. He is that bad. He's even beyond that bad. Son did good capturing that one. He was a mess." Me: "Have you met your last

born?" Father: "My last born lives here with me, he's 2 years old. He likes being up at odd hours so he might come keep you company when I'm busy." I was shocked. He had a 2 year old? Father: "Demon. Not an actual human being." Me: "Oh." Father: "I haven't met that one. And I don't want to. If he values his eyes and legs, he'll stay far away from me." Me: "How come you like the first and not the last? They're from the same mother." Father: "He is the reason you cursed me. He is the reason you turned on me and he is the one that gave you strength to run away from me. I loved you. But you left me. And in all honesty, I don't like anyone. Anyone except for you." Ookay, so I'm guessing he's speaking to grandmother through me? Let me play his game and see what this "love" thing he's talking about even exists. Me: "I only ran because you hurt me. You mistreated me. Kept me locked like an animal and physically tormented me." he stared at me. Father: "Spho. I'm not an idiot." Me: "Of course not but I thought I'd have fun with it." Father: "You are really something else." he walked around. Me: "Tell me about the book." Father: "Ahh...and how do you know about that." he poured liquid from a black metal jug into a glass. Me: "I heard rumors." he stepped toward me and stood in the exact place as before and took a sip. It looked like blood, very possible it was. Father: "Human blood to be exact." Me: "I hate it when you do that." Father: "Read your thoughts? Are they private? I'm sorry." he took another sip. Father: "Only two left in existence. All the others were burnt in war." Me: "Do you know where they are?" Father: "Yep. Your brother-boyfriend had one in his possession and my son has taken it. The other is with me." Me: "Why." Father: "I like a good read." Me: "I mean why did he take the book from him." Father: "He probably likes a good read too." he chuckled. Me: "but why take it from Sandile when you have your own." Father: "Its not his obviously. That book is our bible. It has nothing to do with him." Me: "He was trying to get it to me." Father: "And look where that got him." Me: "Its me you want. Stop targeting him. He's really an innocent soul." Father: "Innoc.... No honey. I know for a fact you cannot be that blind. He is probably as bad as me You'd swear I gave birth to him." Me: "Okay, two things, you can't give birth, you're kind of a man. Secondly, Nobody...is as bad as you. And this is collectively the entire planet I'm talking about." Father: "Oh stop. You think?" Me: "I know." he blushed. Father: "You're too kind my baby." Me: "Now... The handcuffs?" Father: "Too soon." he emptied the glass contents down his throat and looked at me again. Father: "You sure you don't want something? I feel like a bad host." Me: "Don't worry, you're a delight." he poured himself some more and I was actually kind of disgusted. Me: "I never really expected you to be like this." Father: "Like what?" he turned to me again. Me: "Just, nice. Communicative." Father: "I talk a lot. Maybe because I don't have people to talk to, so I just ramble on by myself. Hey, do you want a pillow? You can't be

sitting on the floor like that. I'm coming." he disappeared in thin air. That's when the panic started to creep in. I would've rather he be cold and cruel like they always describe him but this sweetness was much scarier. I breathed in and out to calm myself down. He walked back in carrying a big white pillow. He squatted next to me and smiled. Father: "I'm not that bad, I swear." he had his hand on my waist, lifting me up. He slid the pillow under me. Surprisingly enough, he didn't smell anything like blood, instead his cologne was very sneaky, sweet and enchanting. He looked at my face. I looked his hand still on my waist, snaking its way down and he stood up. Father: "Where was I..." my heart raced threatening to explode inside my chest. Tears were starting to prick at the corners of my eyes. Father: "I'm not going to hurt you." I composed myself. Every psychopath said those exact words before they transformed. Father: "No need for name calling now. Okay, I will hurt you but just a little bit. Not too much okay?" Me: "You want to turn me into a demon." the tears just rolled down my face involuntarily. I couldn't take it anymore. He walked to me and came down on one knee. Father: "Yes." he wiped my tears away. Father: "and the mother of my children. Spho, do you realize if you gave birth to my son, that would be single-handedly the most powerful Komander ever to roam this earth." I had a lump in my throat. All those memories I'd forgotten and hid from my childhood flooded back instantly. Father: "More powerful than both of us combined. Well, he would be both of us combined. Dark and Pure." Me: "Please don't do this. I am your granddaughter." Father: "Out there, not in here. In here, you're-" Kom: "What are you doing." he stood by the door. Father: "Chatting." he stood up. Kom: "I thought you'd be done by now." Father: "I thought so too but..." he walked to him, then stood beside him. Father: "she's charming." Kom: "She's a child. My child. And you don't get to touch her." Father: "It's cute that you think you can dictate to my penis. See you later." he walked out. Kom: "Don't listen to him. He's just playing with you." Did he not hear- Me: "Get me out of here!!!" I cried. Me: "he wants to rape me and get me pregnant then turn me into a demon!!!" Kom: "He's just scaring you. You give him too much power over your fears. He's trying to get a reaction out of you and you're making it so easy for him. Komander's love pain and tears more than anything." Me: "I don't want to see him. Please just let me go I promise I won't disrupt you." Kom: "You already have disrupted me Spho. I can't let you be with Siyanda. I can't let him have your kids. Lakhe will be more suitable in a few days then everything will be back to normal, I swear." I closed my eyes trying again and another block hit me. I was developing a headache. Kom: "Try not to worry about your granddad. He's mostly all talk since he has nothing better to do." he bent down. Kom: "You'll be fine soon. I promise it will be much better once you're done-" Me: "I don't want to be a demon!!!" I screamed. Kom: "And you think I

do?" he got up and walked out. Father was in his usual station with his last born. Kom: "You better stay away from my child. First it was Sibú, I will not let you hurt Spho too." Father: "I've never hurt Sibú. I've never even touched him except for hugs. Is that what he's telling you? That I hurt him? How?" Kom: "Sibú did not say anything but you locked him in here and I can only imagine the kind of nonsense you do when you're bored." Father: "Uhhh....Okay. First of all, that's just rude. And why do you speak lies about my name?" Kom: "Stay Away From Sphosenkosi." Father: "Or else." Kom: "or else I let her loose and she decides for herself what to do with you." Father: "You are weak!" Kom: "Not as weak as you preying on a child. Your blood!" Father: "She is of Pure. And that's not my blood." Kom: "You fucking bas-" he breathed walking in a half circle. Kom: "You-" he pointed at him angrily. Father: "Oooh.. You never swear. Did I get on your last nerve? I like dangling on that nerve to be honest." he moved closer. Father: "Spho is a grown woman. An extraordinarily gorgeous woman. And that's my type really." Kom growled. Father: "Breasts like big round mangoes. Juicy, full of life. Fertile as hell. Full lips....and...." Komander pushed him hard. Father laughed. Father: "You see how easy it is to get to you? Work on yourself. You're WEAK." he turned his back to him. Kom: "If you lay a finger on my baby, I swe-" Father: "Yeah. Yeah, I heard you the first time. I have work to do. So goodbye." Komander walked out.

The field : Day 1 for Lakhe.

Lakhe wakes up disoriented in the forest. Crows are flying above his head and he hears what sounds like wolves in the far distance. He looks back on ground level. Faced with Khaya, Babalo and Komander. They looked like statues. Lakhe looks around him and from his left side are soldiers dressed in black with masks covering their faces all around him in half a circle to his right. Lakhe: "So what the fucks going on?" Kom: "Adsulto." black smoke surrounded Lakhe's neck and tightened. Lakhe: "What the-" he choked, slowly losing consciousness. Kom: "You're on the field for training. Every time I hear a curse word coming out your mouth, I choke you. I personally just hate that kind of language." the spirit let go. Lakhe: "Field for what!!!" Kom: "You don't scream at me, you address me as sir with your head facing south. Disobey that, I choke you." Lakhe: "Why am I here?" Kom: "You don't ask questions until the end of training. Disobey that, I choke you." Lakhe looked around him. The soldiers had stepped closer to him. Kom: "You are released from compulsion to participate fully and efficiently. The army around you, is here to help you stay alive. Once you're initiated as a new half demon, they're your servants, use at your disposal. Six of them, being women. The rest, males. There's 15 in

total." Lakhe closed his eyes, this could not be real. Kom: "Your best bet is to stay alive, should you die, I have full access to hell, I can and I will go fetch you then we'll do this all over again. Oh and side note, that would make you a full demon. Now that you're briefed. Its time to begin. Walk with me." he turned around and walked. Khaya and Babalo following behind him. Lakhe reluctantly followed, his heart hammering in his chest. Kom: "To your left, that is my Kingdom of Betrayal." Lakhe looked up and saw the rotting bodies hanging on trees. Kom: "Saurus, Peter and his gang being the most recent. Remember Julie going missing? Those guys. Perv's right? I hate pervs." he carried on walking. Lakhe stared in shock while the bodies swung back and forth, one of them slowly turning to face him. Kom: "and yes, they're still roaming spirits, locked from heaven and hell. I keep them around me just for torture. Look to your right." Lakhe: "Please, not anymore." Kom: "Look to your right." Lakhe looked at the human heads without eyeballs planted on the ground and bile rose in his throat. Kom: "Tombs of the Heads. Usually for the people who've seen my face and decided to have wagging tongues. I've changed my approach. Learning from you Lakhe, subtlety is best." he turned to look at him. Kom: "In one swipe, your entire family could land here. What's it going to be Masilakhe? Are you joining us? Or are they?" Lakhe: "I will." he whispered. Kom: "Proudly." Lakhe: "I will join you Sir." Kom: "Amazing stuff. Khaya will take the first round. I have an errand." he walked away.

Zama walked in her house and rushed to the bedroom. She found Komander sitting on the bed waiting. Kom: "Where have you been." Zama: "Just went to pay some bills. Do you need anything?" she went to the bathroom, he followed and stood behind her. Kom: "Why did you leave your jewelry." Zama: "I didn't leav-" she looked at her neck and wrists. Zama: "Silly me. I must have forgotten. Where could it be?" Kom: "Why did you take it off?" Zama: "I remember I was going to have it cleaned." Kom: "Why." she looked at him in the mirror and smiled. Zama: "I just want your gift to look beautiful." he moved closer and held her body. Kom: "You never take it off. Not for any reason. That's what I told you." Zama: "I promise I never will." he held her breast. Kom: "And?" she breathed. Zama: "and I'm sorry sir." he kissed her left shoulder, caressing her breast. Zama: "ohh sir.." Kom: "You understand why I do what I do." Zama: "Yes sir." Kom: "Why?" Zama: "To protect us." Kom: "From?" Zama: "Those who want to destroy us." he turned her around. Kom: "And do you want to be protected?" he lifted her skirt. Zama: "Yes." she moaned. Kom: "Then why don't you wear your jewelry." Zama: "It won't happen again, I promise..." he slid her white panties aside and looked into her eyes. Kom: "Of course it won't happen again. I'll glue it onto you if I have to." he rubbed a

finger in her opening. Zama: "Yesss." Kom: "You'd allow me to?" Zama: "Yes I would." his other hand held her ass pulling her closer. She held on to his jacket while his fingers expertly moved in and out of her. Zama: "I'm about to.....Ohhh...please...sir." Kom: "I don't make love Zama." Zama: "Do as you please sir..." Kom: "I will." he smiled. Her knees buckled as she reached a blasting orgasm. Her muscles clenching around his fingers, dripping cum. He continued rubbing, staring into her eyes. Her cheeks turned pink as another wave of climax washed over her. He kissed her neck, running his teeth softly on her skin. Zama: "Sirr..." she came again.....and again.....and again.... Zama: "Ican'tbreath." she gasped. Kom: "I'm not done with you yet. Wipe up." he took a wet wipe and left for the bedroom. Zama stared at the puddle at her feet. She Took off her skirt to soak it up, ditching her top and underwear. Kom: "I don't have all day." she stopped right in her tracks. His voice had changed to its unusual demonic tune. Shivers over took her whole body. Zama: "Khaya is going to be home any minute." she cried. He appeared right before her. Kom: "Khaya is already home. Get your ass in that bed." Zama: "No. Please." Kom: "You either walk, or fly. Choose wisely because it will determine the amount of pain when you reach that bed." She slowly made her way around him and to the bedroom. Zama: "Sir please.." Kom: "Face down on the bed. Everything else faces north." she complied, shaking to the core. Once her face hit the pillow, constraints held her down, spreading her legs apart. Kom: "I find resistance heavily seducing. The more you scream." she felt her lower body lift up and a soft lick from her clitoris up her vagina to her ass. Kom: "The more I drive." Zama: "I am sorry!" she mumbled. Kom: "You're about to be." a soft touch rubbed on her clit and another one slipped into her vagina, the next one circled her butt hole. A hot slap connected to her right ass cheek, burning it with the spank. Something was pulling gently at her nipples. Her g-spot already touched and rubbed, she tried moving, another hot slap shot her to stillness. The third entered her in her butt slowly working it in circles. Kom: "I treat you well, don't I?" Zama: "Yes sir!!!" she panted. Kom: "Why do you then betray me." Zama: "I don't betray you sir." Kom: "I'm a liar now?" Zama: "No...." a soft humming of her orgasm approaching left her paralyzed. She waited in anticipated gasps, biting into her pillow, as her climax crashed down in bursts propelling her lower body to move in its rhythm. He stopped. Kom: "Turn." she felt her body loosen, the invisible bondage was off. She turned and lay on her back. He stood naked in a far corner, smiling. Zama: "Please forgive me." Kom: "I would. But I'm hungry and so are my demons." her legs lifted up wide to her shoulders. He moved closer and stood before her. Zama: "Just kill me!!!" she cried. Kom: "Oh you'd love that, wouldn't you? Even if you're dead. All 300 of them will still come have a feast on your carcass." he climbed on top. Kom: "They bite off

chunks of you and chew while they're fucking your dead body until there's nothing left but bones." he smiled. She sobbed painfully. Kom: "You said you wanted me. Here I am." Zama: "Kill me please." Kom: "That was the consensus but I've changed my mind. A price for betrayal, is to behead you but that is just too easy for you. You're ready to die. I can't have that. I need you awake to feel..... me, destroying you from within." he entered her. The size of him grew inside her. Zama: "Please." Kom: "I suggest you enjoy me, there's a lot of indescribable pain for later. Three to five of them at a time. They're ruthless." he chuckled. Kom: "but I'm gentle.....for now." he drilled into her. Zama: "Let them loose." she moaned. Kom: "Why." Zama: "I want to feel you." her legs were loosened, his pace never slowing down. She looked at his eyes and throbbed harder. His eyes lingered over her body, pulling her closer. He groaned, holding around her neck. Her breath abruptly stopped. His grip tightened while she choked into unconsciousness. He stroked deeper, his waist bumping in a slow rhythm into her. Kom: "You dare stop breathing." he roared. She saw the black lace covering her eyes, trying to stay conscious, struggling to breath then having her body betray her, trembling to a mind blowing climax. Her muscles clenched around his size and throbbed at his fullness in her. He let go of her neck. Kom: "Turn." she coughed and breathed turning around. Kom: "Enjoy." he got off the bed....

#160

2 weeks Later.

Lakhe bolted through the woods in lightening speed chasing after a wild animal. Khaya: "He's fast." Balo: "Definitely. And dedicated. He'll make a great fit in the team. Do you think he's taking Komfort's name?" Khaya: "No. He'll have his own. Plus Lakhe will be remarried to Spho and he will be King. His son is a King. He needs a King's name." Kom: "Kadir." he walked to them and finally stood. Balo: "But that's your name." Kom: "Yes. And he's my son. He's Kadir the second because he is powerful." Khaya looked back at his trainee with a scornful look. Kom: "If you even attempt to hurt him. You'll join your wife." he walked away. Lakhe jumped up in the air and grabbed the animal breaking its neck as they both landed on the ground. He stood back up and looked at his supervisors. Khaya: "Bring it here." Lakhe grabbed it by the mouth and pulled the animal back to them. He dropped it before their feet and bowed his head. Khaya: "Your training ends tonight. The official initiation will be at the Tombs of the Heads at midnight. Are you ready?" Lakhe: "Yes

sir." Khaya: "Go and get dressed. You've got day practical in an hour." the sun was just rising. Lakhe walked away. Balo: "What are you doing?" Khaya: "Training him." Balo: "You're straining him to be too tired to perform at his ritual tonight. You heard Sir. Are you trying to get raped by demons?" he whispered. Khaya: "I'm doing my job. Lakhe is a half demon and he needs to do what half demons do." Balo: "He's also half human and needs sleep!!" Khaya: "This is how Siyanda was trained. There was absolutely nothing wrong with him. Maybe if I'd done more he wouldn't have been such a love sick puppy. And you better shut your mouth." Balo: "You don't talk to me like that. I'm the one with the Komander blood-line running through their veins here." Khaya: "You know nothing about this blood-line. I have been here for over twenty years." Balo: "And you still don't have our blood. Is that why You've suddenly despised Lakhe? You are low key jealous that he's Sir's new favorite. And has labeled him his son." Khaya: "You are an imbecile." he walked away. Balo: "A Komander imbecile. Thank you." Lakhe walked back to their spot. Balo: "Khwela emotweni Masilakhe." (Get in the car, Masilakhe) Lakhe: "Sir Khaya said-" Balo: "Fuck Sir Khaya. You're going to sleep." Lakhe: "I don't take orders from you." Babalo turned to look at him. Balo: "If you fail that ritual tonight, be it because of fatigue or lack of concentration, your head will join those ones you saw two weeks ago. Do you understand? You've finished your amount of practicals just yesterday. Now get into that car or I will shove you in the boot and let you stay there all day." Lakhe stood still. Balo: "What the hell have they done to you. Lakhe, you don't take orders. Not from anyone except Sir. Get in the car and let's go home." Lakhe: "That's an order." Balo: "It is advice. I've seen it happen before. They really will kill you Lakhe. Being tired makes you a liability to us." he walked to his car, Lakhe following him. Khaya: "What are you doing?" he came to them. Balo: "Going home. What does it look like." Khaya: "Lakhe is not done. He's got a day practical-" Balo: "I don't give a fuck. Get in Lakhe." Khaya: "You stupid piece of shit!!! You've only been here a month and think you're a boss now." Balo: "I don't think I am, I KNOW I am. You're in the third rank old man. Get out my face." Khaya: "Masilakhe will be a weakling if he doesn't complete this!! Just like you!! How you going to be feeling sorry for a demon doing their job!" Balo: "Suck My Ass." he pushed Lakhe in the passenger seat and closed the door. Balo: "And if you ever call me a piece of shit again, I'll have my brother cut off your tongue." he got in his car and drove off. Balo: "What you going to eat?" Lakhe: "I'm not hungry." Balo: "Hmm...looking bulky I see. You're all muscles and veins popping now." Lakhe looked at him. Balo: "You've never really had a sense of humor kanene. Now that you're an HD, everything will be times by 6. And I mean everything." he winked. He arrived at their quarters. Balo: "Now, since today is your final day as a trainee, you get luxuries." he parked the car.

Balo: "Pampered, fed, played with, just remember to sleep. In your own army, you have six women, at your Komand. They do anything and everything you tell them to. Since you're not married yet, have you some fun. The men in your dark army are basically your friends, your servants actually, but mainly your clique. At least two of them should know your whereabouts at all times. Three of them guard your door as you sleep. The other two are your assigned drivers. You can assign shifts to the remaining nine. Your first salary will be paid in tomorrow morning after the ritual. Exactly R500k as a gift, and 100k each month. I know you're already worth more than those peanuts but these type of connects grow your business and working income. If you were earning 30m it'll be at least 60m now. Follow me." they got out the car. Balo: "You report to Sir once a month unless he calls you himself or visits you. We have our rituals once a month. Any questions?" Lakhe: "No." Balo: "Your training is over, you can ask anything now." Lakhe: "I am now half demon?" Balo: "technically yes. Those gruesome first six days where you felt like dying, that was it. Tonight's ceremony is to name you and finish it off." Lakhe: "What is my name going to be?" Balo: "You'll hear it tonight. So you good?" Lakhe: "Yes." Balo: "Perfect. One more thing. Are you ready to see Spho?" Lakhe: "Do I have to remarry her?" Balo: "Good question. The answer is yes. That is non negotiable." they stood in front of gold double doors. Balo: "She is the queen after all. Whatever you do with your lady servants, can never reach your queen's ears or eyes. Do you understand me?" Lakhe: "Yes." Balo: "Your new bedroom." he opened the doors revealing a gold and white decorated bedroom. A gorgeous woman with long black hair stood naked with a red robe on her arm. Next to her stood another one with a gold plate holding a bottle of his favorite cognac unopened and a glass. Balo: "the others are waiting to give you a scrub in the bathroom. Remember to eat food before you sleep. Enjoy My King." he walked out.....

Sandile got up from the bed and walked around the house. Sands: "Mans." Siya: "WHAT!!!!" Sands: "Why are you always itchy in the morning?" Siya: "I'm trying to work. What do you want." Sands: "What's for breakfast?" Siya: "I can't do this dance with you again. I am not Lakhe. I am not going to wake up everyday in my house and make you breakfast, do you understand me? And what are you still doing here anyway? We left hospital a week ago." Sands: "They're still not back. Nobody knows where they are." Siya sighed. Sands: "I have to take care of Lam and Chris. Every night Dabawo prays and cries herself to sleep. My dad is a mess. Mom doesn't stop calling. Siyanda What if they're dead? What if my brother and his wife were killed by those monsters?" Siya: "You can't think like that Sandile-" Sands: "What the hell then am I

supposed to do!! Lam doesn't have milk, we have to make him formula which he hates! I've never been a parent! I don't know how." Siya: "I'm here aren't I? Am I not helping you?" Sands: "They need their mother. Siyanda, you have to help." Siya: "Sandile I've lost my power. I am as human as you now, I don't know what to do. Not to mention if they see me, they will fucking kill me on the spot. They'll smell me coming before I even leave this house." Sands: "I thought you loved her. Isn't that what you kept saying in your sleep through out the entire week in hospital. Prove it Siyanda." Siya put down his pen and held his head in defeat. Sands: "Lam is almost two months old now." Siya: "This is going to get us killed." he stood up. Siya: "Fine. I'll find them." Sands: "I'm coming with you." Siya: "No. If it turns bad, only one of us should have to die, I'd rather you stayed here and took care of the kids and udabawo." Sands: "I'm not letting you do it alone." Siya: "Why are you so stubborn!!" Sands: "Siyanda I know you're just as scared as I am but you're hiding it! If we do this, we're doing it together. There's a reason Spho ordered for us to be left in the same room in hospital. Now where would be the best place to start?" Siya: "her mom. She won't necessarily tell us where they are but she might give hidden clues I might be able to understand." Sands: "then let's go." Siya: "Since I don't have a car and you crashed yours, what are we going to do?" Sands: "I got you." he made a call and 15 minutes later two white Benz parked out front. Sands: "Let's go." he took a bottle of water, banana and apple. Siya: "Do you ever stop eating? You're finishing my food." Sands: "I'll buy your ugly food. Yo Serge." Serge: "My Sandcastles. Here you go." he tossed him the Benz keys. Sands: "Thanks Sergery. I appreciate it man." Serge: "Anything for my sandies." he got into the passenger seat of the second car and it drove off. Siya: "He has a crush on you." he got into the driver's seat. Sandile got in the passenger. Sands: "Sergio is straight, man." Siya: "My sandcastles? Anything for my sandies? He wants the dick." he started the car and drove off. Sands: "Siyanda. Stop this. Sergio is absolutely straight. Fuck you." Siya: "Why you mad? And why you always attracting gay niggas?" Sands: "Maybe because I'm actually attractive. For a man to like another man, you must know that's one sexy motherfucker. And I am-" Siya: "gay." Sandile punched his shoulder. Siya: "I will crash this car into a tree and kill us both before time. I don't care." Sands: "Don't be a wimp." Siya: "At least I'm not a gay wimp." they laughed. Sands: "Stupid ass." they arrived at Zama's house in under 15 minutes and got out the car. Sands: "Mans, can you sense those things when they approach." he pulled out a gun. Siya: "Where the hell did you get that?" Sands: "You think Sergio would deliver me an empty car? You wild." they knocked on the door. Siya: "No....but I'll try." he knocked again. Sandile opened the door and stepped in. Siya: "Sandile." he whisper yelled. Siya: "Nxx!" he followed him in. Sands: "What the hell happened here."

the house was a complete mess with furniture broken in half and blood smears on the wall. Sandile walked further in. Sands: "Ma?" she was laying on the floor in the bedroom, dried and wet blood all over her body. Siya: "Shit." Sands: "What happened here." Siya: "You do not want to know." he kneeled next to her feeling for a pulse. It was very light. Siya: "Mama?" Zama: "Leave..... They'll come..... after you. They'll.... kill you. Please.... go." Siya: "Sandile pack a bag of clothes for her." Zama: "there's.... no... time. He's-coming..... back. Please.... go." Sandile opened the wardrobe. Zama: "They're coming back!" she cried. Siya: "Let's go. Leave it Sands." he picked her up and carried her out. Sandile grabbed the blue fleece blanket and a toiletry bag following them out to the car. They covered her in the backseat and drove off. Siya: "We have to change the car." Sands: "No problem. Turn right there. What's wrong?" Siya: "Check if she's still fine." Sandile pulled down his seat and helped her drink water. He peeled the banana and fed her. Sands: "What did they do to her?" Siya: "Leave this alone, Sandile." Sands directed him to a building where they parked underground. Sands: "We'll use that black Range Rover." Siya: "Who's car is that?" Sands: "My girlfriend. She'll understand. What's the next stop?" Siya: "After we drop umama in a church because that's the only place She'll be safe now. We've got to go to his building." Sands: "Who?" Siya: "The Grandfather."

I woke up from my uneasy sleep. I was in so much pain because of this spot and I was tired. I felt his cold presence around me. Father: "You're not eating. Why." Me: "I can't." he appeared before me and sat down next to me. Father: "its been a tough two weeks. It will be over really soon. Tonight, your husband will be crowned. Actually, his actual crowning will be marrying you that's if he marries you but tonight he finishes training and joins my son. You on the other hand will have your ritual in a few days. Since last week you had your period, I've waited a few days and guess whaaat. You're ovulating. Our chance of getting pregnant is high. What do you think?" Me: "You really want a baby?" Father: "More than anything in the world." I sighed in complete defeat. Father: "I will be gentle." I looked at him. Me: "You look exactly like my father." he swapped his appearance as quick as a snake into Lakhe. Father: "How about now?" Man I missed this face. Father: "I know." he held my face. Father: "Tonight we'll begin. Laura will come fetch you to bathe and dress. I have a white gown I had made especially for you. Okay?" I nodded. Father: "Spho you make me happy. You're sweet and understanding. You are the perfect wife. How about....." he smiled. Father: "Little Komander is not going to make it to sunrise." Me: "No. Please don't kill him." Father: "I'm not gonna kill him my beautiful flower, he is going to kill himself. You need not forget who I am. I'll

see you tonight." he stood up and walked out. I had long run out of tears. I was numb. So this was it. The last day of my everything. Deep down my soul hummed a tune. I closed my eyes and listened carefully hearing a soft voice: "Truly my soul finds rest in God. My salvation comes from him. Truly he is my rock and my salvation, he is my fortress; I will never be shaken. How long will you assault me? Would all of you throw me down this leaning wall, this tottering fence? Surely they intend to topple me from my lofty place; they take delight in lies. With their mouths they bless but in their hearts they curse.." I felt my spirit slowly leaving my body. This was it.....

#161

Siya stood inside the church looking around. Sands: "Burning already?" Siya: "I didn't burn even when I was a demon. Which is why I'm not really sure about this." Sands: "What do you mean? You said church would be safe!" Siya: "Yes, I thought so too until I walked in. Sit." they sat down. Siya: "Sandile, I could go into a church and praise. Even looking the pastor in the eye at times. Nothing ever happened to me. I just got more powerful. Now I don't know if this is going to work out for uMam'Zama." Sands: "Then what do you suggest we do." Siya: "There is no safe option. At home there's Dabawo and the kids, we can't risk their lives. We also can't leave her alone." Sands: "Normal people, I don't mind fighting. But demons? Hayi mans. Ha.a. These things are disrespectful." Siya: "Yeah." "Demons I hear." a voice said behind them. The man walked in dressed in black and white. They stood up to face him. "I'm Pastor Graham, you must be Komfort." Siya stared at him. Graham: "I've had more than one dream about you. This meeting is the first." Siya: "How." Graham: "Well...I see things. You need help. Where is she." Sands: "Who." Graham: "The woman raped by hundreds of demons. She isn't supposed to be alive. She actually isn't but we'll discuss that later. I need to see her. Give me a minute to settle in my office." he walked to his office. Sands: "Okay. Okay. Siyanda. Did you know about this?" Siya looked away. Sands: "S I Y A N D A!!! I know you can hear me!!!" he yelled. Siya: "Sandile its not like tha-" Sands: "Like what!!!! You're the one who suggested we go to her house. Did you know!" Siya: "How would I have known!" Sands: "You- I just- God." he huffed and walked to the door, stopping halfway and walking back to Siya. Sands: "You and your people are SICK. This is disgusting!!! Raping a defenseless old woman ? Hundreds of demons? What kind of evil are you!!!" Siya: "I didn't do this!!!" Sands: "Yes, but your kind did!" Siya: "Sandile. They are not my kind! I am not a demon anymore!" Sands: "I don't know what the fuck you are!!! All I know is, once in your life you made the decision of joining

them! Willfully! Now you want to act human when you know exactly what they do!!! You are fucking disgusting." Siya: "Sandile, I've never raped a woman in my life. Why are you condemning me for the actions of things I used to associate with? How could I have known they'd do something like this?" Sands: "Have they done it before?" Siya looked at the floor. Sands: "Un-fucking-believable. To whom!" Siya: "Sandile please." Sands: "Don't bloody Sandile me!! To who!!" Siya: "Chris' mom." Sandile stared at him icily. Siya: "I'm not pro-" Sands: "YOU STAYED." Siya: "They would've killed me!!!" Sands: "Well whose damn fault would that be?" Siya: "What do you want me to do!!" Sands: "To stay the hell away from my family. Christian is my nephew. Spho, is his mother now. How do I know you won't let these sick things rape her too?" Siya: "I would never hurt Spho. You know this." Sands: "Do I....? Rey was your best friend, when he died the responsibility of taking care of his family became yours. You let them hurt her and watched her die." Siya: "Sandile. If I hadn't done what I did, they would've tortured her." his tears finally broke free, running down his cheeks. He wiped them quickly and looked away. Sands: "You killed her." Siya: "I had no choice. They'd already come for her once. I knew more would come. Much dangerous. Deadlier. She would have been tortured for months. I planned the accident. She had to die naturally. Not through pain, possession and helplessness." Sands: "And Chris? He was in the car too." Siya: "There will come a time, he will find out about his father and they'll kill him too." Sands: "Tyrone processed his adoption. Why." Siya: "If Chris never knows about Rey, it would be safest for him." Sands: "Why would someone care and then hurt something they recently just cared about I don't understand. He does these good deeds and then turns around to do the opposite." Siya: "That's because he's not full dark. He has internal conflicts, to do bad or good. One side overpowers the other." Sands: "I am not pleased with you." Siya: "I'd never hurt your family Sandile. I would rather die protecting them." Sands: "That is yet to be proven." Siya: "You don't know how hard it is to be an Elite, Sandile. Most people hear about K.U.G and think that's hard. The Elite shows you things no human should ever see. They make you do things that are inhumane, well...they're not human either. You go through all types of motions and experience all kinds of hell. Daily. Not to mention you sign your life away. You sign your family's lives away. I knew how Rey felt. I felt that way too. It was too much. I'd had enough but I was a coward. Weird right? Fearing to be tortured and finally killed so you choose to stay and be tortured mentally for the rest of your life. I was a coward." Sands: "You can't really expect me to feel sorry for you Siyanda. You chose to join them. You knew what this was." Siya laughed. Siya: "You think the devil advertises pain when he's trying to buy you? He hires PR companies, paid agents, brilliant marketing to romanticize it. Once you're in, he shows himself

in his true nature. Everyone who doesn't know K, doesn't know he's a demon. They think he's an ordinary man that's just smart as hell, an exclusive criminal without a face. Unimaginable. That, on its own should be scary. Working for a ghost. Sandile, that man owns literally everything." Sands: "Kodwa Siyanda what were you thinking. You have a good job, you're a doctor for goodness sake. Why would you go do this?" Siya: "Approval. I wanted to belong somewhere. Khaya made me feel like that. Like I was his son. He mentored me, taught me a lot, brought Spheo into my life then snatched her away again. He basically taught me resistance, discipline and reward. Then he taught me to kill." Graham walked to them once more. Graham: "No more bickering? Can we get on with it now?" Sands: "I'll go get her."

It was a few hours I'd slipped into another coma and I was waking up again. My eyes unfocused and I was dizzy, they finally rested on his eyes. Me: "Lakhe." he stared back at me. This was him. Me: "Please...help." Him: "Maybe I should give you one more day to recuperate." Was it really him. He sat in front of me and held my cheek. "You're worrying me. Please eat something. You're getting weaker and honestly I don't like that." I nodded. Him: "I brought you fruit and water. Should I cut it up for you and help you eat?" I nodded. Him: "After this, you can go to sleep. I'll untie the handcuffs. You'll be moved to the bedroom. Much more comfortable and warm. Open up." I opened my mouth and he fed me an apple. Him: "My wife can't live like a prisoner. You'll reign with me. Right by my side. We'll be a force to be reckoned with I tell you." Me: "water." him: "of course. Look at me rambling on." he opened the bottle and I drank water. I swallowed the refreshing water and rested a bit. Me: "My babies." Him: "I'll bring them to you too. We'll all live together. We'll be a happy family." he gave me banana. Him: "then we can possibly discuss expanding our breed." I smiled. Me: "too soon." Him: "hmm..." I only ate half of his fruit and water and I was full. Him: "Komander will be no more after tonight. Doesn't that make you happy? He's a bad man, Isn't he?" Me: "he has a bit of good." Him: "a bit is not enough." he held my thigh. Him: "I'll get Laura to take you to the bedroom and tuck you in. I'll see you in the morning once everything is done okay?" Me: "Please come back." Him: "I promise I will. Is there anything you'll need? Food? More water? I'll have it sent to you." Me: "Why don't you stay." Him: "I have work to do my beautiful flower." something weird about that name. Him: "I'll be back in the morning before you wake." I nodded and closed my eyes. He got up and walked out. "Laura." he changed back to his form. Laura: "Yes Sir." Father: "Prepare a room for Spheo. The best one. With the silk sheets and pillows. Get her bathed and dressed in her silk white gown. Let her sleep afterwards." Laura: "Yes father." she hurried

away. He sniffed around walking to his hall. All his babies were asleep. Father: "Who's disturbing you?" the little spirits were restless in their slumber. Father: "I command them to burn. Sleep my little butterflies." Kom: "Funny how you treat them like eggs and I was a slave but I'm the actual blood and flesh of you and your bloodline." Father: "Nxarg. I should've known it was you. What do you want." Kom: "We'll be done by midnight. Spho should be released by morning." Father: "Spho wants to stay with me." Kom: "Don't start this shit." his father laughed. Father: "I just love it when you swear. Considering you hate the English language as a whole. The curse words repulse you even more. Why you insist on speaking it instead of your own language boggles my mind." kom: "Spho is not staying here. She's to be married to Lakhe in 6 days." Father: "No." Kom: "No what!!" Father: "She will be married to me in 6 days. We discussed it. She agreed. Its done." Kom: "You compelled her. She doesn't even know its you! Why are you like this? Why can't you leave my children alone!" Father: "Bring me back Sibub, I'll release her without hesitation." Kom: "and what will you do with Sibulele!" Father: "he's my best friend and you stole him from me." Kom: "he's a child!! How can you be best friends with kids!" Father: "Since you won't let me be a grandfather tomato face. You're always so angry and bitter." Kom: "You want to be a gra- How!!! You send Sibub to kill people on YOUR behalf. Endangering his life. Now you want to marry Spho. What grandfather does that." Father: "Me." Kom: "Stay away from my kids." Father: "You won't care if they live or die come tomorrow morning. I'm just trying to protect them from you. You're turning full dark after midnight. Then.....you'll be. Just. Like. Me." Kom: "I'll never be you." Father: "Well then goodluck." Kom: "I will be back." he walked out. Father: "My knees are buckling.". He laughed. Father: "He's such a diva." he went to his altar and the ground started shaking beneath it. He looked around him, confused. As he took another step, another quake of movement beneath him almost made him lose balance. He rose off the ground. Black smoke circled around his feet. His eyes turning white and the horns in his head poking themselves out to view. Father: "Who in seven hells...." he hissed.....

#162

After bathing me, Laura took me to bed and I dressed. The handcuffs were finally off but I was so weak I could barely see anything. I got into bed and felt the silk smoothly over my body making me weak again. He walked in. Me: "Lakhe." he looked at Laura. Lakhe: "Leave us. Make sure nobody finds you." Laura: "Yes sir." she walked out. He climbed onto the bed and pulled my body close to him. Me: "You came to fetch me." Lakhe: "We have to lay low

for a while. Your father wants to hurt you." I nodded. Lakhe: "Can you see me?" Me: "a bit." he took my hand and kissed it. Lakhe: "I love you Spheo." Me: "I love you too." he kissed my lips and groaned then pulled away. Lakhe: "I need you to eat. You're getting weaker. Baby, its not healthy." Me: "I can't.."
Lakhe: "I'll help you." I nodded. Lakhe: "Do you like it when I'm holding you?" Me: "Yes." Lakhe: "and when I kiss you?" I nodded. He kissed my cheek. Lakhe: "You're perfect." Me: "I don't want him to hurt you." Lakhe: "he won't ever find us here don't worry. Let's get you fed." he went to fetch the tray. Lakhe: "We have fruits here. Avo and cheese sandwiches. Some snacks too. There's juice and water. And.....this." he gave me a flower and I sniffed. Me: "my favorite." Lakhe: "I know." my thoughts went into a swirl and I felt like I was floating.
Lakhe: "Now, to feed you." he fed me the sandwich first then some fruit. I drank water after. Lakhe: "Perfect." he set the tray aside. Lakhe: "If you keep eating like this, you will get stronger then I'll go fetch the kids so we can all be together. How's that sound?" Me: "Its great." he pulled up my chin and kissed my lips. Lakhe: "I want to make you happy." Me: "You already have." I kissed him again. I heard a purr in the room and he sat up to look. It was a white cat. Lakhe: "Outside." the cat strolled out again and the door closed. Me: "Whose cat is that?" Lakhe: "Don't worry about it. Where were we?" he looked into my eyes and kissed my lips again. Lakhe: "Have I told you that I love you?" Me: "twice now." Lakhe: "Remember it. Always." he combed my hair with his fingers. And we stayed cuddled in bed until I fell asleep. He covered her with the silk sheets and kissed her forehead slipping out of bed. He walked out the bedroom to his altar and stared at it from afar. Father: "Bloody imbeciles. You really think you can get in the way of My plans? Vos volo ut moriatur." he breathed into his hands and a fire erupted. Father: "Should've stopped the superman job with the old lady. You're not getting farther than that. Daemonium. Expergiscimini." he smiled.

Komander walked into his house where Khaya was sitting in the lounge staring at the table. Kom: "Should get you a TV." Khaya: "I Don't need it." Kom: "Zama escaped." Khaya: "Oh. How did that happen." Kom: "I should be asking you that." Khaya: "I haven't been there as you commanded me." Kom: "Yet she's gone." Khaya: "Maybe someone else went there." Kom: "Why would you think that." Khaya: "I don't think she would have the strength. Asag visited her as well and you know how dangerous he is." Kom: "Point is, she's gone and she's found her way to Graham." Khaya: "Graham the pastor?" Kom: "Yeah." he sat down and stared at his trembling hand. Khaya: "What is that?" Kom: "It started a few hours ago. Its my father. He wants me dead." Khaya: "What! Why?" Kom: "He wants Spheo. And seemingly would go through lengths to get

her since I'm against it, he could very well kill me." Khaya: "What is he to do with Spho?" Kom: "Marry her and make more of him. What else." Khaya: "Is that even allowed." Kom: "Incest is how this bloodline is alive today. From the beginning. Brother and sister made the twin boys. The twins separated and married women. Dark twin's wife died and he slept with his daughter to produce him more sons. It goes on from there. Even if born as twins, boy and girl. They would sleep together. So yes, he's allowed." Khaya: "Perhaps he's only interested in her because she's pure blood. What if you turned her into full dark, he wouldn't want her then." Kom chuckled. Kom: "You really don't know him. And I suggest you leave it at unknowing. He is beyond you." Babalo walked in. Kom: "If I am to die. What would you do." he asked Khaya. Balo: "You're not going to die." Kom: "My father is the only person that Can kill me and no doubt he'll do it soon." Balo: "Not until you give in to his demands." Kom: "I am not going to grovel." Balo: "No, you'll give him what he wants. Sibuh." Khaya: "Are you crazy?". Balo: "Sibuh is a man and can take care of himself not to mention he's easily traceable. Spho on the other hand is a woman, he shut off her thinking and sooner or later he will help himself to her. Like he did with mother. So would you rather have a full dark son or a little grandson-brother that is probably going to be 10 times more powerful than you will ever be. You need to make this decision soon before you turn because once you're full dark, its gonna be over." Khaya: "What happens if he already helped himself then. What guarantee do you have that he'll keep his end of the bargain? What if he wants both of them by his side?" Kom: "What do you then suggest?" they looked at him. Khaya: "Lakhe should be the one to request her. She's his wife after all." Balo: "WOW. I knew you didn't like the guy but damn, this is deep. Throwing him straight into hell." Khaya: "Its not about liking him, its the only solution." Kom: "If I should die. What would you do. Follow Father or continue on your own?" Balo: "I'd obviously carry on by myself. I'll head everything up alone. Father wanted to kill me and won't stop until he's successful. I won't ever hand myself over to him." Khaya: "You don't even know the first basics of running the Komander blood line, let alone the empire." Balo: "Its a shame because you don't even qualify." Khaya frowned. Kom: "Both of you need to learn to get along. Khaya, get Sibuh out of his chambers, I'll take him to his grandfather. Babalo, prepare our headquarters for Lakhe's initiation. Is he asleep?" Balo: "Yes. I checked on him before I came." Kom: "Good. Don't disturb him." he got up and walked out. Balo: "You may be his right hand man but I am his blood brother. Sadly for you, I'll always come first to him." he stuck his tongue out and walked away.

Siya and Sands waited outside Graham's office. Sands: "What you think is happening in there?" Siya: "I wouldn't know." Sands: "Its been almost an hour!" Siya: "These things take time Sandile." Sands: "You seem nervous. What's going on." Siya: "Something is going to happen tonight. I don't know exactly what but I have a bad feeling. Sandile someone might die." Sands: "That someone better not be Spho." Siya: "I don't know." Sands: "How can you say you have a bad feeling? You were the one that said you're fully human now." Siya: "I am." Sands: "Then how." Siya: "I don't know. I just feel it. I can't explain. We need to find Niny." Sands: "Who is Niny now!" Siya: "Kompany." Sands: "Kompany the demon? No." Siya: "Pastor Graham will help him-" Sands: "If Kompany was human, perhaps. But Kompany ISN'T human. You can't drive out the demon IN a demon." Graham walked out his office pulling off bloodied gloves. Graham: "Its done. Now, we need to get moving." Sands: "What's done? You can't kill a person in a church!" Graham: "She was repeatedly raped for two weeks by demons, all of them leaving their seeds in her, killing her from inside. She would be giving birth to all their offspring and litter it all over the world increasing evil. She would never have survived it. Now we need to focus on saving your sister. She's being blinded into evil. Not even her father has control over it. She's underground, hidden in a dungeon laying on silk. The devil has shielded her eyes from what he truly is, he is growing himself on her to get closer to her. He wants to marry her, impregnate her and rule evil with her." Siya: "but Spho is pure blood!" Graham: "Not for long." Siya sprinted to the car followed by Sandile and the pastor. Graham: "Wait!!! Are you insane! You are going to enter full blown hell! How are you just going to run in there like clowns???" Siya: "We don't have time!!" Graham: "There's always time for prayer." they went back inside. Graham took his anointing oil and poured a bit on their heads. Graham: "May the God who rules over heaven and earth walk with you as you enter the shadow of death. May you fear no evil. You are representation of God and you are His sons. No harm, no entity will harm you in any way. Father God, protect your sons in their journey. Escort them with the angels of heaven into the dungeon to find Your Gift. We call on you father to give her the strength and the power to wake from her slumber and defeat this evil. Raise her up, dear God. Hold her heart as it sings Your name. Hear her plea reach heaven gates. We are stepping out of our comfort Lord to do this in Your holy name. Amen." he gave them each a cross and hung another around their necks. He took a white cloth and tied their hands together. Sands: "Excuse me-" Graham: "Hold your servants together God and protect them through fire. Any distraction thrown their way should be recognized by the other." he took off the cloth and wrapped it around the standing cross on the alter. Graham: "I need you both to open your hearts to God. You need to believe greatly from now. Any shred of doubt can open a

crack and let the devil in to swarm your brain with evil thoughts. The place we're going to is the Kingdom of evil. Hell personified. You have to believe." Sands: "I do." Siya: "I do." Graham: "Now we leave." they walked out the door and Graham stopped them. Siya: "What?" Graham: "Get down!!!!" he pulled them to the ground as the car exploded into flames bouncing off the road a few meters high and banging back down. Sands: "SHIT!!!!!!" Graham: "This is only just the beginning."

#163

Sandile looked at the Pastor. Sands: "What was that?" Graham: "That was the type of evil we are going to." Siya: "How then are we supposed to get there?" Graham: "You need to fetch your friend." Siya: "I don't have any friends." Graham: "You do. From the dark side." Siya: "Niny? I don't even know where he is. Are you going to help him?" Graham kept quiet. Siya: "You just want to use him? No." Graham: "He's a demon. There's not mu-" Siya: "So You'd rather just use him instead and then let him get thrown into a pit and be a slave? Do you even know what they do to demons who betray them? Have you ever seen a demon slave? No, you haven't! Or You'd never even suggest this. I will not exploit my friendship with him like that." Graham: "I understand-" Siya: "No you don't! Kompany is the only friend that's been there for me all this time. You will not force me to do that." Sands: "Kodwa Siya, if you had to choose between Kompany and Spho, you know deep in your heart he would want you to choose her. He would do anything for her." Siya: "I know that but we have to find another way." Graham: "The other way is a very difficult way Siyanda. I guess we'll have to risk it." Sands: "What is the other way." Graham: "Kompany only works on orders. He is not necessarily evil. He only protects and serves like a police officer basically." Siya: "Yes." Graham: "If he can attach to Spho, she can turn him into her angel." Sands: "From demon to angel? Is that possible?" Graham: "Barely. Like I say, Kompany is only designed to follow orders, once he attaches himself there's no letting go. The tricky part is getting him to attach to Spho's spirit but this kind of thing needs daily repetition. She will have to pray over him on a daily basis because it will be easy for the dark side to swallow him if he's left unattended." Sands: "That's doable, Spho loves to pray and Kompany will be with her most of the time." Graham: "that's not all. Something is going to have to take Kompany's demon. It can't roam especially because its that big. If its left to just do as it pleases without command it would hurt a lot of people." Siya: "I knew there had to be a catch." Sands: "So, when you take the demon out of him, you have to put it in someone else?" Graham: "Yes." Sands: "Then put it in me."

Siya: "What! No!" Sands: "We don't have time Siyanda. I've been taking orders from Lakhe since I was a kid anyway, this won't be any different." Siya: "I said. NO. Lakhe and Spho will never forgive me if I did that to you." he turned to Graham. Siya: "I'll find you a corpse." Graham: "No, it needs a very much alive soul." Sands: "Then let-" Siya: "No Sandile!! I said No!!! You don't want those things in you. Trust me. Pastor, an animal then?" Graham: "That could work." Sands: "What happens when the animal is slaughtered?" Graham: "the demon departs with the soul." the fire brigade finally arrived to blow the fire out, police cars and an ambulance too. Siya: "I think I know where he could be." Sands: "Who?" Siya: "Kompany. He only takes orders from K and he's probably held him down now." Graham: "Do you know where?" Siya: "I'm not sure if I can remember properly but I'll try." Graham: "Fine. Let's move." they ran to Graham's car since theirs was set alight by air. Graham drove with Siya's directions. Sands: "So what do we do when we get there?" Graham: "All I know is, we need to be quick. Why am I seeing a ceremony? Something is happening tonight." Siya: "Describe the scene." Graham: "a huge ball of fire and people dressed in black standing around it. I see a tall man holding a spear-" Siya: "Oh no..." Graham: "What?" Siya: "That's an initiation. Is the person in specific facing off a wolf?" Graham: "Yes. Its on the other side of the fire." Siya: "They're replacing me. Whoever it is, has turned half demon and they're official at midnight." Graham: "Who do you think that could be?" Sands: "Lakhe." he flopped back into his seat. Siya: "You can't be sure about that." Sands: "I am. The day before he disappeared Siyanda he was acting weird. Possessed even. He agreed with the K clan all of a sudden and ordered me to burn the book I'd found." Siya: "You found the book!!!" Sands: "Yes." Siya: "Why didn't you say anything!" Sands: "I lost it in the accident." Siya: "Great.." Graham: " We can't interfere with the initiation process. Its too dangerous, for him and you two. He's in between two worlds now and an interference might just kill him." Siya: "So we just let him be a demon?" Graham: "Its best for his survival." Sands: "Do you even know Lakhe? Demonizing him would be putting the entire human race at risk. There's got to be another way." Graham: "Unfortunately there isn't. We have to wait until he's done and even so, at least a week after once his spirit is in one sphere." Siya: "There has to be a way. Spho can fix him." Graham: "He will die." Siya: "He will hate me." Graham: "Rather he hates you alive than dead. Trust me you do not want to be hated by a dead demon." he drove quietly. Sands: "Why do you think he'd hate you?" Siya: "I'm a traitor to them and they're missing two limbs of the elites now. Zama and me. No doubt they'd replace me with Lakhe. He's physically strong, he's successful, he's very dominant, just downright perfect as an elite. The spot though belongs to Komfort and to punish me, they will do it through my replacement. His training was probably twice more difficult. Now who

wouldn't hate me, being punished for my sins." Sands: "That is so unfair." Siya: "Nothing in the Elite is fair or kind. Remember that. Here's the place." Graham took his toolbox out and crowbar. Sands: "You're tryna tell me you're going to fix them back to hell?" he chuckled. Graham: "You're an idiot. Grab your cross." Sands: "How are we going to get in?" Siya: "wait here." he took the crow bar, stuffing it in his pants, covering it with his shirt then got out the car and went straight to the gate. Sands: "There's those statues standing there!" Siya: "Shhh." he opened and went in. Nobody moved. He stepped into the building. Seemingly nobody was around. He rushed to the passage and down the stairs. In the cells, Kompany was chained to the wall. Siya: "Niny!" Kompany looked at him. Kompany: "You come for me." Siya: "Of course I came." he broke the gate and pushed it open. Kompany: "There's little time." Siya smashed onto the chains repeatedly until they broke. Kompany pulled them off. Siya: "Let's go. Now!" Kompany: "Walk behind, Niny." they walked up again a mob of guards came to them. Kompany swung the bars smashing their heads in and carried on walking. They way out the building was met with more guards and more fighting finally making it out the gate and into the car. Siya: "They'll swarm again in minutes. DRIVE!!!" Graham stepped on the pedal and the car flew off. He kept staring at Kompany in the mirror. Siya: "He's a bit weak so we'll have to stop at home to get him hydrated and stronger." Sands: "What is the next plan?" Siya: "Basically after Kompany gets his energy, we go to the building. Him and I will be fighting off grandfather, Pastor will be shielding us, and you will locate Spho." Sands: "You're human. You'll die." Siya: "It will still hold him off a little." Graham: "This is not a demon." Sands: "That's it. Stop the car. I can't keep up with this." Siya: "What are you talking about Pastor? I trained with Kompany. He works directly for K himself." Graham: "Yet, he is not a demon."

Komander entered his father's building with Sibulele and Khaya. Sibulele: "Why am I here?" Kom: "Your grandfather wants you." Sibulele: "I thought you said-" Kom: "Forget what I said. You wanted to come back here." Sibulele: "I don't. I just didn't want to be in chains all day. I wanted you to let me go." Kom: "I had to do that to protect you." Sibulele: "Then why bring me back here?" Kom: "He wants to marry Spho." Sibulele: "Am I supposed to walk her down the aisle?" Kom: "Its either her or you." Sibulele: "You want ME to marry him?" Kom: "No. He wants you to be his friend. Like you used to be." Sibulele: "Why." Kom: "Sibulele I can't let your grandfather marry Spho." Sibulele: "Wow. So You'd rather sacrifice me instead? Again? Yazi you're worse than he is." Kom: "This is not what I wanted." Sibulele: "Of course it is. You would rather auction your only son, your first born son rather than succumb to your father. I love Spho, and I know whatever brought her

here was YOU. Now she's held hostage because of YOU. And you want to use ME as a bargaining chip. I should've just listened to her and stayed the hell away from looking for my father. You're nothing short of Satan." Father: "WOW. That is just Deep." he walked in. Father: "Now, now. Don't cry my bumble bee. I'll take care of you. You know that." Kom: "Give me my daughter." Father: "Yeah... About that." Kom: "Don't you even... Don't." Father: "I told you she wanted to stay." Kom: "You said you would give her to me!!!" Sibuh: "Like she's a piece of meat." Kom: "Stay out of this boy!" Father: "Don't yell at my son." Kom: "That is not your son." he said through gritted teeth. Father: "Is so." Kom: "Is n- Give me my child." Father: "I can do this all day." Komander held his head receiving a wave of pain. Kom: "Who's in my fucking house." Khaya: "There's guards. Nobody would get through. Maybe Babalo." Kom: "Somebody went through!!!!!" he roared. Kom: "I will be back for my child come morning and you WILL give her to me. Or there will be war." Father: "Finally. I'm looking forward to that." Kom took Sibuh's arm walking out. Father: "and where are you taking him?" Kom: "Until you give me Spho, you're not receiving him." Father: "You are so dramatic. I'll see you at the ceremony. I have a whole new gown made. It looks Spectacular." he stared at Khaya. Father: "Aren't you supposed to be his tail?" Khaya: "You want to kill him." Father: "Hahahaha, contrary to popular belief, I really am not that evil. I wouldn't kill my own son." Khaya: "Yet you want to marry his daughter. Your granddaughter." Father: "Well... It'll happen regardless. She loves me." Khaya: "You still want to kill him. You want to turn Sibuh into full dark to be your successor until Spho gives birth to your son. The most powerful Komander to ever live." Father: "You've done your research." Khaya: "That is my job." Father: "Let me guess, you are offering your services to me since your boss might just drop dead before midnight. You're a clever man." he moved closer to him. Father: "It's a wise move joining the winning team. His will be wiped out in seconds." he looked into his eyes. Father: "You're hurt. He slept with your wife. Plus all of his demons. That's just disrespectful. Whatever happened to a normal beheading? NC NC. The world we live in. You're welcome here anytime." Khaya: "I don't want visitation rights." Father: "Oh yes of course. You're a man of power. Don't worry, I got you covered. Go well. I'll see you at the ceremony."

Siyanda's house. Graham was in the lounge praying for their journey. Siyanda was with Kompany checking his levels and giving him another cup. Sands: "How is he?" Siya: "Almost there." Sands: "It's been hours Siya. It's late." Siya: "It would be better if he's fully ready." Graham: "He's ready." he stood up. Sands: "Pastor, what did you mean when you said he's not a demon." Graham: "That

is for another day." he fell to his knees, his head rolling around his neck. Siya: "I think he's having a vision." they waited for the pastor to finally finish and he opened his eyes staring at them. Graham: "Darkness. Overruling more darkness. There is a portal tonight that will be receiving the initiates." Sands: "Woah woah... What do you mean initiates? You said you only saw one in the fire." Graham: "Yes. The second one appears on this vision, a light is wearing off of him." Sands: "K. He's turning full dark. That's how they describe it in the book I read." Siya: "As if it couldn't get any worse. How are we supposed to save Lakhe from a full dark!!" Graham: "Tonight we focus on Spho. She can't be there another night, or else we might lose her forever." Sands: "Let's go." ***** I opened my eyes and saw Lakhe laying next to me staring at me. Me: "Heyy." Lakhe: "Hi." Me: "Its rude to stare." Lakhe: "Apologies my queen. You're still weak. You were supposed to be attending the ceremony with me tonight, pregnant with my son but you're still weak. I don't like that." Me: "I'll be much better by morning." Lakhe: "That's what I like to hear. Tomorrow, we'll be starting our journey together. A queen and King. They won't ever find us, ever again." Me: "You want to elope?" Lakhe: "Yes, elope." Me: "the kids are still young Lakhe." Lakhe: "I know baby but they will be fine." he kissed my cheek with cold lips. Lakhe: "I cannot wait to feel you." he whispered. Me: "Patience is a virtue Mr Sobukwe." Lakhe: "huh?" Me: "You'll have to wait." Lakhe: "With pleasure." he looked around him and sat him. Lakhe: "I think there's someone at the door." Me: "leave them. Come here daddy." I pulled his shirt. Lakhe: "oh honey." he laid back down and kissed my lips but stopped. Lakhe: "Daemonium. Expergiscimini." he whispered and got up. Me: "Lakhe?" he stormed out the room smashing the door and found his way to the entrance. Father: "Well, well, well.... Who said you needed to be out the house to get some food." Graham: "By the Power of-" Father: "First things first, ask Sandile right here what happened to his old friend, Bible thumping Luke when he tried that on me." he floated off the ground, his form changing into an ugly disfigured face with horns at the top of his head. Father: "Now you come into my house, interrupting my leisure time with my wife? Vos volo ut moriatur." immediate flames rose up from the floor but neither touched them. Graham: "I walk with God. Nothing you come with can defeat me. I have waited years for you Komander." Father: "Komander is my son, I am Rex. Bet you didn't know that huh." Graham: "I don't care who or what you are. Tonight will be your LAST!! Redire ad somnum." he stepped closer. Graham: "Yes, I speak your language."

(Rex Komander is grandfather, remember from the previous insert. Rex means King in their language. Kadir means powerful. Basically Komander is a surname. So Rex = Grandfather. Kadir = The son, Spho's dad. Don't get confused.)

I tried sitting up from bed but I kept slipping. Me: "stupid silk." not to mention my breasts were in so much pain and leaking as well. The door opened and for a second I saw a blurry shadow only. "Spho?" he came closer and sat next to me holding my face. Me: "Sandile?" Sands: "Its me!! You're alive!!" Me: "Of course I'm alive. What are you doing here? Did Lakhe let you in?" Sands: "That is not Lakhe. We need to leave. Graham has trapped grandfather in a mind reversal portal, it won't be long till he wakes from it." Me: "I don't understand." Sands: "Fuck it." he pulled off the covers and scooped me up over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes. Me: "Let me go!" I would be kicking but my body was too weak. A cold rush of air hit my face and I was out. *****

Graham held Rex and watched him stirring in frustration. Soon he would be free at least Spho was out the building with Sandile and Siya. Graham: "You are finally under my command now. I command heavens angels to form as audience to witness God's great glory. Surround him and block him from any attempt to pull in hell. Break down all tactics that some up in him that may hurt us. Burn them with the fire of the holy Ghost!!" Rex broke free and stared up at him. Graham: "God is in control now. Your evil reign has come to an end." Rex: "You think you're smart." he growled. Graham: "Speak up." Rex: "You may weaken and hold my power hostage but you can't kill me. Only Spho can and she won't." Graham: "I wasn't trying to kill you. I am simply showing you God always wins. Your kind-" Rex: "OUR kind!!!!!" Graham: "I am not you Rex Komander." Rex: "You are very well me. Let me go and I'll show you." Graham: "I would if I wanted to." Rex: "You're scared I will defeat you and your so called God!" Graham: "I'm not even touching you and you can barely move!" he laughed. Graham: "Look at you! Your own powers are held hostage, and it will stay like that until I find your son." Rex: "Never!!!" Graham: "Strike me then." Rex: "Striking would be the least on my list." Graham: "Uh huh? I can imagine. You should have those baby spirits running around too but they're under hold as well. Admit that my God is the undefeated and only living God, truthfully repent and I will let you free." Rex: "You'd have to kill me first." Graham: "You're very stubborn. You would rather be stuck in this portal than to be free." Rex: "I alioquin interficiemus te." Graham: "I'd like to see you try. Parata supplicia?" Rex started to burn by the side of his face. Graham: "Quod igne Spiritus sancti habitabo vobiscum in aeternum." Rex screamed in agony as the rest of his body went ablaze. Graham: "You shall burn everytime you utter my name. Every time you think of Spho or try to hurt

her. I command the heavens to tear you off your skin and burn you with the fire of the holy Spirit!! That of which will now reside in you!!!" he signaled to Kompany for them to leave. Graham gave one last look at Rex. Graham: "and I didn't even have to touch you." he walked out followed by Kompany.

I was woken up by curtains opening and I sat up. For the first time in two weeks. I could sit up and see. Me: "Who are you." a man was in this room I was in, he was the one who'd opened the curtains. He turned to look at me with his hands in his pockets. Caucasian man with smooth vanilla skin. His hair was jet black and had icy blue eyes. "You're awake." Me: "Who. Are. You." my eyes scanned my surroundings quickly for a weapon. "You must be better now, the fact that you're looking for something to attack me with proves You've got your strength back. I spent all night praying with your aunt. I'm Pastor Graham." Me: "Where is she!!" Graham: "I ordered her to sleep for a few hours. The kids are with your brother in law. You don't seem to trust me." Me: "I don't know you!!" I got out of bed and realized not only was I dressed in a silk night dress but my legs were wobbly too and I tripped and fell very quickly than I realized what was happening. He walked to me and I covered my thighs. This was so embarrassing. Flashing a whole pastor. Why am I even wearing this!! I don't remember owning it. Graham: "I am not going to hurt you." Oh God. He was back. Me: "Get away from me!!!!!!!" I screamed. Me: "Get out!!!!!" Graham: "Spho-" Me: "Leave me alone!!!!!!!" the room door flew open. Sands: "What the hell is going on!" Me: "He's back!! He changes himself!! Get him out!!!!" Sandile grabbed the pastor and held him against the wall. Sands: "What were the first words you said when you found us in your church?" Graham: "Demons I hear." Sandile let go of him. Sands: "If I even smell something fishy with you I'll slit your throat, do you understand me?" Graham: "Yes." Sandile turned to pull me up. Sands: "Don't worry. He's not going to hurt you. I'm here." I sat on the bed and breathed in gasps. Sands: "What happened." he looked at the pastor. Graham: "Her memory is a little impaired since she's just woken from her compulsion. It will take a few hours for her to remember what happened to her maybe a few days maximum. I must have said something that triggered a memory." Sands: "Well what did you say." Graham: "I told her I wasn't going to hurt her." Sands: "Why would she then freak out?" Graham: "I'm a stranger in her bedroom, what do you think!" Sands: "When do you propose to leave." Graham: "I can't leave until I'm commanded to by the queen." Sands: "Well she just threw you out so goodbye." Graham: "The Queen Mother. She has to appear and tell me to go. Spho is still regaining her energy and I need to be around her for her strength. Since Rex is out of function, Kadir is likely to take over from him and I

cannot locate him. I'm not leaving Spho's side." Sands: "Who's dog is Rex?" Graham: "The grandfather." Sands: "out of function how?" Graham: "I can't kill him, I can only restrain him. Spho has the ability but with her pure heart she won't ever do it." Me: "Where are my kids." Sands: "Taking a nap. I'll run you bath for now then I'll bring them to you once you're done." Me: "Thank you." he stood up and walked out. Me: "You restrained him? Are you sure he won't hurt anyone?" Graham: "Yes. I'm sure." Me: "What about Kadir." Graham: "He is a different ball game. He's incredibly difficult to locate." Me: "My mother can locate him. Where is she." Graham: "Uhm....resting. Are you hungry? I can make you something to eat." Me: "I'll be fine. Where's Siyanda?" Graham: "Also sleeping. Its 10am. We stayed up until 6 this morning. I had to get the compulsion out of you. Then I had to let them sleep." Me: "What about you?" his cheeks turned pink. Graham: "I'll be fine." Me: "How can you protect me if you're tired?" Graham: "I'll take a nap once your aunt is awake. I promised her." Me: "Have you found Lakhe?" Graham: "Unfortunately not. Kadir will keep him and your brother hostage for now. He will probably find out soon what happened to his father. He's not going to be impressed." Me: "You need to find Lakhe. He's in danger!" Graham: "I know, but not immediate danger. He will turn up soon and once he does, you'll be stronger and you'll be able to cast out his half demon. You did it for Siya, you'll be able to do it again for Lakhe." Me: "I should've listened to him. He didn't want a part of this and now its all my fault." Graham: "You can't blame yourself for the way you were born. You want to tell me what happened in the chamber?" Me: "I can't really remember yet. Its just faint." Graham: "it'll come to you soon." I looked through the wardrobe and found an indoor dress. With my toiletries and it under my arm I went to bath quickly and dressed in the bathroom because seemingly I had a bodyguard now. After my bath I was back in the room waiting for Sandile. Graham knocked on the open door and brought in a tray. Graham: "Breakfast." Me: "Breakfast can wait. I want my kids." Sandile walked in carrying Lam in his arms. Me: "Where's Chris?" Sands: "Still napping. I didn't want to disturb him, he has a tummy ache." Me: "What did he eat dan?" I extended my arms, receiving my baby. Sands: "I'll ask Dubs once she's awake." I looked at my baby while he yawned and I held his cheeks. Me: "Boy do I miss you." he fiddled in my arms, his eyes still semi closed and a little snuffle and sob I knew he was hungry. I latched him on my breast and he sucked furiously. Me: "You missed me too?" his little gulps warmed my heart. I was finally home with my children. The nightmare was over. My eyes were a little blurry again but this time with tears. My peripheral vision caught a figure standing by the door. I looked up and saw nothing. Nobody was there. Graham: "What?" Me: "We're going to pray. Now."

#165

A week after I returned home, I had gotten stronger. Mentally and physically. Now, to find Lakhe. We walked in the yard after our prayer jog with Graham. He sat on the kitchen stool and I stood. Me: "So?" Graham: "You're a control freak. I'm never jogging with you again." I laughed. Me: "How am I a control freak? You have to push your limits." Graham: "My limits ran out Spho, you were driving out my soul. I couldn't breath." we laughed. Me: "You're being a baby." he smiled at me. Graham: "I love your praying spirit. Its so energizing. I'm learning a lot from you Spho." Me: "and I from you." Sandile walked in. Sands: "Where have you two been. I made breakfast." Me: "Prayer jog. You should come with." Sands: "So that's not happening. It is enough that you make me pray at night but I need my sleep in the morning woman." I pinched his cheek. Me: "I'll go take a shower. We're moving at 12. Where's Siya?" Sands: "At hospital, he was called in after midnight. He'll probably be back before we leave." Me: "And the kids?" Sands: "Chris is at day care with Dabawo and Lam is taking his morning nap." Dabawo had gotten a job at Chris' school. She helped with cleaning up and cooking for them and they loved her so much. So much she couldn't leave until the last kid went home. They just adored her. I ran upstairs. Sands: "What's your game." Graham: "What game." Sands: "Oh you want bullet points? Oh okay. Firstly, when do you plan on telling Spho her mother died a week ago? And oh, when are you leaving?" Graham: "You don't like me." Sands: "Of course I don't like you with your Jesus sandals." Graham: "I get that, you want me to get rid of the sandals?" Sands: "Its not about the damn sandals! They're nice. Its you I don't want here. Spho is my brother's wife and I will not let you swindle your way into her life." Graham: "I'm only doing my job Sandile." Sands: "I've seen how you look at her." Graham: "Is it any different from Siyanda.....and you." he stood up. Graham: "I will leave when I'm commanded to. Get used to my presence, tell your dog to stop peeing at my door and get ready at 12, we're moving Spho to her new house. And Good Morning." he smiled and walked away. Sands: "You just..." he breathed. Siya walked in. Sands: "Good morning. Ooh you look like hell." Siya: "long night. Head on collision." Sands: "Aren't you used to this?" Siya: "I was a half demon so I barely got tired. Now.....I could barely drive home." Sands: "Okay. Well here's your plate, eat, take a bath and sleep. At least its still 7, we'll be moving at 12." Siya: "Do you guys really have to go? I kind of got used to coming home to cooked food and a family." Sands: "Why don't you get a girlfriend?" Siya picked at his food. Sands: "Oh my God, you're still hoping she will be yours? Siyanda, You've closed yourself off to other women because you're hung up on a married one?" Siya:

"Keep your voice down! Damn, might as well play drums while you say it. And she's divorced." Sands: "but she loves him." Siya: "I know." Sands: "Sir, the only way to get over her is to find you a girl. Liz has this cute friend. I'll hook you up." Siya: "I don't want a hook up Sandile. I just need to focus on my work for now and get into a rhythm." he ate his food. Sands: "Where's Niny?" Siya: "Probably gardening out the back. You know him and his flowers." Sands: "I'm just glad he finally took off his mask. Although he looks even more weird." Siya: "He can still hear you." Sands: "Of course elephant ears can hear me. He could probably hear the conversations God has with Jesus in heaven." Kompany stood behind him. Siya held his mouth laughing. Sands: "He's behind me, isn't he?" he turned around. Sands: "Hey big man." Kompany: "Niny is not elephant ears." Sands: "I was joking. That's what brothers do." Kompany looked at Siya. Kompany: "What is joking?" Siya: "Playing. Making things funny. Like Haha." Niny: "Haha." he chuckled. Kompany: "Niny don't like it. Make it stop." Sands: "Done. No more joking." Kompany turned and went back to his garden. Sands: "Even though he's not a demon. He's still scary." Siya: "You just don't listen." Sands: "Why has Graham not yet spoken about it? He brushes it off everytime we ask. It makes sense that Kompany is no demon, he would've attacked us by now and he wouldn't have been chained to the wall by K. But what is he then?" Siya: "Graham says Queen Mother will explain once she appears. All he knows is that Niny is harmless." Sands: "Graham again." Siya: "Why don't you like the guy? Even Niny likes him and you know he doesn't play with his likes." Sands: "He's attaching too much to Spho." Siya: "Oh....protecting your brother's place. Is it because you know Graham is much better and more in tune with Spho's spiritual side and your brother isn't? I can see how that can be a loss." Sands: "Siya, my brother is not a demon! A bad man yes, a criminal, of course. But he's not demonic. This Graham guy likes chatting with you, slide in the rescuing Lakhe conversation. Every time Spho does, he just defends the whole Queen Mother appearance which I think does not even exist. She believes him. Do you think a queen mother would let Spho suffer in the devil's dungeon for two weeks? If she's that powerful, why didn't she help her out? Or at least given her strength? I know I can trust you and you love Spho, even with your feelings you still respect Lakhe. Please Siya." Siya: "Fine. I'll put pressure on him. At least now Lakhe is in his correct mind, although he's half demon he can think for himself and operate properly." Sands: "Thanks mans. I really appreciate this." Siya: "I'm doing it for Spho." he gulped the last of his juice. Siya: "and believe in Queen Mother. She really does exist." he put the dishes in the sink. Siya: "Keep an eye on Kompany, he tends to overdo it in the sun. I'm going for a nap. Wake me at 11." Sands: "I might as well be the maid then." Siya: "It suits you." he laughed and ran up the stairs.

I was dressed in white tight shorts and a tank vest for Lam to slip into every time he wanted his breast. For the life of him he couldn't let go of the boob ever since I got back. Most of the time he wasn't even feeding, he would just have it in his mouth rolling his tongue around the nipple. This child really was his father's son. Graham: "Ready?" he stood by the door. He had changed into denim shorts that held tight on his healthy thighs and a slim fit black t shirt. Showing off his muscles. I wonder how old he was. He didn't look a day over 35. Me: "Yeah, just putting on my sneakers." I wore red Jordans which I couldn't even remember when and where I got them. Sands: "Khasuke." he nudged Graham out the way and walked in with Lam. Me: "Really Sandile?" I took the baby. Sands: "The baby wants to eat." Me: "Apologize!" Graham: "Its okay Spho, I was in the way." Me: "No Graham. Sandile. Apologize. That was rude." Sands: "I'm sorry Graham." Graham: "Its fine. I'll wait downstairs." he walked away. Me: "What is it with you lately?" Sands: "He's not even making the effort to dress like a pastor." Me: "Must he be in a cloak all day in this heat?" Sands: "Yes." Me: "Sandile, I haven't given up on Lakhe. I won't. Now that I'm absolutely fine, and we'll be in our own house tonight. I will dedicate everything in finding him and saving him. Believe me." Sands: "I believe you." Me: "Don't be mean to Graham. He's just here to help. Once Mother has appeared, she will let him off his duties but right now taking care of me and being my bodyguard is his job." Sands: "I can take care of you." Me: "And you are sweetie. I'm happy that you're here with us." Sands: "Okay." Me: "Let's get moving then." I walked down stairs with Lam. Graham was sitting on the stool with a bottle of water in his hand. He stared at Spho climbing down the stairs, oblivious to her surroundings because of her fixed concentration to the baby in her arms. She reached the last step almost missing it. Graham: "Careful!" he jumped up in time to catch her. Me: "I'm sorry, I wasn't looking." I stood up straight. He stepped back. Graham: "Its okay." Me: "Graham, when we're done with the move, I want us to devise a plan of action for Lakhe. I'm not sitting another day not knowing where he is." Graham: "I agree. His spirit is rested now and not in any danger." Me: "Hold him." I gave him the baby. Me: "Have you eaten?" I walked to the kitchen. He didn't respond. I looked behind me and he was staring at Lam in his arms. Me: "Graham?" he looked up at me, his cheeks turning crimson. Graham: "Yes." Me: "Are you okay? You look dizzy." Graham: "Does it happen every time you stare into his eyes? Like you're in a different world, everything is perfect and you're healed from whatever burdens you may have?" Sands: "Yes." he walked past him. Sands: "Lam is a King. He has a healing spirit." Graham: "That's amazing." Sands: "Wait until you see this. Are your hands clean? Come." he pulled him to the sink and

watched his right hand. Sands: "close your eyes." he took Graham's wet finger and placed it on Lam's lower lip. Graham had tears slipping out his closed eyes. Sandile pulled his hand to Lam's hand. Sands: "Healing spirit." Graham opened his eyes. Graham: "This is incredible." Sands: "Right?" I carried on making lunch. At least they'd found common ground even if its using my baby as their discovery toy. Me: "I'm making spicy roasted shrimp sandwiches with Avo mayonnaise. I hope you're not allergic to anything Graham." Graham: "I eat everything, don't worry." Me: "Sands?" Sands: "I'd even eat poison served by you. Let me wake Siyanda." Me: "Not yet, this will take about 25 to 30 minutes." Sands: "in 10 minutes then." I preheated the oven and lined the baking sheet with parchment paper. Then combined some chipotle peppers, avocado, mayonnaise, Greek yoghurt, lime juice and salt in the bowl of a food processor then I set it aside. I combined my peeled shrimp, olive oil, cumin, garlic powder, chilli powder, salt and pepper to taste as well. I placed the shrimp mixture onto the baking sheet and into the oven. I would wait until it was pink, firm and cooked which would be about 8 minutes max. I prepared the bread rolls. This would taste so good. I had another batch of shrimps that would go in after this one for later on. Knowing Sandile he'll be hungry again by the time we get to my new house. The oven finished and I made the sandwiches. Sandile was standing in the kitchen now staring at me. Me: "Wake Siya." Sands: "I can't." Me: "this will need a minute to cool off. Its not going anywhere." Sands: "Can you even smell how good that is? I'm not going anywhere." Graham was in silent giggles on the chair. Kompany was sitting on the couch. Me: "Niny, please call Siya for lunch." Niny went up the stairs. Everyone's sandwiches were on their plates. Sandile and Graham took theirs. I made the second batch and took Lam to his bassinet(more like a crib but he just chills there.) Kompany came with Siya and they sat down to eat. Kompany didn't eat as usual. I finished making the other sandwiches. Sands: "Who's this for?" Me: "These are extras. For later." he took one and went to the sink. After we had our lunch, we packed up my things and left for my new house. Beds and couches were the primary furniture I had delivered the previous day. I still needed kitchen appliances and a TV. For tonight we'd order some pizza and play board games. It was going to be family time. The house was four bedrooms and three bathrooms. No I couldn't afford it. I'd paid the deposit and first month of rent but I needed to get a job to cover the second month which was approaching in the near six week future. Rob had come to see me during the week and told me the project had been paused and would continue once I was ready and that would be after I sort Lakhe out properly then all my focus will be on it.

Lakhe walked into his warehouse, early evening. Lakhe: "Is everyone here?" Sergio: "Yes sir. Except Sandile. You asked me not to call him." Lakhe: "Yes, Sandile isn't part of this mission. We've got new shipment arriving in two hours. I want the boys on deck, ready." Sergio: "What are we getting boss?" Lakhe: "Do I pay you to ask questions?" Sergio: "No sir. I'm on it." he spoke in his cellphone on his way out. Lakhe: "Kyle, I want you on bed support, nobody comes through whatsoever. Blue, gun the gates down. Black Stallion." BS: "Yes sir." Lakhe: "You wait here." BS: "I can help on deck si-" Lakhe: "I said, wait here. Rest of you, move out." everyone left the building, leaving Stallion and Lakhe alone. Lakhe: "So you're still a double agent." BS: "I was only doing this to help you sir. I am only loyal to you." Lakhe: "Then why sign into the K.U.G." BS: "I needed to get you information!" Lakhe grabbed his neck lifting him off the floor. Lakhe: "and you're done. We're done." he threw him at the wall. Black's head connected dangerously with the wall bouncing like a rag doll and he fell with a thud on the floor. His body raised up on the floor in front of Lakhe and stopped mid air. Lakhe: "Vos non potestis ludere mecum." Kyle walked back in. Kyle: "Boss I forgot the-" he stared at the body floating in mid air and couldn't breath. He turned to run but something grabbed at his ankles and pulled him back screaming. Kyle: "HELP!!!!!!!!!" he screamed. Lakhe: "Who do you think is going to come for you? It'll be a cold day in hell before one of you thinks of double crossing me again. Open your mouth. I want to hear you scream." ***** it was evening and I'd finally moved in. The family was having pizza and playing monopoly. Siya and Kompany were still here. Graham, Dubs and Sands were playing the board game. I was lying on my back on the fluffy white carpet and Chris sat on top of my stomach relaying today's school events. Chris: "ooohh and tomorrow we have a bake sale. Mama, please bake me cupcakes? The red ones." Me: "I will. I'll wake up early and bake them for you. Don't forget tomorrow you have a dinner date with Julie and her parents." Chris: "Mama why don't you like me." Me: "What did I do now?" Chris: "You can't let me go there by myself. Uncle Dave and Uncle Kev are always whispering alone and I'm left to answer all of Julie's questions. Her recent study of ants. I don't want to talk about ants mama. Help me." Me: "Why don't you choose a topic for once and stop letting Julie bully you?" Chris: "I'm a gentleman. I avoid confronts." Sands: "Confrontation." Chris: "She knows what I mean." Dubs: "Awufun ndihambe nawe?" Chris: "No. I want mama." Me: "Fine mama is going to be there for you my boy." Chris: "Thank you." Me: "Let's get you ready for your bath." Lam was sleeping in Siya's arms right after his bath. I heard some growl in the living room. Graham. He was now kneeling, head rolling around his neck. Chris: "mama..." he panicked. I covered his eyes. Me: "What's going on." I whispered. Siya sat up. Sands: "he's having a vision." we waited in anticipated silence until Graham finally

snapped back in the world of the living. Graham: "He's released." I swallowed a lump of saliva. Sands: "Who." Graham: "Lakhe. And he's not showing the world any mercy." he stood up and frantically searched. Graham: "I thought Kadir would take over after Rex. That's the natural order. Where is it!!!" he panicked. Sands: "What are you looking for?" Graham: "My Bible." Me: "So if Kadir isn't the successor, who is?" Graham: "He chose Lakhe. I don't understand why!" Me: "Lakhe is not even in the bloodline. He's also only half demon." Graham: "I need to find my bible. Masilakhe is about to rip the skin of the entire world. His strength is astounding." the door bell rang. Who could that be this late in the night? I stood up, still carrying Chris. Sands: "stand back." the door opened and Lakhe walked in. The whole lounge was dead quiet. Lakhe: "Oh good, everyone is here." Me: "What are you doing here." Lakhe: "I Came to fetch my family. Pack your things. Hi Siya." Me: "I'm not going anywhere with you." Lakhe: "Aren't you?" he smiled.....

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The lounge was gloomy and quiet as we all stared at him unsure of what's next. This was a Komander successor. He probably had enough power to wipe everything out this house because he contracted Rex AND Kadir's powers. Which makes him extremely dangerous. Lakhe: "I'd never do anything to hurt you baby. You're my life. I need you back. Hey Chrissie, come here boy." Chris held on tighter to me. Me: "Lakhe, I'm not going anywhere with you. Even the child is scared of you. How do you go do something like this?" Lakhe: "It was for you my love. You wanted me to be a Komander like your dad, now I am." Me: "I never wanted you to be-" I calmed myself down. Me: "We're going to fix this. I can get all of it out of you. You'll be okay again. Normal again-" he laughed. Lakhe: "Normal? This is my normal. I've never felt so alive Spho...so powerful. You never told me it felt this good to be in control." Me: "Because its not. Its a detrimental feeling. It could break you." Lakhe: "I did this for you." he purred. A scream would have been less scarier. He looked so sinister and dirty. His eyes were a mixture of almond and brown, glossy and low like a serpent. Graham: "Lakhe." he stepped in front of me. Lakhe: "Who's this clown?" Graham: "This clown is Pastor Graham. I'm sure your boss spoke about me." Lakhe: "Not really. It is a pleasure though but if you don't mind I'm actually speaking to my wife." Me: "Ex." Lakhe: "We will be married again baby, so you'll be my wife." Graham: "Lakhe, you are hurting your family. Komander is only using you." Lakhe: "I can assure you my father isn't using me. And my family is just fine. Thank you." Graham: "Father? Why did Kadir choose you? You're not a Komander. He still has his son Sibuh and

that's only after he dies, Kadir was supposed to be successor." Lakhe: "I am his son." Graham: "Still not his blood." Lakhe: "After the initiation Pastor. We merged. He took me as his own." he smiled. Lakhe: "Don't look so sad." Me: "Please let us help you." Lakhe: "I don't need help. I need you to come home with me. I want to see you in our house tomorrow afternoon with my kids. I don't want to have to come back here and tie your bodyguards to the ceiling. I'll be waiting." Sands: "Bhuti you can't do that, let us help you." Lakhe: "You are nothing to me." he walked out. I let out a sigh of relief then anxiety struck. Shit. We need a plan otherwise Lakhe would hold everyone hostage tomorrow. Siya: "What did he mean when he said they merged?" Graham: "Oh man." he sat down and held his head. Graham: "I need Queen Mother right now." Sands: "WHAT DID HE MEAN!!!!" Graham: "There's a ritual during the initiation, final night. Where a Komander, cuts his hand and that of the initiate then hold together the two bleeding cuts so that the blood merges with each other. That process, transforms the initiate from being a regular elite to be an actual Komander." Sands: "Lakhe is now a Komander?" he whispered. Graham: "Not just any Komander Sandile. He's a full dark blood."

We were stunned, sitting in the lounge. Me: "We can't bring him back can we?" Graham: "There's always a way through God Spho. I just need guidance on how to do it. I don't want to endanger his life." Sands: "What does endangering his life entail? Graham how will I explain to our father that his first son is a demon?" Graham: "Sandile we will fix this. I can't have you panicking or in doubt." Siya: "We're not going anywhere. He might come back and do something. We need to protect Spho, Dabawo and the kids." Graham: "That's a good idea Siyanda. We need all the help." Sands: "What can I do?" Graham: "We'll take turns in keeping watch. Siya and Kompany first. Me and Sandile after." Me: "That's not going to happen. We're not going to be ruled by demons here. We're all going to sleep the same. Now I'm going to bath Chris and putting him to bed. You guys shall get ready too. Me, dubs and Chris and Lam will be in my room since its bigger. Sandile with Graham. Kompany with Siya. I don't want no trouble." Sands: "You're talking to me?" Me: "I'm talking to everyone." Sands: "Where will Boogie sleep?" Me: "In the toilet." I walked to the bathroom. Sands: "That's just being mean!" he yelled. Siya: "I know she means well but we need to protect her." Graham: "Yeah. I know. But we need to keep quiet about it because you know her when she's mad." Sands: "I'm not part of this. I don't want Spho mad at me because of you. No." Graham: "You're going to do it." ***** Chris wanted to sleep next to Sandile today so I let him go after his bath. After my bath and wearing my pajamas, I checked on Lam who was sleeping in his cot. He would be up in

about an hour. Dabawo was in the lounge, I don't know what she was watching anyway I got in bed and closed my eyes, ready for sleep. The room started to spin and I opened my eyes again. Nothing seemed abnormal. I pulled Lam's cot closer to the bed. He was sound asleep. I got back in bed and settled into a sleeping position. My door opened. Graham: "Spho..." I sat up. Am I not allowed to sleep? Graham: "I need us to pray." Me: "Okay. Where's everyone." I got out of bed. He closed the door. Graham: "They're in the lounge. I need to pray together with you because I need Mother to show herself soon. Lakhe is going to hurt a lot of people and I don't want that to happen. We can't give up on him yet." Me: "I hear you." I switched on the light. Me: "Way Maker. Miracle Worker. Promise Keeper. Light in the darkness. My God, that is who you are." I sang. Graham joined in singing. Me: "You are here.. Moving in our midst. I worship you.... I worship you..." Graham: "You are here. Working in this place. I worship you. I worship you." Me: "Way Maker." Graham: "Miracle Worker." Me: "Promise Keeper." Graham: "Light in the darkness, My God that is who you are." Me: "You are here, turning lives around. I worship you. I worship you." Graham: "You are here! And you're mending every heart!!" the room shifted in spirit. Me: "Arise Lord! Lift up Your hand, o God. Do not forget the helpless. Why does the wicked man revile God? Why does he say You won't call him to account? But you God, see the trouble of the afflicted, you consider their grief and take it in hand. The victims commit themselves to You, Emperor of the universe. You are the helper of the fatherless. Break the arm of the wicked man call the evil doer to account for his wickedness that would not otherwise be found. I hand our enemies over to You my God. Show them how you love me. Show them how you protect me and have saved me countless times. They shall bow to You Lord. Break every chain holding your children dear God. We are giving You our all. Our hearts yearn for you. Lead me to You. Bring me Lord, to the place where You are. I want to feel You. Breath life into Masilakhe wherever he is. Show him Your mercy Father as he knows not what he's doing. Take him to Your secret place, the one in his heart. Shake his spirit to a standstill. Let him listen to Your voice. Please help him Jesus." I kneeled on the ground sobbing. Me: "Please make him whole again Dear God." a pair of hands touched my shoulders. I looked up and saw Graham. His eyes were fixed on Queen Mother standing next to Lam's crib. He kneeled down. Graham: "Queen." Mother: "Your queen is right next to you my son." Lam woke up from his slumber and yawned. Queen: "King." Me: "Mother we have a problem. My father has turned Lakhe into one of them." Queen: "I'm well aware of what your father has done my child." Me: "We need to stop him but need your guidance how. I don't want Lakhe hurt." Queen: "The King is the only one who can help you." Me: "Lam is a baby. He can't even talk. I don't even know

want to know what Lakhe is capable of. What if he hurts him?" Queen: "Nothing is able to hurt Lam. Your father himself knows that." Graham: "My quee- Mother, one of the guards, in the Komander elite, his name is Kompany. He is not a demon. What is he? Prayer does not burn him, yet he is supposedly Kadir's security." Queen: "Kompany is a lost angel. Kadir stole him and used him as his security. Kompany only protects. That is what he did in his previous life. Kadir took and blinded him into his elites. The powers he has are not contributed by Komander. They are his own. You need to guide him, Graham. You need to look after him." Graham: "Yes ma'am." Queen: "Take care of Spho. She does tend to lose it at times." I tried not to chuckle. Graham: "I will." Queen: "Have faith in the king Spho. God is protecting you always. He has his angels protecting you as well. Take care my children." Me: "Thank you mama." and she disappeared. I sat on my bed and looked at the floor. Graham kneeled in front of me. His hands on my knees. He brushed them a bit since I'd been kneeling on the floor. Graham: "What's wrong?" his voice was soft. Me: "the first time I met Queen Mother, Kadir was there with me. He summoned her and she appeared but it was so painful, I was pregnant with Lam at the time. My back felt like it was breaking. Now, when I see her, its harmless, peaceful." Graham: "Because Kadir is half dark. He can only summon her because she gave birth to him and he has a part of her. Maybe that's why it was painful to you, two worlds were clashing and you belong to the pure. This time, its only you, there is no heaviness of evil lurking around, that's probably why." Me: "I guess.... I'm going to Lakhe tomorrow. With the kids." Graham: "Why?" Me: "His son will heal him. I am afraid once he sees what's going on he will want to run." Graham: "You want to ambush him." Me: "Yes." Graham: "I will help. We'll do it tomorrow afternoon." Me: "Thank you Graham." the door opened and Sandile walked in, staring at Graham. Sands: "And then?" Graham stood up. Graham: "We have a plan for tomorrow. I'm just going to need a lot of help." Sands: "That's not what I asked. Why did you let him touch you Spho?" Me: "Sandile please stop being dramatic. We have a bigger issue tomorrow and I need all of us on the same side." Sands: "Have you found your bible?" he asked Graham. Graham: "Yes. Boogie was using it as a pillow." Sands: "Sorry about that." Graham: "Goodnight Spho. We will talk tomorrow." Me: "Goodnight Graham." he walked out. I looked at Sandile. He stared quietly at me. Me: "Why." Sands: "He has a crush on you." Me: "No, he doesn't. He's a nice person. That's it. Why can't a guy just be nice without people thinking it over?" Sands: "I am a guy and I know what his nice means. Spho, my brother loves you. I know right now he's some mini Lucifer but you know him. The real him. He adores you. He is not a demon. He never was. Please have faith in him." Me: "I do have faith in him Sandile. This will be over soon. We're going to fix it as a family and I'm

going to protect him with everything I have. I love Masilakhe and I'd love more than anything to have our old life back. We're just one step away from it. You need to believe." Sands: "So you still want to marry him?" Me: "Of course. And move back to our house. The previous one." Sands: "I missed that. Being a whole family." Me: "We're hours away from it. We just need to stick together and beat this." Sands: "Okay." Dabawo came into the room. Dubs: "Nisahleli. Yuh khome ndilale bethuna." Sands: "Goodnight dubs." Dubs: "Night mntanam." Sands: "See you tomorrow." Me: "Join me for a prayer jog." Sands: "That's not happening." he marched out. I laughed and got into bed.

The next morning was swift. I'd gone on a prayer jog with Graham and Boogie in his leash. Once we got back home, I made Chris' cupcakes for school, Dabawo was making breakfast. I went to shower and dressed in pink body suit and simple skinny jeans. I slipped on my fluffy slides, tied my hair up and took Lam to the lounge where Chris was enjoying his cartoon time. Graham walked in also dressed in his denim jeans and a white shirt. His casual look was always relaxed and stylish. Graham: "I have a plan." Me: "Show me, don't tell." Graham: "As you wish my queen." Sandile strolled in, stretching out. Sands: "Morning fam." Me: "We'll be leaving in 30 minutes Sands. Right after breakfast." Sands: "Siyaphi?" Me: "To Lakhe." Sands: "Uhm....Which Lakhe?" his eyes were wide enough to pop out of their sockets. Me: "Your brother." Sands: "Today?" Me: "Yes." Sands: "To the Lakhe we saw yesterday?" Me: "Yep." Sands: "Ooohh Lord, I need empty my bladder. Give me a second to sort out my mentals." Me: "Either way, be quick." Siya and Kompany sat down for breakfast. I was pleased that Niny was an angel instead. It made sense though. When he was instructed to me, he never once left my side. Half an hour later. We filed out to the cars and drove to our old mansion. There was some eerie vibe about it now. Like an abandoned haunted house. Well that ends today. We went inside and cleaned up a bit. One of the rooms opened and out came Nosi. What the.... Me: "what are you doing here?" Nosi: "Well, I remember this is where my family once lived but everyone decided to move out. Who's BMW is in the garage? I like it." BMW? Me: "We need to prepare this house Nosi. Please go visit a friend or something." Nosi: "No need to tell me twice. I'll be gone in 10 minutes sister." she disappeared to her room. It was hours after we'd cleaned and prayed throughout the entire house. It breathed a new different energy. Lam suddenly woke up and fussed. This was unlike him at all. Graham: "He's coming. Okay, everyone, out. Remember, the minute he's in, we lock from outside and start prayer again. He can't have a way out." they all walked out. Chris was at school and would wait for me until we finished here. I didn't want to scare him. The car drove in

and I went to the kitchen to reheat the food carrying Lam in my one arm. In a minute Lakhe walked in the house and stood by the door with a smile plastered on his face. Me: "Hey." Lakhe: "my beautiful wife." he took one step and the smile evaporated from his face in a split second. Lakhe: "Who else is here?" Me: "Nosi baby. She just appeared in one of the rooms while I was cleaning. Hold the baby, I want to dish for you." Lakhe: "No i-" I'd given him the baby already and went back to the pots. Me: "So I made oxtail. I hope you like it. Its the first time in ages I've made this recipe. Doesn't it smell glorious?" I switched the stove off then turned around to look at him. He was gone..... With my baby....

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I ran out the kitchen panicking, my heart jumping out of my throat. There was no sign of him in the lounge either. Me: "Masilakhe!!!!!" I screamed. He walked out the passage. Lakhe: "What?" Me: "Where is my baby!!" Lakhe: "Sleeping. What's wrong?" Me: "You just disappeared!" Lakhe: "To go put him down? Or you thought I'd steal him? You do realize this is our house right? Where could I possibly take our baby? Why don't you trust me?" I felt a pang of guilt. Me: "I just...I'm a little panicky when it comes to him ever since I was...held captive." he stepped closer to me. Lakhe: "Who held you captive." Me: "Rex." Lakhe: "Why." Me: "Its a long sto-" Lakhe: "I've got time." Me: "The food i-" Lakhe: "can wait. Why did he keep you captive." Me: "Kadir didn't want me to interfere with your initiation. So he asked Rex to look after me, but later Rex decided he wanted to make me his wife and mother his kids." Lakhe: "Did he touch you?" Me: "Not in that way, no." Lakhe: "Show me." Me: "Just usually my knee or shoulder. Sometimes my thigh." Lakhe: "And what did Kadir do about this." Me: "He couldn't do anything." Lakhe: "We'll see about that." he walked to the door. Me: "Where are you going." Lakhe: "Look after my boy, I'll be right back in time for dinner." Me: "Lakhe you can't-" but he was already out the door. I went to the bedroom where Lam was sleeping. He was peaceful as he usually was. "Where is he going?" I got a fright and spun around. Graham. How did he... Me: "He's uhm...I don't know. Where's everyone?" Graham: "After he drove out I told them to come back in because I wasn't sure what was going on." Me: "Yeah, he's not really pleased about Rex keeping me." Graham: "Oh no... Don't tell me he's going to him right now!" Me: "I think he is." Graham: "If he fights with Rex, he'll have to release him first." Me: "and he'll feed off his power right? Crap. I should've shut my mouth." Graham: "You couldn't have known. At least he's fighting for you. So that's a good thing." Me: "Graham I thought this would be done by now, Lam didn't even affect

him. He managed to walk out of here even while you're praying outside."

Graham: "Of course it won't just happen Spho. Its going to take time. Longer than I'd initially thought." Me: "Longer than a day?" Graham: "Yes. Spho you need to understand, the kind of massive power he's holding right now. It needs to be broken down step by step." Me: "We are in his house for crying out loud. How are we going to survive in a house with a full dark blood Komander. You weren't here when Rex once visited this place. He almost killed Sandile!!" Graham: "Lakhe is not going to hurt you. We'll be here with you." Me: "Promise me!" Graham: "I promise. I promise I won't leave you." he pulled me into his arms and held me tight. Me: "I'm scared Graham. My kids can't live here. You don't know the look of death I saw everyday in that dungeon. The sound of his voice. His smell. I remember everything." I sobbed. Me: "I can never let my kids live that life." Graham: "I know... I'm sorry." Me: "I don't wanna lose them!" I sniffed at his shirt. Graham: "Spho...there's something I need to tell you." Me: "What..." he had his hand in my hair. Graham: "So the day we found you...Siya and Sandile came to visit my church. They'd brought your mom." Me: "Why." I finally picked my head up from his chest and looked at his face. Graham: "They'd found her and she was in a bad condition. I'm sorry Spho." Me: "Sorry for what. Where is she?" he wiped my cheek with his thumb. Graham: "She passed away." It felt like time stood still. I just stared at him. He had to have the nerve to stand here and tell me this shit? Graham: "I know I should've said something this week, but you were still healing and I didn't want to hurt you in that state-" Me: "You chose to hide the fact that my mother has passed away?" Graham: "Your spiritual health, your sanity, your whole well-being is my priority Spho. I did not want you to relapse or even worse, give up on your faith. I needed to get you stronger and out of that dangerous haze Rex had put you through." Me: "Get out." Graham: "Spho. I care about you. I am really sorry about your mother but I did everything I could to help her. It was too late." Me: "I said. Get out!" Graham: "She's gone Spho. The last thing I wanted was to lose you too." Me: "YOU DIDN'T EVEN KNOW ME!!!!!!!" I screamed. Me: "YOU HAD NO FUCKING RIGHT TO DECIDE FOR ME!!!! SHE IS MY MOTHER!!!! I SHOULD BE MOURNING HER DEATH BUT I DON'T EVEN KNOW SHE'S DEAD!!! Get out of my house Graham. And don't you ever come back." Graham: "Spho, don't do this." Me: "What kind of a person does this? How do you keep such a thing for this long? You had many opportunities to tell me that she's gone but you decide not to. What human being could live in the same house as another and not have the heart to tell them the woman that took care of them when she had nothing, is dead. How could you?" I cried. Graham: "It was hard for me Spho but I made a promise to Queen Mother. You had to be stro-" Me: "Don't give me that!!! You did this for yourself! To make it easier for you. I told you to get

out twice, if I have to say it again, it will be through the police." Graham: "Fine. I'll be leaving. Just so you know, I do care and I'll always be there for you, praying for you." he walked out. My heart was so heavy. I had a lump in my throat and I couldn't breathe. Not my mother. She can't be gone. Why? How? I needed answers and honest ones at that. I walked out and found everyone in the lounge. Me: "How did my mother die Sandile." they all kept quiet. Dubs: "Hayi Spho uthini ngoku? Njani?" (No Spho, what are you saying? How?) I still stared at Sandile. Me: "Graham says, she passed away. You brought her to him. How did she die." he opened his mouth and Siya interjected. Siya: "We found her on the floor in her house. Like someone came in andtried to murder her." Me: "Sandile." Sands: "Siya, she's needs to know." Siya: "Not like this Sandile." Me: "Tell me!!!!" Sands: "Your father's demons raped her near to death. When we found her she was barely breathing Spho, so we took her to Graham's church because we thought he....." I dissolved into the couch and drowned my sobs with a cushion. All of this was my fault. She didn't deserve to die! Sands: "I'm sorry Spho." Lakhe: "What the hell is going on." he walked in. Lakhe: "What are you all doing in my house?" Sands:"Spho needs us. We're here for her." Lakhe: " "We're here for her" Get out of my house. All of you." Siya: "You see the state she's in! We're not leaving her here with you!" Lakhe: "Of course you are. Do you want me to help you leave her with me?" Sands: "Bhuti, we're her support. Her mother has passed." Lakhe: "That's upsetting but this is My house and I want you out right after dinner. All of you." he walked to his room. Siya: "We can't leave her. Sandile, talk to your brother." Sands: "And say what! You see how he is.. We need Graham back." Lakhe came back into the lounge and kneeled next to the couch with a handkerchief. Lakhe: "Your mother is now resting. You have to let her go in peace. It might not be the easiest thing but you have to move on. The way she would've wanted you happy, you implement it into your daily life. That's how you'll celebrate her life." he wiped my tears. Lakhe: "You'll be fine." I stood up and went to the kitchen to dish up dinner.

The next day was a quite a windy day. It was hard for me to get up but I eventually did and went to get dressed. Lakhe had ordered everyone out of his house. Only Dabawo was left behind with me and the kids. I'd spent most of last night praying until I fell asleep. I dressed quick in shorts, a vest and windbreaker plus my sneakers. Lakhe: "Where you going?" Me: "Going for a quick run." Lakhe: "There's a treadmill in our gym." Me: "I need fresh air and to clear my head." Lakhe: "Okay." I took my watch and walked out wearing it. I started my jogging, out the house and up the street. I knew someone was behind me but I wasn't sure who at this hour would be using this path, except

me. Finally mystery person catches up. Its Graham. I am so annoyed its crazy. Me: "What do you want." Graham: "Nothing, I'm just jogging." Me: "You don't even live here. Why are you stalking me." Graham: "I'm not." I ran faster. Graham: "Are you ever going to forgive me?" Me: "I'm trying to pray and run. Stop this." Graham: "What I did was wrong Spho. I am sorry." Me: "My mother is dead. All along." Graham: "I know. I will do anything Spho." Me: "You can't bring her back though." Graham: "No I can't bring her back. But I made sure she didn't die in pain or in possession. Her soul is free from Komander." I picked up pace again. He was running out of breath. Sprinting was much more fun for me than it was for him. After a good 30 minutes of running, I won't back home to shower and dress. I needed to start the funeral arrangements. Lakhe: "How was your run?" Me: "Eventful. I'm going to go check the funeral plans okay?" Lakhe: "Do you want me to be by your side for support." Me: "Thank you but I'll be fine. Dabawo will be looking after the baby." Lakhe: "No problem." After dressing, I left for the mortuary where Graham had decided to place my mother. Where was my dad even? Did he do this? It couldn't have been. Once I arrived and let them know who I was. I waited. Her body was probably ice cold by now. I'll never feel her warm touch ever again. The lady came back to me with the coroner and two other guys. Lady: "Ma'am, This is Dr Freidman, our coroner. This is Detective Greenstone and Detective Nyaba." I was now confused. Me: "Okay." Doc: "Can we go to my office?" Me: "I'm not going anywhere with you until you tell me what's going on!" Doc: "There's no easy way to say this at all. Your mother's body has gone missing."

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I'm back at home after the mortuary drama. I am just defeated. Lakhe comes out the passage as I dissolve into the couch. There's a woman walking behind him. I'm more shocked than annoyed. Who was she and why was she carrying my baby? Lakhe spoke on his phone and hearing the conversation, it was work related. Lakhe: "I already have three trucks waiting at the factory. They'll be filled up and on the road by 12. How does that sound?" he listened and looked at me with a heart melting smile. I took my baby from said woman who gave me an annoyed look. Does she know me? Okay. Lakhe: "I am glad then. I'll see you tomorrow for our meeting. You too sir." he hung up. Lakhe: "You will not believe this baby!" Me: "Who is this woman and why was she carrying my child?" he looked surprised. Lakhe: "She's the nanny." Me: "Did we discuss a nanny?" Lakhe: "No." Me: "Then why is she here?" I heard a 'Mnk' from the woman and I stared at her. She looked at the floor. Lakhe: "Baby,

Dabawo needed a break. Besides She'll be leaving soon." Me: "Are you insinuating that I can't take care of my son?" Lakhe: "No?" he asked unsure of how to continue." Me: "I want her gone." I walked to the bedroom to prepare feeding Lam. After getting comfortable on the bed and him in my arms opening his little mouth ready for a nipple, I teased him a bit and he started to sob. Me: "I'm sorry my angel. Here you go." he sucked on happily, his eyes fluttering against his will. I could feel someone staring at me. He was at the door with his hands in his pockets. I looked up at him and he walked to the bed, sitting on it. His eyes were fixed on Lam. Lakhe: "What happened?" Me: "With what?" Lakhe: "You are upset. Something happened. What is it?" All the while not looking at me but at his son. Me: "You already know what happened. Why do you even care." Lakhe: "Would I be asking if I didn't?" Well... I didn't have a smart comeback to that. Lakhe: "Tell me." Me: "Her body is missing." he didn't even pretend to be shocked. Me: "Are you going to give it back?" Lakhe: "Do I look like a guy that steals dead bodies?" Me: "Your friends do." I mumbled. He rested on the bed with his elbow. I would have called anyone who told me he was a demon, a liar and probably burn them with paraffin. There was no way this beautiful face, those small brown eyes, smooth skin and breathtaking smile could ever be associated with demons. Maybe it was out of him. Lam must have helped him. He had to be healed now. Me: "How do you feel?" Lakhe: "Fine." he pulled Lam from me. Me: "Careful!" Lakhe: "he's a man. He can take it." he held the boy and burped him before dissolving back in lying down on the bed with him on his chest. Me: "Lakhe, be careful anganyukwa umntana." Lakhe: "He's fine." he sat up a little bit but that was enough for me. Lakhe: "So...I'm buying a mine." Me: "What." he smiled, clearly please with himself. Lakhe: "I'm finalizing the deal tomorrow and I want you to come with me." Me: "Wait what? Why?" Lakhe: "You're an incredible businesswoman. I value your input. There's a lot we will be discussing before I sign, most of it might go over my head and I'll have to deal with it later but with you there I know it won't get to that." I am flabbergasted. This is literally the first time he's ever complimented me work-wise. Lakhe: "So are you gonna come?" Me: "Yeah.." I heard myself say. Honestly? I was overwrought. I just could not process what just happened. Onika was his MD. Why didn't he ask her? Me: "Isn't Onika your MD?" Lakhe: "I'm firing her today." Me: "Why?" Lakhe: "Why not." Me: "You can't fire for no reason and she's a smart girl, she could sue the company and set you back from this mine deal." Lakhe: "Should I pay her off then? She has to go." Me: "Do you really think She'll go away that easily?" Lakhe: "You're right. I'll make a plan." he tickled a half asleep Lam. Me: "Make a plan? I hope you're not going to do anything to hurt her Masilakhe." he didn't respond. I covered my boob. Me: "Can I get my mother back, I just want to bury her in peace.

Please?" Why was I begging him? It was my right! Lakhe: "I don't have control over that baby." Me: "Why not!" Lakhe: "Nobody killed by Komanders can get buried." Me: "Why not!" Lakhe: "I can't tell you." Me: "Masilakhe." I said through silent sobbing. Lakhe: "This is law Spho. You know that. Don't cry like that." Me: "She's my mother." Lakhe: "She betrayed the code of conduct." Me: "She was trying to protect me!" Lakhe: "She knew what she was doing. She knew the consequences. Sphosenkosi, there's nothing we can do now. The body is gone. Deal with it. Now you can have a memorial with her printed picture, but that's it. I'm not going to have this talk with you again." I held back my tears. I didn't even know where to look except at my hands. Finally I got up and changed in the closet to my Nike power sculpt leggings and a matching Hypercool crop. I laced up my Nike Trainer 7 Premium sneaker. I tied up my hair and secured my iPod to my arm. Lakhe: "You're going to jog again?" Me: "I'll be in the gym. Don't let that woman near my child." Lakhe: "I told her to leave. I'll be working from home today. I just needed to do a few things." I nodded and headed for our house gym. It was actually quite big. At least three treadmills, three bicycles. A corner with all sizes of dumbbells. Bosu ball close by. I start off by stretching then went on the treadmill. After 30 minutes of running I go do jumping squats. First 50 then I'm on my back for crunches. I'd lost myself in my work out that I only realized how sore I'd become when Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "You will tear a muscle if you keep doing this. Its been three hours already." I can't hear him as my music is pumping loud in my earphones. He grabs my arm and pulls out my earphones. Lakhe: "Stop." His eyes with grave warning. Me: "I need to keep busy." Lakhe: "You're done with gym. Find something else." he dropped my arm and walked out. I really was tired though. After grabbing my water bottle and squeezing into my mouth and gulping down the soothing beverage I went to our bathroom for a shower. He was already there. The bath tub was half full of water, exotic bath salts and glorious smelling bath oils. Candles were lit on two corners. I was hearing a light humming sound and I realized it was this bath tub jacuzzi doing its job. Me: "What's this?" Lakhe: "Your life." he took off my clothes and helped me in the bath. Lakhe: "Sit there and relax." and he disappeared out the bathroom only to come back with a glass of red wine. I took a sip and felt my muscles relax. Lakhe: "Screaming Eagle, 1992. That bottle took me four and a half years to find." Me: "The is the most expensive wine in the world Lakhe. And you're letting me drink it while having a bubble bath? This is supposed to be kept for special dinners!" Lakhe: "Well, the night would have been our wedding night but you were pregnant. Today is not a good day for you. I sympathize. You need this." he urged me. I knew arguing with him was futile. He washed my body while I sipped and relaxed, listening to the pulsating jets underneath me. His hand massaged my thigh under water

releasing the tightened tension from my workout. The hands slid up a notch. Lakhe: "Have you spoken to your dad?" Me: "Nope." My mood changed. Neither one of them has even come to say they're sorry for my loss. Lakhe says mama was killed by a Komander that's why her body is missing so that means tata knows. Lakhe: "I'm going to cook supper for you. What would you like to eat?" Me: "I'm not hungry." Lakhe: "I'll make lamb chops, vegetables and some salad." he planned. Lakhe: "Oooh and I have to make dessert. You're going to be blown away." I keep quiet and stare at thin air. His hand is out the water, holding my chin. Lakhe: "let it go." Me: "She is my mother." Lakhe: "I know." I'm done with this bath plus I hear the baby crying. As I try to get out, he holds me down. Lakhe: "Sit, drink that and let me handle the baby." Me: "he wants his mama." Lakhe: "That is a man and he doesn't want his mama." he walked out in a few seconds, Lam's crying turned to hysterical screams which got nearer until they walked in the bathroom I was in. Lakhe: "I said sit." he undressed the baby and handed him in. Complete silence right then. Me: "Told you he wanted his mama." he just smiled and kneeled next to the tub. Lakhe: "Let me go fetch Chris." Me: "Please do." he kissed my lips. My heart almost stopped and jumped at him. His sweet soft vanilla tasting lips finally pulled away from me then he stared at my eyes. What was that electricity? He had the look of hunger in his eyes. Determined to take what's his. He held the back of my neck and kissed me harder, more passionate and equally alarming. Lakhe: "You're fortunate peanut has glued himself back on you. I can't wait to be inside of you. Feeling you tight and wet around my dick." I was shocked he said it out loud. I don't remember him being this blunt. Especially in front of the baby. Lakhe: "He doesn't understand me." as if he could read my thoughts, could he? Me: "I Uhm..." Lakhe: "There's always later." he planted a kiss on my forehead and walked out. What the hell....

I wanted to catch up on some reading which was impossible since Lam wanted to stare into my eyes. We were done with our bath, sitting on the bed waiting for Lakhe and Chris. As if on cue, the door barged open and Chris dropped his bag runnin to me. Chris: "Mama!!!" Me: "Hi honey. Unjani." I kissed him and he climbed on the bed. Lakhe picked up the bag. Lakhe: "Dubs will be back later." Me: "Okay. I'm meeting a friend in about 30 minutes for lunch." Lakhe: "Pastor Graham?" he leaned on the dresser. Me: "no." Lakhe: "I know you're going to see him, I don't know why you're lying about it." I pretended not to hear him as I was playing with Chris. Lakhe: "You like him." Me: "I don't like him." Lakhe: "I think you do." Me: "Why would I like him?" Lakhe: "Maybe because he's a charmer." Me: "He's not. I don't like him." Lakhe: "And Siya..." Me: "What about Siya?" Lakhe: "You broke up with him?" Me: "We weren't

dating to begin with." Lakhe: "It was fake?" Me: "Yep." Lakhe: "So nobody else has touched you except me?" I looked up at him. He had a pleased smile on his face. Me: "There's kids here." I mumbled. Me: "Plus I need to get ready. Hold the baby." I gave him Lam. Lakhe: "When will you be back?" Me: "In about two hours. Get Lam's bag ready, I'm taking them with." I took out plain high waist skinny jeans and a black crop top. After getting dressed and wearing my black Alexander Wang stilettos, I turned to walk out and he was standing in the doorway of the walk in closet. Lakhe: "You're going to the pastor dressed like that?" Me: "I'm going to see Sandile." he held my waist pulling me to him. Lakhe: "Why are you avoiding spending time with me?" Me: "Why do you keep leaving my baby by himself?" Lakhe: "he's with his big brother. Answer me." Me: "I'm not avoiding you Lakhe. I just need time." damn he smells so good. Lakhe: "Time for what." he murmured against my skin sending electricity through my body. Me: "To get used to us being together." Lakhe: "Maybe I should just fuck it out of you then." I looked up at him, shocked. He smiled. Lakhe: "I'll make dinner so long. You go see your friends and hurry back. We've got a meeting to prepare for as well. Don't forget." he kissed me and walked out. I went into the room taking Lam's bag, my phone and purse. I gave the items to Chris and picked Lam up. I still needed to change them. Me: "Sweetie, bring me your bag. I need to change your shirt." Chris ran to fetch his bag. I quickly changed Lam's onesie dressing him in the tiniest pair of jeans and a plain white t shirt plus white socks. Me: "Such a Slay King aren't you? You're gonn charm these girls, won't you baby?" Chris: "Nazi mama." he held a t shirt. Between a bag and a t shirt, what did I ask for? Me: "I said your bag." Chris: "I know mama but can I please wear this one?" Me: "Fine baby. Come let me-" Chris: "I got it." he dressed himself. I took King and we marched out to the lounge. Lakhe: "My beautiful family." he kissed my cheek then picked Chris up. Lakhe: "Take my car baby. The Audi. Here is Lam's breast milk as well." Me: "Thank you." Lakhe: "Spho?" Me: "Yeah?" Lakhe: "You're a bit cold. I get that you're sad about your mom but my love, look at this. We're together as a family again. Isn't that something to smile about at least?" Me: "I guess." Lakhe: "We'll have the memorial here. On Saturday. Invite her friends, I'll organize an urn, flowers, catering and the program. You don't have to do a thing, my angel. We're going to give her a beautiful send off either way. Body or no body. Her spirit will be remembered." he was really trying though, the least I could do was appreciate. Me: "I'd love that. Thank you my love." I kissed his chin. Me: "We won't be long." Lakhe: "Okay." he put Chris down and we left with his car.

I sat in Sandile's apartment with him and the kids. He was only too happy to see us. Sands: "So you're saying, everything is back to normal? You guys will be getting married again?" Me: "We haven't spoken about it but he's changed Sandile. He listens, he's always smiling at me. He even wants my input on his new deal." Sands: "Wow. That's huge! This is what I wanted for you guys Spho. This is beautiful. Happy husband, a happy wife, happy kids. Look at peanut tryna suck a nipple." I laughed. Sands: "I'm happy for you. Perhaps I should move back home too. I miss you guys a lot." Me: "I'll speak to him." the elevator doors opened and a tall gorgeous supermodel walked in. "When were you going to tell me that my car caught fire?" she accused. Oops. Sands: "When I bought you a new one." She: "Sandile. That was a gift from my father!!!! And you set it alight just like that!!!" she snapped her fingers. Sands: "I did not set it alight, it exploded-" She: "How!!!!!! HOW!!!!!! HOW DOES A CAR JUST EXPLODE!!!!!" she screamed. Sands: "Don't raise your voice at me." She: "Don't tell me what to do!!!!!! Not after this!!!! How could you!!!" Sandile kept quiet and looked at the TV. She: "I'm talking to you!!!!" silence. This was so awkward. If it was Stella sitting here would she go on like this? I mean I'm not his mom but I'm his sister and well..... I guess we're raised differently. She: "Sandile!" Sands: "I will buy you your car." she stormed to the bedroom. I was cringing a bit because Chris was taking a nap there. She seemed to be in the mood to make noise. In a few minutes, she carried out a bag. "You'll be hearing from my father's lawyers!" and out she went. Me: "And then?" Sands: "She'll cool off eventually." Me: "Lawyers Sandile?" Sands: "She's says that every time we fight. Liz is very dramatic and super insecure. By the time she reaches her car She'll call me to insult me again." I chuckled and his phone rang. Sands: "See?" he pressed reject. Me: "But Sandile you make her like this. If only you can be honest with your girl from word go she wouldn't be acting like this." Sands: "Yes she would." Siya walked in the house. Siya: "Hey." he sat next to me. Sands: "How you gonn walk into my house and greet the guest before me." Siya: "I saw you this morning and last night. How are you Spho?" Me: "I'm great. How about you?" Siya: "I'm good." he leaned back on the couch. Me: "Where's Niny?" Siya: "I left him with Graham." Me: "Graham lives with you?" Sands: "Against his will. Siyanda kidnapped him." Me: "Haibo!!!" Siya: "I didn't kidnap him." he took Lam into his arms. Siya: "I simply gave him no option. He doesn't have a family. He lives in the church." Me: "I thought he was the pastor." Siya: "He is a pastor. Just with no family. He also needs to keep an eye on Niny when I'm at work. So I invited him to live with me." Me: "that's nice." Siya: "He was asking about you." Me: "What about me?" Siya: "If You've called. If you need help." I sighed. Me: "Her body is missing." Sands: "Not again!" Siya: "I can't say I'm surprised. Komander's take their victims." Me: "When this happened to Miriam I didn't really care that much. Now....my

heart isn't in the correct place. I don't know what to do. Lakhe suggested we have a memorial this Saturday anyway." Siya: "That's a good idea. I'm sorry for your loss Spho." the door opened again. Girlfriend was back. "Why aren't you answering my calls!" Wow. Sands: "I'm with my family. Can you not see the two human beings sitting over there? Have you no respect?" She: "But baby you burnt my-" Sands: "Get the fuck out of my house." She: "Bu-" Sands: "GET OUTTT!!!!!!!!!!!!!" she jumped and rushed out. What the fuck just happened? Sands: "Anyway, so do you need help with the memorial? We can do it here in the hotel." Did he just.....? It took me a second to get back on track. Me: "Uhm, we'll do it at the house. Can you get Graham to do the service?" Siya: "You're still mad at him?" Me: "No. I'm embarrassed. I got so angry and said some things. He didn't deserve it." Siya: "Then call him." Me: "I can't." Sands: "Proud?" Me: "No. I'm just being careful." "Hello?" I looked around. Sands: "Spho wants to talk to you." Sandile had dialed his number!! He was on loud speaker. Me: "Sandile!!!" he tossed me the phone. Me: "Hi Graham." Graham: "Hey." Me: "I'm sorry about yesterday and this morning. It was unnecessary." Graham: "its okay. How did you sleep?" Me: "Okay I suppose." Graham: "How is Lakhe?" Me: "He's great. Being around Lam is really helping. He's no longer that snaky evil thing he was before." Graham: "Don't stop praying. No matter how good it is. You need to keep faith up." Siya: "Tell her about your dream." Me: "What dream?" Graham: "Nothing. Siyanda is being silly." Sands: "We're having a memorial at the house on Saturday." Graham: "Okay. I'll pray for you guys." Me: "I want you to do the program. You were there in her last moments, I want you there to celebrate her life." Graham: "I don't know Spho. After things were said yesterday." Me: "I'm sorry about that. I didn't mean it. Graham I really need you." he sighed. Graham: "Fine, I will be there." Me: "Thank you." Graham: "Niny is calling for me. Some of it is in English. I can't really understand the rest. I'll talk to you later okay?" Me: "Okay." I chuckled, hanging up. Siya and Sands looked at me. Me: "What?" Sands: "You didn't tell him Lakhe was the one doing the memorial and he has been a sweetheart." Me: "Why do I have to tell him?" Sands: "You told me though." Me: "You asked." Siya: "Lakhe? A sweetheart?" he laughed. Sands: "Don't be jealous." Siya: "I'm actually not jealous but let's be realistic, a sweetheart? An apricot, maybe. A full sweet plum? Haha. No." Sands: "Mean. Anyway, I'm happy." Siya: "Your girlfriend is probably slashing your tyres right now." Sands: "I don't even have a car." Siya: "Your office?" Sands: "That bitch." he jumped up and ran out. Siya: "So...are you happy?" Me: "Yes. I am." Siya: "Aren't you glad that I refused you now?" I laughed. Me: "Leave that." Siya: "I didn't want you to regret yourself Spho. I know you love Lakhe and that's the person you want to be with. If you're happy, its enough for me." Me: "Thank you Siya. You're a great person." Siya: "You're Welcome. Continue praying for your marriage

and children Spheo. Your prayers are powerful." Me: "Thank you. For everything." Siya: "Its cool." Me: "So.. You and Sandile? Besties?" Siya: "Not really. We just hung out last night. The four of us watched a movie till late." Me: "four?" Siya: "Niny and Graham too." Me: "Ohh..." my phone rang. It was Lakhe. Me: "hey baby." Lakhe: "Where are you?" Me: "Oh I'm at Sandile's hotel." Lakhe: "Dinner is ready." Me: "I'll be there just now." he hung up. Me: "I have to go." I went to fetch Chris when Sandile came in. Sands: "Leaving already?" Me: "Yeah. Your brother cooked us dinner so he wants his little chickens home." he smiled. Sands: "I'm glad. I'll be back soon." Me: "Thanks for having us. It was lovely seeing you Siya." Siya: "Drive safe. Here you go." he gave me a sleeping Lam. ***** Our drive home was a bit longer because of traffic but we finally made it home. After taking the kids in, I put Lam in his bassinet then helped set the table. Lakhe walked to me and kissed my forehead. Lakhe: "I missed you." Me: "me too honey." his hand slid under my top letting my bra loose. Me: "The kids, Lakhe." Lakhe: "Chris is taking his nap. Lam will be dozing off soon, just have to move him to his brother with the baby monitor." Me: "What about dinner?" Lakhe: "It can wait." I shook my head and continue with the table. In just 5 minutes, he grabbed my arm and pulled me to the bedroom, closing the door behind us. Me: "What was that for!" Lakhe: "I missed you." he inched closer to me. My heart started racing. Lakhe: "I missed a whole lot of you." he had a dark look on his face. Unreadable. Unpredictable. I tripped on the bed and flopped down. He pulled me back up. Me: "Lakhe..." Lakhe: "Do you love me?" Me: "Of course I love you baby." I panicked. He pulled off my top. A cold breeze slaps my skin and I start shivering. Me: "Baby...can we please-" Lakhe: "I'm not waiting any longer. Are you not my wife?" Me: "Was-" his lips smashed into mine, dripping and holding me closely. His hand pulled down the jeans. Me: "Lakhe..." I breathed. Lakhe: "you wanted me?" he whispered onto my lips. I hated how good he smelt. He pulled off the jeans and stared at my body only dressed in a black thong. Lakhe: "Sooo beautiful." I stood shy staring at the floor like a high school girl. I should be used to him by now. We were married for goodness sake! We have kids. Why was I so shy? He held my waist with his left arm, his right hand in between my thighs rubbing on top of the fabric of my underwear. Lakhe: "You're my everything." my heart fluttered. Lakhe: "Do you know how beautiful you are?" Me: "No." I breathed. Lakhe: "Fucking breathtaking. And you're all mine." my thighs were shaking. He pulled the thong aside and rubbed on the clit. Lakhe: "And I'm going to have you....as my wife, as my lover, as everything. I want to drink you. Every last bit of you." Me: "Oh Lakhe." Lakhe: "Then....I'm going to fuck you. All. Night. Long." he turned me around, my back to face him. I slipped off the underwear. His hand rubbing from behind up to the clit sliding down to the opening, up

again to circle at the clit and down again. Me: "Masilakhe..." Lakhe: "You like that?" Me: "Yes...." I panted. Lakhe: "You want me now baby?" Me: "Yes!!" he slipped his finger in. Lakhe: "Damn baby....don't do me like this...." Me: "faster..." Lakhe: "he didn't have a piece of this baby....how...?" I flopped on my face on the bed. Lakhe: "Fuuuck. This...." his one hand on my back, the other still playing in between me. He pulled me back up to look at him. I took off his shirt, sliding it off his shoulders. His body more muscular than I've ever seen. Carved like a beautiful sculpture. I unbuttoned his pants, pulling them off. His white Calvin Klein briefs tightly holding onto him, his dick threatening to tear through them. His breathing more calculated and slow. I pulled the briefs off. He was staring at me now. A hard look on his face. He held my face, one hand sliding down to my neck, holding on to it. Me: "Lakhe. No." he laid me down on the bed climbing on top. His hand unremoved from my throat. Me: "Baby..." the grip got tighter and I panicked. He smiled. Lakhe: "Look into my eyes." he whispered. I did as he said and he pushed himself in slowly, getting stuck and pushing in some more. Lakhe: "Aaah." What the hell.... Me: "Lakhe." he held me still and stroked gently in and out. I fell weak under him and welcomed him in. My nails dug into his skin, toes curling in the air. Me: "Lakheeee.." I breathed. He pushed deeper, alarming me. He groaned and went faster. Me: "Baby?" he pulled up my legs to his shoulders, stroking deeper, faster. Lakhe: "fucckkk..." he moved his waist in a slow rhythm and then upped the paced. Me: "Baby!!!!!" he let go of my legs and lay on top of my body. I wrapped my legs around his waist. Me: "I'm coming baby!!!" Lakhe: "Ohh shiit." he buried his face in my neck. Lakhe: "I love you so much...." I felt my heart stop and I clung onto him listening to my humming climax and exploded into a crumbling orgasm. He went faster and finally smashed into me emptying his soul, shivering. I held him quietly. Lakhe: "I've never felt so alive." Me: "You're a romantic these days I see." Lakhe: "What must I do when I'm so in love?" Me: "I love this side of you." Lakhe: "You bring it out of me, my queen." we stayed in that position for some time before he finally lifted his head with a hard look on his face again. Me: "What is it." Lakhe: "I'm not heavy?" Me: "I didn't notice." he got in next to me and closed his eyes. Me: "Baby?" Lakhe: "Short nap." Me: "Okay, well Sandile wants to come hom-" Lakhe: "No." Me: "but baby-" Lakhe: "I said no. Sandile is a grown man. He must be out there doing grown man shit. Get his own wife and his own kids. Not living off mine. You breastfeed Sandile too much." Me: "I don't breastfeed him." Lakhe: "You do. He's a big baby. You baby him too much. How is he going to grow and have his own life if he's always around his mama?" Me: "Okay fine. Then give him the other side of the house and make him pay rent." Lakhe: "Are you hearing yourself right now? Sandile is not coming back here. Rob isn't coming back here. Stella isn't coming back and

neither is Nosi or anyone else for that matter. Its you, me and our two children. No one else. Forget it." Me: "But Lak-" Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi." he warned. I kept my mouth shut after that. I missed our family. I enjoyed every minute of everyday having them with me. Lakhe: "Baby please stop this." Me: "I'm not doing anything." Lakhe: "I do not want you upset. Especially not over this shit. Do you hate me that much that you can't stand living with me only? Ever since we got together You've entertained everyone except for me. Do you not love me?" I suddenly heard Rex's voice in my head. (Everyone except your husband) Lakhe: "I'm talking to you." Me: "I do love you." Lakhe: "I don't think you do. You can live with Siya and its not an issue. I'm the problem here." Me: "Baby don't say that." Lakhe: "What do you expect me to think Spho? Do you know how hard it was for me to accept that your living with another man? Do you even know?" Me: "I'm sorry." Lakhe: "No baby, that is not my point right now. I need to know if you're uncomfortable living with me only so I can leave or let you go." Me: "I'm not uncomfortable. Lakhe I love you. I love every part of you. I thought you loved having your family here. I didn't know that's how you felt." I got out of bed because I didn't want to start crying looking like a manipulative bitch. Lakhe: "Come back here." Me: "I need to pee." I went to sit in the toilet. I do enjoy Lakhe's attention. Especially now that he's changed. Of course I wanted to live with him. There's nowhere else I'd rather be. This is all I've been wishing for. I went back to the bedroom and found him sleeping. I crawled in bed and stared at him. Me: "You're all I need Lakhe. I'll show you that my love." he opened his eyes. Lakhe: "hm?" Me: "sleep my angel." I cuddled him in my arms and he fell asleep.. Lakhe: "Noli ludere mecum." He whispered.....

#169

I woke up some time during the early evening. Seemed to have dozed off. I had a terrible cramp in my lower abdomen. Lakhe: "Hi mama." I looked up and saw him walking in. He had Lam in his arm. Lakhe: "What's wrong?" Me: "I think I'm getting my period." Lakhe: "Aww, sorry baby. Let me get you some pain killers and your food." I got out of bed and went to the bathroom to urinate. Indeed I saw the blood pouring out of me. Then a clot. I stared in between my legs into the toilet. What the hell was this? Me: "Baby?" Lakhe: "Almost there." he came in the bathroom. Lakhe: "I had to put the baby down. What's up?" Me: "I don't think this is just blood. A clot, the size of my hand just poured out." Lakhe: "Shit. Do you need a doctor?" Me: "No. Just my bible and a pad. You know where I keep those right?" Lakhe: "Yes baby." he walked back out. I flushed the toilet, still sitting. Chris strolled in carrying my

Bible and a plastic. Chris: "Ina mama." Me: "Where's your father?" Chris: "he's bringing tablets. He says you're sick." Me: "Yes sweetheart. Please look after Lam for me." Chris: "Okay!" he ran out. I wiped and flushed again. The shower was a few steps away. I got inside it and switched on the tap. From the cold water to the warm, my body was still and unresponsive. Like I could not even feel anymore. After my shower I took my panty and pad which were in the plastic and got dressed. The cramps were still attacking me. I finally made it to bed and read my Bible. Lakhe: "honey?" he entered the room about 5 minutes later. Lakhe: "Food and meds." placing the tray on the bed. Lakhe: "If it happens again, I'm calling a doctor. Please don't hide this from me Spho. I don't want you sick. We have kids here. Imagine if you just collapse?" Me: "I won't just collapse." Lakhe: "Promise me." Me: "I promise." Lakhe: "I'm finishing off some work in the study. I'll join you soon so that we can discuss the mine deal. Is that okay?" Me: "Yes. Thank you baby." Lakhe: "You're welcome." he walked out again. After a few spoons. I took 1 pain killer and continued with my bible. In no time, the pain had subsided. I took my dishes to the kitchen to wash then went to fetch Lam and Chris. We stayed together in my room. Chris: "I'm going to tata." he jumped off and ran. I looked down at Lam. Me: "Pumpkin. Ndithembele kuwe. If any of my strength deteriorates, I want to look into your eyes and regain it back. You are my healer baby boy." ***** Chris pushed open the door in the study. Chris: "Tata." he took a step in. Lakhe looked up at him. Chris: "Why are you sitting alone here?" Lakhe: "I'm just thinking my son. Come here." he pulled him on top of his lap. Lakhe: "What do you think about your mommy?" Chris: "I love her. She's pretty. And she makes me my favorite food. And she smells pretty." Lakhe: "She loves you too. And I'll make sure I protect her for you. Okay?" Chris: "And baby Lam?" Lakhe: "and baby Lam too. All of you are my family. I love you with all my heart." Chris: "Are you dying?" his voice quivered. Lakhe: "Never, my boy. Don't worry about that. I just want you to know you're protected and loved by your parents." Chris: "Okay." he leaned back on his father's chest. Chris: "So you not gonna leave us again." Lakhe: "I'll never leave you again. You belong right where you are." Chris: "So I'm gonna have a little sister?" Lakhe: "As many as you want." Chris: "When? I want to name her Princess!" Lakhe: "When your mom is ready. We're going to go to the doctor and get you a sister." Chris: "Dr Uncle Siya?" Lakhe clenched his teeth. Lakhe: "How was living with him?" Chris: "Fine I guess. He's always writing. Says its patient file. Then he goes to the hospital. He comes home and sleeps after." Lakhe: "Where did he sleep?" Chris: "in his room alone." Lakhe: "Ohh... So who slept in your mom's room?" Chris: "Me. Sometimes Makhulu. Lam has his own bed." Lakhe: "That's good. What else." Chris: "Well, Uncle Graham always goes running with mama in the morning. He doesn't like it that much. Says he can't breath." Lakhe: "Yet he

keeps going?" Chris: "Yeah. Its weird." Lakhe: "You think there might be something going on?" Chris: "Not really. He isn't mama's type." Lakhe laughed. Lakhe: "What do you know about types?" Chris: "Julie and her dads talk about it a lot." Lakhe: "Yeah you need to spend less time with this girl and her two gay parents. So what is mama's type?" Chris: "You. And Dr Uncle Siya of course. He likes gardening with her. He's cool." Lakhe: "So I must learn how to garden?" Chris: "Perhaps. Or learn how to run. Why do you want to do these things? Mama is already here. Why are you trying to win?" Lakhe: "You'll only understand when you're older, my boy." Chris: "Okay. You want tips?" Lakhe: "You even have tips for me?" Chris: "Yes. I do." Lakhe: "What are they?" Chris: "I charge R20 a tip dad. Don't be cheap." Lakhe laughed. Lakhe: "How are you going to bill your own father, Christian?" Chris: "Gifts are expensive. Mother's day is next week." Lakhe: "fine. I'll send you a cheque." Chris: "I only take cash tata. Don't be cheap." Lakhe: "Who is raising you?" he chuckled. Chris: "I don't know how a cheque works but I know its just paper. I want cash." Lakhe: "Fine. Put it on my tab." Chris: "What's a tab." Lakhe: "Write it down. Whenever I get a tip, you write it down, end of the week, you count them all up and I pay." Chris: "Sounds like a job. I can't write so no. I take cash only." Lakhe: "I'll write for you." Chris: "I am not going to go through this with you. Borrow me your phone." Lakhe gave him the phone and Chris dialed. Dumi: "Hello?" Chris: "Hi Uncle Dumi. Its Chris here." Dumi: "Hey Chris. What's up?" Chris: "I'm trying to get into a deal with my dad but there is money involved so naturally he's trying to trick me. So I need lawyer help." Dumi laughed out loud. Chris: "Did I say something funny?" Lakhe: "No. Dumi is being mean. You do realize that you'll have to pay your lawyer." Chris: "Yuuh hayi tata! You see now. If you just accepted cash payment. Now I have to pay." Dumi: "What are you two planning?" Lakhe: "Chris is selling me husband tips here." Dumi: "I actually want some of those. How much is a tip?" Chris: "R20 a tip. Since you're my lawyer I'll pay you with a discount." Dumi laughed. Dumi: "Lakhe you're raising a CEO." Lakhe: "I know bra. I can't believe I have to pay my own son." Dumi: "Chris, you should have family discounts. For your dad." Chris: "No can do. Daddy has a lot of money. Gazzillions. So he can afford me and my R20's. He must not be cheap." Dumi: "What if I can't afford?" Chris: "You're a lawyer Uncle Dumi." Dumi: "Yes but I don't have money." Chris: "You can borrow from daddy then. He's your friend." Lakhe: "I'm not letting you trick me. No." Chris: "Well I charge R20 still and my tips work." Lakhe: "I don't even need your tips. Your mama is already mine." Chris: "Yeah. And she's still friends with Dr Uncle Siya. She was chatting to him this afternoon at Uncle Sandile's house. So I guess you're not getting that far hey. But if you say you don't need me..." he shrugged. Lakhe: "What could you possibly do that I can't?" Chris: "I can make him disappear." he got off his lap and ran out. Dumi: "WOW." Lakhe:

"I'm trying to wrap this around my head. How did a four year old become a master manipulator and a gangster? What did his parents feed him?" Dumi: "Yah... That's one hell of a kid. Lulo can't even think past his next meal and he's two years older. But then again, that's Rey's kid so its obvious he's gonna be a genius." Lakhe: "Rey was smart?" Dumi: "Yeah. I read up on his profile. I was researching for a case. He was a super genius throughout his schooling and profession." Lakhe: "That's new." Dumi: "Anyway, are you keen for dinner some time? I haven't seen you since the... Divorce. How you holding up?" Lakhe: "Absolutely fine. My wife is in our bedroom changing our baby. Everything is back to the way it should be." Dumi: "huh?" Lakhe: "We're back together." Dumi: "That's great Lakhe! You do not understand how relieved I am to hear that. I hated that you guys divorced. Both of you are my friends. So will you be remarrying?" Lakhe: "Yeah. I want less stress for her this time, I'm gonna plan the whole thing myself. Its gonna be a surprise wedding on her birthday. Do you think She'll like it? I don't know why I'm so nervous." Dumi: "I know Spho is head over heels in love with you. She would love it. What changed you? You seem less tense. I am loving this new romantic vibe." Lakhe: "I don't know really. It just clicked in my heart that she belongs with me and I'm just deeply in love with her. She's my everything Dumisani. I can't imagine my life without her." Dumi: "That's amazing man. You gonn make me cry." Lakhe: "Stop that gay shit." he laughed. Dumi: "I'm proud of you man. Our wives are amazing women and they should be treated as queens. I'm thinking of asking Zingi to take me back again. I don't know if She'll say yes." Lakhe: "Do you still love her though? Do you trust her? You need to be sure about those because you don't want to do something and then treat her badly for her past mistakes because of your insecurities. You need to deal with yourself first. Forgive yourself and her. And forgive Sandile too. I know you don't want him near her. That's another danger Dumi. If you can't trust her, then will it ever really work out?" Dumi: "You're right but she's the mother of my kids Lakhe. I don't see myself with anyone else." Lakhe: "Then give yourself some time man. You need to let your heart give in without you telling it to. That's how I felt when I walked in the kitchen and my wife was making me dinner. I literally gave in. I would've been on my knees in surrender if I could." Dumi: "What do I do in the mean time?" Lakhe: "Heal. Spend time with your kids. And her. Don't overthink everything." Dumi: "Ayt man. I get you. When will you be available for a hang out?" Lakhe: "I'll have to ask Spho. I almost forgot to tell you, her mom has passed. She's not in a good space. We'll be having the memorial this Saturday." Dumi: "WHAT!!! Hold on, I'm coming." he hung up. Lakhe got out of his seat and walked down the passage to his bedroom. Lakhe: "Sweetheart?" his wife looked up at him. Her eyes sparkling with love and pain simultaneously. His heart almost jumped out of his chest.

Lakhe: "What's wrong?" he stepped closer to the bed. Spho: "Nothing." Lakhe: "Tell me Spho, what is it?" Spho: "Lakhe I don't have parents." she sobbed. Lakhe: "Of course you do. You have Rob and Stella." Me: "Those are your parents, not mine. Both my mothers are dead, killed by both my fathers because who really knows what happens in that cult. Its just a mess." Lakhe sat down next to her. Lakhe: "You and I are one. We share a house, a life and kids. What is mine is equally yours. Rob and Stella are both our parents. Now I don't ever want to hear you say you don't have parents ever again. Do you hear me?" Spho: "Yeah." Lakhe: "Good. I was on the phone with Dumi. He's on his way. I told him about Sis'Zama." Spho: "Okay. Let me get dressed." Lakhe: "Where is Chris?" Spho: "in his room probably. Check on him." he kissed her cheek and walked out.

After being dressed, I fixed the bed and went to the kitchen. I already had a headache and didn't feel like talking to guests. Lakhe: "My universe." he hugged me from behind. I could ignore everyone except for him. Me: "hey baby." he turned me around to look at him. Lakhe: "You don't look okay." Me: "Yeah I do feel a bit tired. Maybe its the pills." Lakhe: "You want me to get rid of him?" Me: "He's my friend baby. At least he's trying to show support." Lakhe: "Okay but he shouldn't stay long. I want you to rest." Me: "I will." Lakhe: "I've just requested an Uber for Dubs. She'll be here soon. Also, I have a few things to sort out tonight so I'm gonn be busy in the study while you sleep." Me: "its okay babe. I won't disturb you." Lakhe: "This is why you're my wife." he kissed my lips. Lakhe: "before all that though, we have a business meeting. You still up for it?" Me: "Yes baby." Lakhe: "Great. We'll continue after Dumi has left." he kissed my nose. The gate buzzed and I was a bit shocked. Could that be them already? Lakhe went to open and the car drove in. I really wasn't in the mood for this. Lakhe received them at the door and walked them in. Zingi: "Spho!" she came straight to me and hugged me. Me: "hey." Zingi: "I'm sorry for your loss my friend." Me: "its cool. Want some tea?" Zingi: "No." she sat me down. Zingi: "Is there anything you need my help with?" Me: "No. Thank you. Lakhe has me covered." I looked at him. He was standing close by, smiling at me. His smile really drove me crazy. Dumi: "Spho, what happened? Was it an accident?" How is it that my husband looked this gorgeous? Why did nobody tell me? I've been with him for such a long time that his looks just seemed normal and right now I've just realized his smile actually makes my heart melt. Zingi: "Spho? Can you hear us?" I looked at her. Me: "What?" she looked at Lakhe then Dumi. Zingi: "If you don't feel like talking about it, its okay honey. We're here for you." Me: "Thank you." Lakhe: "I'll make tea." he disappeared to the kitchen. Zingi: "Okay, that's it. What the hell is wrong with him? Is he hitting

you?" Me: "What? No!" Zingi: "You have been staring at him ever since we got here and he's been smiling like one of his ducks. What's going on?" I smiled. Me: "Nothing. He's just...sweet." Zingi: "Are you high?" Me: "No." Zingi: "You divorced and got back together. Now he's all smiles, making tea and being a whole jam scone for you. Something is amiss. Are you sure he's not cheating? He has to be." Dumis: "That's madness. Lakhe's not cheating. He's just happy." Zingi: "That's the creepy part. Lakhe is NEVER happy. Not for all those months I've known him has he ever flashed a smile." Dumis: "Can't a man be in love? I personally like him like this. Less aggressive and pessimistic. He's more light. Bubbly. He's an angel." Zingi: "Okay if you're gonna be gay, please do it outside of our circle of friends. Thanks. Spho honey, is Lakhe hitting you?" Dumis: "He's not that type of guy-" Zingi: "Are you Spho? Do you live here or sleep with him? No. Spho? Talk to me." Me: "He's not hitting me. He's never raised a hand on me. He's a great person Zingisa. The kind of person I wanted him to be. Now he is. I'm happy." Zingi: "Are you sure?" Me: "Yes. I'm sure." Lakhe came back with a tray and set it on the table. Lakhe: "Steaming hot Earl Grey and some jam scones." he looked at Zingi and smiled. Me: "Thank you baby." Zingi: "Dumis? You said we had an appointment." Dumis: "No I didn't. Lakhe, my man, I've got something to talk to you about. Got a minute?" Lakhe: "Yeah sure. Follow through." Dumis followed Lakhe with his wheelchair down the passage. Zingi: "Spho. Did you see that?" she whispered. Me: "See what? Why are you whispering? There's nobody here." I put two teaspoons of sugar and some milk. Zingi: "The way he looked at me!" she hissed. Me: "Who?" Zingi: "Kanti who were we talking about? Spho, I think he heard us." I stirred my tea and took a sip. Me: "That's impossible Zingi. He was in the kitchen. We're in the lounge. That's basically two normal houses away. You know how big this castle is." Zingi: "How did he know about the jam scones? When he placed the tray, he looked at me. I'd just said he was acting like a whole jam scone." Me: "Maybe if You'd said chocolate donut, we'd be eating donuts by now." I chuckled. She frowned at me. Me: "Okay I'm sorry. I understand you're a little shaken. It is a bit weird yes but its a coincidence. Don't read too much into it. Knowing the old Lakhe he would have confronted you or made a remark by now. He didn't hear you." Zingi: "Okay. I'm taking your word for it. By the way he is looking dreamier than ever." Me: "Right? I thought I was the only one who noticed." Zingi: "No he's definitely looking like more of a five course meal than a snack. Sooo.....Where's little brother?" Me: "I haven't seen Sibu in a while." Zingi: "His little brother." Me: "Ohh...him. He is in his hotel apartment." Zingi: "he lives alone?" Me: "With his girlfriend. Why?" Zingi: "He has a girlfriend?" Me: "Yeah." Zingi: "for how long?" Me: "I think its going on two months now." Zingi: "Its serious?" Me: "Kind of..." Zingi: "Oh. Well.. Good for him." Me: "You're living with

Dumi." Zingi: "Yes...I know I'm being an ass but Spho...I love Sandile." I stared at her in shock. Did she really just admit this? Me: "Zingi, No." Zingi: "I don't know either. He's just always on my mind. Dumi is the father of my kids and yeah, I do love him too. Plus the sex has improved." Me: "but he can't use his legs?" Zingi: "That's the weird thing. Now that he can't use his legs, I have to be on top right? And giirrrlll, it is just something else. It is amazing. His size just does everything to me. And our foreplay, he makes me sit on his face in reverse." Me: "Woww. All that and you still love another guy. You are more savage than I thought." Zingi: "With Sandile its different. We talk about everything and anything. He is so smart Spho." Me: "Who? Sandile? See you're not gonna come and lie here." she laughed. Zingi: "I know he acts a fool most of the time but he really is smart." Me: "Yeah." Lakhe walked back out the passage followed by Dumi. Lakhe: "My beautiful Queen." he sat next to me with his arm around my shoulder. Me: "My handsome King." he smiled. Dumi: "You guys are giving me FOMO." Lakhe: "Your wife is right here man." Zingi: "ex wife." Lakhe: "Why is that, Zingi. Why can't you give this good man a chance?" Zingi: "So that he can cheat on me again?" Lakhe: "Oh yeah. You're right. Let me call Sandile." he took out his phone. Oh Shit, he didn't. Lmao. Zingi: "Wow Lakhe." Lakhe: "What did I do now?" Zingi: "You had to bring that up?" Lakhe: "Bring what up? I need to call my brother. Is there a problem with missing my sibling?" Zingi looked away. Lakhe: "Dumisani loves you." he concluded. The house was quiet and tense now. Dumi: "These scones are really good." Lakhe: "Dabawo baked them. She really knows how to get it nice and moist in the middle with a bit of crunch on the outside. I don't know how she do it. I guess its what they mean when they say 'black girl magic'." Dumi laughed. Me: "Hey! That's my aunt." Lakhe: "Sorry baby. I think that's her. Let me go open the gate." he went up to open. Zingi: "Dumi we should get going." Dumi: "we haven't spent time with our friends in ages." Zingi: "Yes but its dark outside. You know I hate driving in the dark." Lakhe: "I'll drive you guys home. Its not a problem." Me: "We have work to do baby." Zingi: "Yes and besides I have an early meeting in the morning so I'll need a car. We'll see you guys on Saturday for the memorial. Come Dumi." she stood up. Me: "Okay, drive safe guys. Thanks for coming." Dumi: "You're welcome Spho." they left as Dabawo was coming in with a plastic bag full of stuff. Me: "Hi dubs. What's this?" Dubs: "For Saturday mntanam. I must bake kaloku." she gave it to Lakhe. Dubs: "Beka pha e-kitchen mfana. Ndisayo vasa." (Put this in the kitchen. I'm going to bath.) she went to her bedroom. Lakhe came back after packing the plastic. Lakhe: "Finally. Some time alone." Me: "Let me check the babies and we'll get on it ne?" Lakhe: "Okay. I'll set up the bedroom." I went to the bedroom where Chris had taken a nap. This was actually Lam's nursery where Lam was also sleeping. Talk about nap buddies.

I checked the baby monitor and made sure the camera was on, the windows were locked and they were both sleeping safely. Me: "Dear Lord, I come to you this evening to put my children in your safe embrace. Protect them from anything that disturbs their peace of mind. May the angels of heaven watch over them throughout the night. I rebuke all evil from entering here. Your Will shall be done Lord. Help us break through Your son's heart and his soul. I ask that you walk with me in my dangerous paths. I look up to You for guidance my God. I ask all of this in Jesus Christ's name. Amen." I kissed my sons goodnight and tip toed out their room. Lakhe in our bedroom had the table set up and a chair. There were a few papers on the desk. Me: "They're sleeping. Absolutely peaceful." Lakhe: "You're a great mom." Me: "I don't know about great hey." Lakhe: "Trust me." he pulled me to the chair. Lakhe: "So here goes." I read through it. Me: "A diamond mine?" Lakhe: "Yep." I read quietly. Me: "20 years ago, huh.." Lakhe: "What is it?" Me: "I'm still getting the info. Oh this is an actual mining company you're buying. You got money huh?" he smiled. Lakhe: "And you're about to make me more. I'll make tea." he left for the kitchen. Bumping into Babalo in the lounge. Lakhe: "What are you doing in my house Komodus? My wife and kids are here!" Balo: "I'm only carrying a message, my King. Sir has requested you to come see him." Lakhe: "I am his king. If he needs to see me he will make an appointment preferably when my kids are not here and so will you." Balo: "As you wish, Your excellency. May I?" Lakhe: "Continue." Balo: "I do like the way you are currently running things. There is more order. More production and more respect commanded. It is a true honor to be serving you as my king. Send my love to the queen, sir." Lakhe: "I will. Tell Sir I will be with him tonight." Balo: "Yes, my King." he walked out. Lakhe went to the kitchen to make tea and walked back to his room. Lakhe: "My beautiful wife." he gave me a few hours while he carried on with his other work. Occasionally stopping to bring me tea and some snacks. I was finally getting somewhere. Working with data and numbers was a hell of a stress and headache. This is the main reason I never veered toward Accounting as a career. I've done it but for me to spend the rest of my life doing it is just not gonna work out. Me: "These scones are magical. Remind me to thank Dubs in the morning." Lakhe: "I will my angel. How far have you gotten?" Me: "I'm trying to figure out how the production has seemingly increased in such high volume. It kind of doesn't make sense." Lakhe: "I figured its because they were doing well." Me: "a little too well." Lakhe: "You think someone was playing with the numbers?" Me: "I've tried to check if the data corresponds to Benford's law." Lakhe: "What's Benford's Law baby?" Me: "Its a mathematical law based on the principle that in just about any set of numerical data, numbers occur as the first or second digit at a predictable rate." he stared at me and blinked twice. Me: "Okay. Look, let's

say the number 1 will appear as the first digit 38% of the time, but number 8 will only appear as first digit about 4% of the time. So to test this company's data, I browsed the last ten years of financial data for various items and compared them to other companies of the same nature. Under this law, you would expect the leading digit to be the number 1 about 30% of the time right? But in this case, it doesn't appear as the first digit. Ever." Lakhe: "That doesn't sound good." Me: "That's not the only thing, but it seems the number 6 appears 68% of the time when according to law, it should only appear 8.3% of the time." Lakhe: "Spho are you sure about this? How do you know this shit?" Me: "I've done it for a former client once. Actually I was assisting his Forensic Accountant with the investigation." Lakhe: "Which client is this?" Me: "Sebastian. I think you know him." Lakhe: "We'll come back to why Sebastian is no longer contracted with us later. This information you're telling me, this is for real?" Me: "Yep. We could call a Forensic Accountant to double check in case I missed something vital." Lakhe: "Son of a fucking bitch. How could they do this?" Me: "You need to calm do-" Lakhe: "Do you know how much this shit costs!!!! I wouldve gone bankrupt in a month!!!" Me: "Isn't that why I'm here? To help you?" Lakhe: "And If it weren't for you?" Me: "You can't be thinking about that now." Lakhe: "They tried to play me. Why." if I told him, there's no telling what he'd do. Lakhe: "You're hiding something from me, what is it." Me: "Sit do-" Lakhe: "Tell. Me." he sneered. Me: "Before I say anyt-" Lakhe: "SPHO!" he warned. Me: "How much shares were you going to buy here?" Lakhe: "The majority. 60%. Why." Me: "I have a theory that, whoever is in charge, messed up production big time and cooked the numbers to increase the company share price. Once the company is handed over to you, it will plummet. Thus leaving you bankrupt. Which will force you to sell the company again at an all time obvious low. Was this company listed for sale?" Lakhe: "Yes." Me: "Damn that was brave." Lakhe: "I love you Spho. I am grateful for you. Being the mother of my kids. My business partner. My wife again." Me: "business partner?" Lakhe: "Yes." Me: "You mean your assistant?" Lakhe: "No, I mean my equal business partner. You teach me a lot. You steer me in the right direction. You're crazy beautiful." he kissed my nose. Me: "Are you being serious?" I really didn't believe him. Lakhe was too hard headed to make me his business partner. Lakhe: "I'm serious. You'll be running everything when I'm not around. Not to mention you've just saved me billions." Me: "As if these cents mean anything to you?" Lakhe: "Hewethu Chris is charging me R20 for tips on being a better husband. That child is hurting my pocket at a young age." Me: "You are the CEO. He's living in your house. Charge him rent. If Chris wants to be a thug in this household, he's got to be a responsible one. I don't understand how you let a four year old embezzle you." he laughed out loud. Lakhe: "You're a beast." Me: "I learnt it from you." he pulled me out of my chair

and held my waist. He is always smelling so glorious. His shirt was unbuttoned on the first three buttons. His caramel skin glowing. I looked up at his face. The healthy, neatly trimmed hair covering his jawline. His lower lip pink and moist from the occasional lick. Lakhe: "Why are you undressing me like this Mrs Sobukwe?" Me: "You're the one availing yourself Mr Sobukwe." Lakhe: "Hmmm... You were bleeding earlier and that's the only reason I'm letting you off the hook." Me: "Was there even a hook daddy?" he bit his lower lip. Lakhe: "Stop this right now. I really don't want to paint our bed covers red." Me: "That's just nasty Mr Vampire." Lakhe: "You started." I kissed his hairy chin. Me: "You said you still had to work. I am going to sleep now." Lakhe: "I'll join you in an hour." he kissed my forehead and walked out the bedroom. I kneeled next to the bed and closed my eyes to pray. Something grabbed my throat and I choked instantly. Lakhe: "What are you doing baby?" his eyes were a solid black, shocking me to the core. Me: "st-op." Lakhe: "I will. Once you're asleep." I lifted my hands up in surrender. Lakhe: "I love you with all my heart but if you're gonna keep this shit up, you'll be forcing my hand."

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Lakhe walked in Komander's house and stood in the lounge waiting for him. Kom: "Aha. My King." he came out of the passage, his hands deeply in his pockets. Lakhe: "You summoned me." Kom: "My apologies. I needed to get you here immediately. Seemingly not quick enough. Kadir, you can't strangle the queen. You can't harm her physically, emotionally or even mentally. How do you expect her to trust you if you hurt her?" Lakhe: "Why should I endure torture then? Isn't being a Komander being able to protect yourself from such shit? Am I not a Komander?" Kom: "You know you're a Komander by blood now. You are my son. But she is my daughter. You cannot harm her." Lakhe: "She's forever speaking to her God, sending me around to bring her Bible. It burns! She needs to know that!" Kom: "No. That's not how it works. Father tried it with Mother and that didn't work out, now did it? You have to do this differently. Successfully. This is the only time this is supposed to work in the history of the Komander blood-line. Every leader we've ever had, decided to be violent because that's supposedly the nature of being a Komander. To be more scary and respected. Kadir. It doesn't work. We will lose every time. I need you to change that mentally. You use your power for everything else except hurting the queen. Its written in the books. The only successful way of turning a pure blood queen into dark, is through trust, emotional support and love. Not beating. You will stop that immediately." Lakhe: "So I must burn for her?" Kom: "Yes! If needs be. Same way it does when you're holding the

baby. Sooner or later it won't burn anymore. Get out of the house if you have to. Just let her be comfortable in your love, every woman's weakness is love. She will gladly follow you." he stepped closer to him, standing in front of his face. Kom: "And I swear if you dare touch her that way again, I will destroy you the same way I built you. You may be my King but I am your Creator. You don't ever raise your voice at me. And you don't hit your wife. Are we clear?" Lakhe: "Crystal." he walked out the house. Kom: "About to piss me the fuck off." Babalo walked to him. Balo: "Have to admit he's turning out well." Kom: "He is, but he shouldn't touch Spho!" Balo: "He's full dark, what were you expecting?" Kom: "I don't know. I really don't." Balo: "So what you gonn do about him." he bit into an apple. Kom: "I need to get that pastor. Find him." Balo: "Fuck No. Are you insane?" Kom: "I have a bad feeling. He needs to be out of range from Lakhe. There's no telling what he'd do to him at this point." Balo: "Yeah but he's a powerful pastor. If he even smells me around him, he could kill me. I'm not going to let that happen man, you take care of it." he took another bite. Kom: "You know you're the only person alive that can talk to me like that." Balo: "I'm not scared of you." Kom: "Are you sure about that?" Balo: "What's the worst you can do to me? I'm your little brother. And I'm not going to the pastor, neither are you. If Lakhe wants to kill the pastor, so be it. That's not our problem." Kom: "It shouldn't happen like that. The pastor isn't in our way. He's not coming after us. He is instead keeping Rex locked and-" Balo: "And that means we must keep him alive?" Kom: "Yes." Balo: "I don't understand you." Kom: "Neither do I. I feel like I'm missing something." Balo: "Tell me." Kom: "Ever since she died, I just felt a disconnect of myself." Balo: "Zama? You did love her." Kom: "She betrayed me." Balo: "Betrayal means different to you than the normal person. You need to understand that." Kom: "Doesn't make it any better." Balo: "This is how you grew up. You only have one way of punishing betrayal. You can't do something that nobody ever taught or showed you." Kom: "What you're saying makes sense in my head not my heart." he sighed. Balo: "I have to say I like your human side. Although its a bit disgusting considering you're kind of Komander. The most feared entity on planet earth. So its awkward." Kom: "Get me the pastor." Balo: "No can do." Kom: "I gave you an order." Balo: "Tell Komodity to do it and stop threatening me please. I'm going to bed. Night." Kom: "Baba-" Balo: "Bye." he walked to his room. Kom: "I'm going to get him either way." Balo: "Good luck!" he yelled. Hlumi walked into the house. Hlumi: "Sir." she bowed her head. Kom: "And then..." Hlumi: "I was working late sir." Kom: "I'm not Babalo and you're not gonna lie to me." Hlumi: "I thought everyone had retired to bed sir." Kom: "So you're sneaking into my house at odd hours?" she kept quiet. Kom: "I don't deal well with whores. You're going to be in this house before 6pm every evening smelling like your own sweat or shampoo. Do you understand

me?" Hlumi: "Yes sir." Kom: "Go." Hlumi: "Thank you sir." she looked up at him. Kom: "What is it." Hlumi: "Nothing." she swallowed. Kom: "I said go. Your husband is waiting for you." she walked to her room. Babalo was undressing, ready for bed. Hlumi: "Baby." Balo: "Hey.." Hlumi: "How are you." Balo: "I'm fine." he hopped into you. Balo: "You?" Hlumi: "I'm okay... Uhm... Is Sir okay?" Balo: "He's going through some hectic human shit right now." Hlumi: "So he still has the human side to him?" Balo: "Yes. You were there on the initiation day. He gave himself over to Lakhe to be the full dark instead of him. And in order for Lakhe to be full dark, he had to be a Komander first. Which is why they swapped blood." Hlumi: "So if Lakhe is a Komander, that means he is Sir's son. Right?" Balo: "Ya." Hlumi: "But why would Sir want his "son" and his biological daughter to be married." Balo: "That is how it works best. Through history, the best generations are created through brother and sister." Hlumi: "That's incest." Balo: "In a nutshell." Hlumi: "And you? Will you be forced to marry a sister or cousin." Balo: "Am I not married to you? Are you my sister or cousin?" Hlumi: "You can't marry twice? You're the third Komander apart from Lakhe." Balo: "I could, but I don't see myself being with anyone else." Hlumi: "Oh." she sat on the bed. Balo: "You might want to get his scent off you before you sleep next to me." she stared at him. Balo: "Why would you do this?" Hlumi: "Babalo....It wasn't for you." Balo: "Really? Who was it for?" Hlumi: "I just needed a break, some sanity. Our life together is a lot. I just need some time to breath." Balo: "Don't pretend to cry. Please. You're insulting us both! You agreed to this life! You said You'd die for me. I protected you and now all of a sudden its a lot? So you're just gonna continue sleeping with this guy?" she wiped her tears. Balo: "You know that I love you. You know that with all your heart. What you're doing is only dangerous for your little boyfriend because he will cease to exist if he ever touches you again. Do you understand me?" Hlumi: "Baby..." Balo: "Get in the shower and come to bed. We're not having this conversation again. I swear if I smell him on you again Hlumi... You will know a side of me no one has ever seen." she stood up and stared at him. Balo: "What did I tell you?" she walked to the bathroom, switching on the shower. She stepped in after getting naked and scrubbed her body, tears rolling down her cheeks. Did she even want to be married to a Komander anymore? Everything was understated and she felt as if she got more than she ever bargained for. See, being married into this family meant your entire life would be violated in many ways. A cold breeze hit her skin and she stilled. Balo: "You better not be crying about him." Hlumi: "I don't want this life Babalo. I want us to be the way we were. The way we were normal and living a basic life. We had everything we needed!" he stepped into the shower and switched off the tap. Balo: "You know what would happen to you if you betrayed us right?" Hlumi: "I know." Balo: "I would never be able to protect

you. And I wouldn't want to because I'm not married to a traitor. Fix your emotions and toughen the fuck up." he held her chin. Balo: "What do you want me to do for you to make this easier?" Hlumi: "I just need a piece of clear sanity to hold on to." she sobbed. Balo: "a baby?" Hlumi: "I don't want a demon child." Balo: "Our child will not be a demon. I'll speak to sir. Our house being built, it will be ready in a few months and we'll be out of here. Okay?" Hlumi: "Okay." Balo: "Who's this guy?" Hlumi: "Baby please don't do this." Balo: "I just want to know my competition." Hlumi: "I'll stop seeing him. I swear." Balo: "I will find out anyway. Finish up." he got out the shower, walking to his bed.

***** Sibulele stood in front of his dad. Kom: "What." removing his hand from his forehead. Sibulele: "So you decided to take Lakhe as your son." Kom: "As if you wanted the spot." Sibulele: "You know the craziest thing about this family? The way you treat other kids better than your own. Your father did it to you, and you're doing it to me-" Kom: "You don't want to be anywhere near me. You don't want anything from me. How am I supposed to take care of you without forcing you?" Sibulele: "Have you ever tried? Look at how quick it took you to replace me." Kom: "What do you want from me Sibulele?" Sibulele: "Since Rex is locked. How about letting me go so that I can actually get on with my life." Kom: "I'm trying here." Sibulele: "to control me, yes. And you're doing a commendable job but I'm not happy here. I'm not happy being a Komander. I want my normal life back, far away from this. And you." Kom: "Sibulele, I will do anything. You are my only son." Sibulele: "No I'm not. You've got Lakhe now. I don't want to be a spare." Kom: "Sibulele, when your mother gave birth to you, you fell into my arms and the first years of your life, I spent with you. I'll always be connected to you." Sibulele: "This is you trying to be human now?" Kom: "I never try to be human. Sibulele, you can leave. You're free to go. I'm not going to stop you but I want you to know this is your home. You are welcome any time." Sibulele: "I don't think I'll be back." Kom: "There's a driver waiting outside. He'll take you anywhere you want to go." Sibulele: "I want you to take these demons out of me. I want to be normal!" Kom: "Spho can help you with that." Sibulele walked to the door, stood there and looked back. Sibulele: "You're still my father. I'll always love you. This is just not my life." Kom: "Could you do me just one last favor. I'll never ask again." Sibulele: "Pastor Graham?" Kom: "Yes." Sibulele: "He's a good man. So it goes without saying." he walked out.

Rex's building held a gloomy silence and absence like an abandoned haunted house. There was no life here at all. Lakhe walked in and looked around. Rex: "WOW!!! All hail the king! You look dashing by the way. Reminds me of myself now I don't even know what I look like.. But look at you!!" Lakhe: "Father." Rex: "No, no, no. Call me Rex. I insist. I am enthralled by your

presence. What can I do for you my King. My goodness, you look great!" Lakhe: "Thank you. I still can't see you." Rex: "Your wife's friend did a number on me. I can't do anything. What do you need?" Lakhe: "I need you to help me get rid of Kadir." Rex laughed. Rex: "I've actually been waiting for this. Sibling rivalry. The ultimate best!! You do know only one of you can exist right? Excellent. And I'd prefer it to be my King. We're both full dark. We know what needs to be done, we're both handsome, well... Mostly you are but still. I love everything about you." Lakhe: "So how do I get rid of him." Rex: "Your son obviously. The little lamb can just about destroy him." Lakhe: "I don't want to use my son. I want to do it myself." Rex: "Oooh.. Sexy. Well, its gonna be a little more complicated. You gonna have to let me loose first." Lakhe: "How." Rex: "get your wife to tell her little friend to let me loose. He listens to her every word. Blindly loves her. You need to nip that in the bud real quick." Lakhe: "Done. I'll be back with him." he walked out the building. Rex: "Oh Dark Father. What you have blessed me with this time, I am eternally grateful."

***** I could hear the gate ringing all the way from the bedroom but I was so scared of getting up. I finally mustered up the strength and went to open. The black Audi drove in. Why would Komander even show his face here? You know how disrespectful that is? I was so ready to go off any minute. The back door opened and Sibü stepped out. Behind him, Graham stepped out. Now what was going on? Why were they in Komander's car? Was this a trick? They both reached my front door and I looked at the two of them waiting for an explanation. Sibü: "Baby sis." Me: "What are you doing here?" Graham: "Don't worry. He isn't one of them. What's wrong with your voice?" Me: "Nothing." I let them in. Me: "You can't stay long. He'll be back any minute." my voice was completely burnt because of the strangulation. Which was really weird for me. I didn't think I'd lose my speech. Graham: "What did he do to you." Me: "Why are you here? Please Graham. You have to go." Graham: "I'm not going anywhere!!! Not when he does this! Did he choke you?!" Me: "Please... He's going to hurt-" Graham: "I will not let him touch you Spö! This was not part of it!! He could kill you! There's kids in the hous- WHERE ARE THE KIDS!!!!!" Me: "They're asleep. I checked. They're fine." Graham: "Pack your bags. We're leaving. Masilakhe chose this path, if he's still unchanged, there's no telling what he would do to you. I'll deal with him later." Me: "Leaving Lakhe will mean throwing him into hell. I need to be here. It won't take a day or a week for this to work. God always takes his time and I need to be strong and trust in Him. If that means Lakhe is going to act out everytime I pray then so be it. I am not giving up. God will protect me." Sibü: "Spö, I don't know about this. Graham is right, get the kids, you don't even need the clothes. I'll take care of you. I can't leave you here with a full dark demon." Me: "He will find you. And

he will hurt you. Please. Go." Graham: "I'm not going anywhere without you-"
Lakhe: "Oh yes you are. What do you think you're doing in my house?"

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Graham: "I'm not leaving her with you." Lakhe: "So cute." he mocked. Lakhe: "Baby. Tell him." Me: "You can leave Graham, I'm fine." Graham: "but Spho-"
Lakhe: "You heard her." Graham looked at me. His eyes pleading with me, glassy with tears. Graham: "Fine." he walked out. Siby: "Call me." Lakhe: "That's not gonna happen. Out with you." Siby walked out. I was shaking with heartbreak. Only God knew why he was doing this and I couldn't give up. Not now. I started for the bedroom and he grabbed my arm pulling me to him. Lakhe: "I'm sorry my love. I shouldn't have mishandled you. Its never happening again." my heart was hammering in my chest. I knew for a fact that wasn't the last time. Me: "I need to get sleep." he held me tighter. Lakhe: "Please forgive me." Me: "I forgive you." I croaked. Me: "It was a mistake. I understand." Lakhe: "Good." he kissed my forehead and let me go. I went to the kids bedroom and closed the door behind me. I checked if they were still okay, breathing fine. I needed an isolated place to pray and the best one was their room. Just as I kneeled he opened the door. Lakhe: "Come to bed." Me: "I just wanted to spend a few moments." Lakhe: "They're asleep. Come." I walked out after him and he closed the door. He held my back leading me to the bedroom. Lakhe: "I'm not going to hurt you again. I swear." we got into bed. I covered myself without responding. Lakhe: "I spoke to your father and I promised him." he kissed my back, sending cold shivers down my spine. Lakhe: "Are you still bleeding?" Me: "Yes." Lakhe: "Why are you lying?" Me: "I'm not sure but I think I'm still bleeding." his hand snaked up my thigh and into my underwear. Lakhe: "Dry." I swallowed. Me: "It hurts." Lakhe: "Only because I'm not in there." with one tug, the panty tore and shocked me out my shell. Me: "Lakhe, please." Lakhe: "Come here. Why are you crying?" Me: "I can't... I'm not ready. Please." I begged. he held my chin and stared at me. Lakhe: "So ndithini ke mna." Me: "I'll do anything." Lakhe: "Nothing else is good enough for me." he kissed my lips climbing on top. Lakhe: "I love you. You know that." my thighs were shaking, tears rolling down my cheeks silently. Lakhe: "We are going to be happy. Without them. You're going to love me like I love you and nobody will stop it." he pushed himself in. I closed my eyes and tried to ignore it. All of it. I couldn't wake my kids up with crying or screaming. I stifled my voice and let it tear every part of me. Reminding me of my helplessness when I was a child. The scent of that old man on my skin. Him tearing every part of me. All of it came back ten fold, damaging me more than it ever had before.

When he was done, he rolled over next to me and pulled me into his arms. Soon after, he fell asleep. I couldn't bring myself to fall asleep or even open my eyes anymore. I kept my eyes shut trying to block my reality. This was not my husband. Something had taken over him that I knew. But I never knew for one second that it would take my soul too. ***** In what felt like a second my eyes shot open and I jumped up. I was in severe pain. I felt around my neck and I could feel bruises and gashes like stab wounds. That can't be right. Lakhe was fast asleep. And that's when I was lost into another world. My body was taken over by someone's crying spirit. "God help me.... Pleeeaaase..." it cried. "HELP ME!!!!" I saw a shadow towering on top of me. It had horns on the top of his head and a ghastly face. I felt tied up, unable to move. My heart was heavy, bleeding, crying out to God. This was a vision. I was in someone's body and they were about to die. "What did I do wrongg!!!!" the poor man cried. "Please forgive me!!!" the creature stepped forward until I finally saw his face. "You slept with my wife." This was Babalo/Komodus in his demon form. I finally snapped out of my vision back to the land of the living. I jumped out of bed, sprinting to the closet. I pulled on track pants, laced up my sneakers and a sweater running out. Lakhe: "Spho!!!!!" I grabbed the car keys and flew out the door. I started the car and drove out, speeding down the road. There was only one place they could be and at this time of night. I ignored all traffic signs at this point and screeched to a stop 10 minutes later. I jumped out the car, bolting in full speed into the forest. Me: "KOMODUS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" I screamed. I saw him holding a fork up in the air ready to plunge into the poor man. Me: "I command you by the name of Jesus Christ to put down that weapon!" he stared at me. I looked back at him, walking now. Slowly toward him. Me: "If I reach you, I will break you." he still stood without moving, staring at me. Me: "May the glory of God with all his might, burn you-" he dropped the weapon on the floor. I stepped closer. He took a step back. His beastly form slowly diminishing back to his human form. Me: "Let him loose." Balo: "I don't answer to you." Me: "Komodus. Let him loose." Balo: "NO." Me: "Lord, descend the Holy Fire from heaven. May the power of God fully resurrect this place and burn all signs of evil!!!" he got to his feet and took off with the speed of lightening. Me: "You cannot run from God Babalo. He will find you." I walked to the man, on his knees, hands tied to the back. I let his hands loose and kneeled next to him. The exact same bruises on my neck were on his. Me: "Jesus Christ. Lord and King. Please join us on this dreadful night. Speak into your child's heart. Breath life into him. Hold his soul as it belongs to you and nobody else." I held his neck. Me: "Heal the wounds inflicted on him spiritually, break the ties that hold his soul. Take back his soul dear father." he coughed. Me: "breath...." he looked up at me, tears running down his cheeks. "How..." Me: "We have to leave. He will be back here with

his army." I pulled him up. His legs gave up instantly. I picked him up again and hung him on my back pulling him to the car. Thank God for that intense strength training otherwise this would have been impossible. After getting him in the car, I drove off. The only best place right now I could think of was Siya's house since that's where Graham was. It took at least 15 minutes of hectic traffic violations to get there. I took the man out and pulled him to the front door of the house. I rang the door bell which was opened within a minute. Graham took him in his arm, dragging him to the lounge. Niny was up as well. Graham: "I had a vision. I just didn't know where he could be." Me: "Same. He woke me up." Graham: "Niny. Get me my bible." Niny went up to fetch it. Graham stood in front of me. I couldn't even look him in the eye. It felt as if he could see through me. Me: "I have to go back. Lam will be up soon." it was just after 5am. Graham: "I know what he did to you." Me: "You don't know anything. I have to go Pastor Graham." Graham: "You can't go anywhere. You need to give this man his life back." Me: "I brought him to you for that! You're the pastor here!" Graham: "Yes. But you're the queen. You saw him, saved him from death. Its your duty to bring him back." Me: "Look, I can't do this. Okay? I left my kids and I need to go back. I don't know what he'll -" I stopped myself because tears were threatening my eyes now. Lakhe wouldn't hurt his kids. Graham: "You don't know what he'll do to them?" he pulled my arm gently. Me: "No. I don't know what he'll be thinking. I left without an explanation." Graham: "You need to wake this man Spho." I looked at the lifeless body on the carpet. My heart broke. I knelt next to him holding his chest and head with my other hand. Me: "Pull me closer. Hold on to me. Draw me nearer." he moved uncomfortably, his eyes fluttering. Me: "Hold on..." he exhaled and the black smoke poured out his mouth. I sighed. "You ..." I heard a voice say. I looked down at him. Me: "Hey." "Saved me." I smiled. Me: "God saved you. He showed me to you to help." Him: "You're...angel." Me: "Thank you." Him: "No....I see...angel....a halo. You're....angel." I looked at Graham, confused. Graham: "You're radiating. He can only see you as an angel." he explained. Ohh.... Makes sense. Graham knelt down on his other side with the bible Niny brought. My body was shaking. Totally out of sync. Like I was terrified and weak. Graham held my hands to stabilize me. Graham: "There's no one greater. Full of majesty. Then our Savior. None more powerful, Than our King. Strong and mighty, With all authority. No one higher, No one wiser, than our King. I lift my hands in praise. Hallelujah. I lift my voice to your holy name. I lift my hands in praise, hallelujah. I lift my voice to your holy name...." he sang.

Babaloo barged into the house shaking off his burnt jacket. Kom: "What is up with all of you walking in my house like its a damn circus!!" Balo: "She found me!!" Kom: "WHO." he stood up. Balo: "Your child!! She burnt me!" Kom: "What? Why." Balo: "Why? Why? Is your question!!!!!!!" he screamed. Balo: "LOOK AT ME!!!!!!!" he shook with ultimate rage. Kom: "Spho will never attack you by mistake or for no reason. You did something!" Balo: "You better control her Kadir. You better control your child!" Kom: "Tell me what happened!" Balo: "The idiot that is sleeping with Hlumi kept phoning her last night. I lost it! I went to find him and I was about to kill him when Spho appeared!" Kom: "How the hell would she have known." Balo: "You're asking me? Do you really want to get me even more mad right now?" Kom: "There's no way Spho can just know that. Its impossible...unless....." Balo: "Unless what." Kom: "Someone was praying for him." Balo: "There was nobody in his house when I took him!!" Kom: "They don't have to be in the house. It could have been his mother or someone close to him connecting." he sat down. Kom: "This is worse than I thought." Balo: "You're trying to tell me you didn't know she could do this?" Kom: "How could I? She managed to be pure but she's my blood! There is no indication in the Komander blood-lines history that says a Queen can connect to all other praying spirits around her. She has an army Babalo. She's not fighting alone. If Lakhe doesn't successfully turn her soon, we might as well just commit suicide now." Balo: "Do you think he'll pull through?" Kom: "Not soon enough. Lakhe is too stubborn. He has too much power and he is too occupied." Balo: "So what are you going to do." Kom: "I'll do it." Balo: "WHAT." Kom: "There's no other way." Balo: "You're going to marry your own biological daughter?" Kom: "This is to ensure nobody hurts her and we still reign successfully. I don't trust anyone else!" Balo: "How are you gonna.....do the thing...well, there's no way around this, I mean have sex with your own daughter." Kom: "I can't think about that right now. I don't want to." Balo: "You are her father. She won't just accept it, marry you and have your babies." Kom: "She was attracted to me before. The first time we met. When she didn't know who I was. It will happen again. Babalo don't make me think about this. Its already 6am in the morning, I need to change to full dark by midnight. We're taking her right after that. Prepare the army." Balo: "Wait... If you're full dark, won't that affect your relationship? Seeing that you won't have a human side." Kom: "I'll always love Spho, she is part of me. For me only, its impossible to hurt her. Which is why I have to do it." Balo: "It shouldn't be hard though. I mean shiiiiit, sign me up. I for one wouldn't mind taking your place, she is sexy as he-" Komander held him by the throat lifting him off the floor. Kom: "You may be my brother but if I ever hear you speaking like that about my daughter ever again. I'll fucking kill you. Are we clear?" Balo choked and nodded.....

It was after 9 am when I finally finished at Siya's house. Me: "I have to go Graham. The kids, Lakhe must be worried." Graham: "Yes sure.. Uhm.. Okay." the man was recovering, but in excruciating pain. Lucky for him he won't remember much but I doubt he'll forget entirely. Seeing a demon's face so close to your own is just beyond scary. Something that will mentally scar you for the rest of your life. Now, demons on their own are scary, imagine a Komander demon. Graham: "Spho?" Me: "Yes." Graham: "You have to take the kids and come back here. We'll protect you. Let me deal with Lakhe alone. I'll chain him, I'll find a way." Me: "Graham, Lakhe will kill you on your own. I'm just finding a way to soften him, he will be fine. This is all my fault. I introduced the Komanders in our lives. He never wanted this." Graham: "Yes but now he's in there. You cannot hurt yourself like this Spho." Me: "I'm not giving up until that demon is out of him. He is the father of my children. If I give up on him, who will save him?" Graham: "I understand." he gave me a long hug. How I wished I could stay in his protective arms. Truthfully I was really scared of going back there but I'd left my kids to save a man's life. Graham: "You're an amazing woman. With a beautiful heart full of so much love. You just want to give it to the whole wide world. You want everyone to be safe and happy. You'd rather sacrifice yourself for it. You really are the Queen Spho. I love you." I pulled away from him. Me: "I have to go." Graham: "I'm sorry. That shouldn't have come out." he folded his arms over his chest as if he was trying to hide his heart. Me: "I'll see you later." I took my keys and went to the car, driving straight home. My mind was on the kids. I know Lakhe can cope with them but I always wonder if they missed me. Of course they did. Lam would happily fuss for me and suck on my nipple and sleep. Chris would be sitting on top of me as usual, chatting to me about school and his friend Julie. I parked the car in our driveway and jogged up to the house. No sign of Lakhe or the kids inside. I searched the entire 15 bedroom house and all bathrooms. Nothing. It was Friday. So Chris should be at school right? I made a call to Dubs and indeed she confirmed they were at school. Me: "And Lam?" Dubs: "uphangele notatakhe mntanam." How the... Me: "Okay Dubs." I hung up. Lakhe took the baby to work? My phone rang. Kadir. The fucking nerve? I rejected the call. A message came in. 'Let me talk to you. Its important.' I'd call the damn police if he wasn't a demon. I took a shower and dressed up in a white bandage skirt that really bandaged to my ankles. A matching crop top with thick straps on the shoulders. I wore my Tom Ford glass Cinderella stilettos and tied up my hair in a long ponytail. This process was going to take a short second, after covering my outfit with a gown and applying make up, I was ready to go. I grabbed my Celine shades and a red

clutch bag, putting my essentials in and walked out, driving to fetch my son. After parking at the office, I went inside the big building and I felt the familiar sense of being at home. I loved this company. I remember when I first stepped in here for my interview and every milestone I reached thereafter. I missed it so much. After a quick chat with Bianca at reception I made my way to Lakhe's office. He wasn't there. I went to the boardroom, opening the door and stepped in. To my surprise, it was full. Everyone seated at the table stared at me. I just froze. Then it quickly came back to mind. The mining deal. SHIT!!! Lakhe stood in front carrying Lam in his left arm and holding a bottle. Lakhe: "By all means, join us." he said in a condescending tone. I walked to him. Lakhe: "This is the mother of my kids and the other shareholder of this company, gentlemen." I heard a whistle followed by a 'Jesus Christ.' I sucked on my teeth. Men will always be men. Lakhe: "Have a seat." Me: "Let me take the baby." Lakhe: "Sit." he hissed. A grave warning flashed in his eyes and I sat down immediately. Lakhe: "As I was saying....." he carried on with his meeting. The meeting itself took longer than I expected. Mostly because of the irregularities of the data produced by the owners. It was almost three hours later when we finished. Most of them hung around and chatted to Lakhe. I took the baby from him. Lam looked up at me with a pout. Me: "Someone is hungry." I whispered. He squirmed in my arms. Me: "oh yes he is. Look at you." I giggled. "Mrs Sobukwe." I looked up. Me: "Lwando. Hi." he gave me his brightest smile. Me: "What are you doing here?" Lwando: "I see you're back with the Mr. You don't even let us know so that we stop hunting huh." I laughed. The corner of my eye caught Lakhe. He was staring straight at us from across the room. I had no doubt in my mind he could hear everything even with the noise around us. Me: "Well, he is my husband. Who else but him." Lwando: "Me. I could take care of you." Me: "He takes care of me very well Lwando. So if you don't mind. Drop it." Lwando: "I have backed off. I respect Lakhe. He's a phenomenal businessman. Don't know about husband." he walked away. I was scared of looking in Lakhe's direction because I knew what I'd see I wouldn't like. I occupied myself with the baby. "He's so cute." a man I don't know. Me: "Thank you sir." he held out his hand. "Jeff Keenan. JK mining." Me: "Of course!! Mr Keenan. It is a pleasure." Jeff: "I heard a lot about you. Your husband says you pointed out the irregularities in this deal. Is that true?" Me: "Well, we worked together on it." Jeff: "I'm impressed. I also know, you're only a shareholder here and not employed." Me: "I am building my-" Lakhe: "Family. She's a great mom and wife. And my best asset. So no Jeffrica, you can't hire her." he stood behind me pulling my waist as he sat down on the desk making me lean on him. Jeff looked at Lakhe's hands and up at him again. Jeff: "You're an ass." Lakhe: "This is my wife so fuck off." Jeff: "It was a pleasure meeting you Mrs Sobz. I don't know why you chose to marry

this idiot." I don't know either sir. He walked away. Lakhe: "His wife's name is Jessica. We tease him because she crazy as hell and we call her Jeffrica. I would never understand why Jeff loves women so much. He fucks everything he sees. Such an idiot." he chuckled resting his head on my shoulder. Lakhe: "How do you know Lwando?" I knew that was coming. Me: "I met him at a seminar with your dad." Lakhe: "Oh.. And where were you this morning? You ran out of bed as if you were burning." Me: "I had a crisis." Lakhe: "At 5 in the morning?" "The Sobz..." another one came to greet. Lakhe: "Yes, Ian. What's the deal." Ian: "Round of golf later this week?" Lakhe: "Baby, golf is a cheat code for meeting with women. Yell at him please. I'm not going golfing with him. Tell him." Ian laughed. Ian: "No, its not. Why would I even bother you with women when you've got-" he choked holding his throat unable to breath. Everyone stopped and stared as he dissolved to the floor. What the hell? I put the baby in his pram and knelt down next to Ian. Me: "Breath." I held his neck. He inhaled and exhaled. Ian: "What the." he stood up slowly. Ian: "I need to.....get home." he rushed out. I stared at Lakhe who seemed unbothered. Everyone else carried on with their conversations walking out. Me: "Why?" Lakhe: "He thinks he's going to disrespect my wife in front of me? In which universe?" he stood back up and pulled me to him. Lakhe: "I have one more meeting. Then I'm coming home." I nodded, turning to leave but he held me tight. Lakhe: "What is it." Me: "Nothing." Lakhe: "You're looking gorgeous today. I could have robbed all these men their billions because of you." Me: "I don't know what's that supposed to mean." Lakhe: "That means, you're distracting. Beautiful. Smart." he breathed near my face, his hand snaking down my back. I could see where this was leading and I grew colder by the second. I couldn't let it happen in front of my baby. Me: "I have to get the baby home he's hungry." Lakhe: "Fine." he let me go. I took the baby with his bag to the car. He was so cute today. Dressed in Gucci. Stylish as ever. Me: "Your grandma is just extra. I know she bought this for you. She thinks you're a designer baby my angel." after securing him in his seat, I drove home. Perhaps Graham was right. I should just leave Lakhe. This process was hurtful and I didn't want to experience what he did last night again. I love him but the demonic side to him was taking everything I felt for him away. I had to leave if I didn't want to completely hate him. What would be the purpose of saving someone and losing yourself? Hating them? Arriving at our house, I breastfed Lam very quick and burped him. I laid him to sleep in his nursery and went to pack our bags in my room. Halfway through I heard the door close. When I looked up, I saw him. Me: "Baby." I started. Lakhe: "You're leaving me." he stated. Me: "No. I'm donating these clothes. I wanted us to go shopping later as a family. New beginnings." Lakhe: "You're lying to me. You want to run away from me. Tell me the truth." Me: "I can't do this Lakhe. I

love you but you hurt me!! You need help!" Lakhe: "What help? Is this not what you wanted? A Komander husband? What did you think happens?" Me: "Baby, this is not what I wanted. I wanted to protect you." Lakhe: "Yet you're leaving me. You want to go to him? You want him to raise my kids?" I just stared quietly. Lakhe: "DO YOU WANT HIM TO RAISE MY KIDS!!!" he roared. I flinched with tears streaming down my face. Me: "No." who was he talking about? I looked at the dresser where my bible was when I jumped he grabbed me and threw against the wall. I connected with the side of my head and fell down on the floor with a thud. I tried getting up and I felt an excruciating kick to my side. Lakhe: "YOU LEFT ME IN BED TO BE IN HIS ARMS!!! YOU LEFT YOUR KIDS!!!!!" another blow. He pulled me up with my hair and threw me on the bed, his hand around my neck, literally squeezing life out of me. He finally let go. Lakhe: "You. Disrespect me. You don't see me. I have been nothing but good to you but I have to wake up to you sneaking out to your boyfriend at 5am!!! You have the nerve to come to me smelling like him! You are disgusting!!!!" Me: "Lakhe, the baby-" a hand connected with my face. My ears started to ring in pain. Lakhe: "You're a whore." he paced the room. My left eye was blurry and I could taste copper. Lakhe: "What was I thinking taking you back after you moved in with a man right after our divorce! Its always men buzzing around you because you're a cheap whore!! You don't have any female friends!! Why is it always men! Are you sleeping with Lwando?" I shook my head unable to speak any longer. Lakhe: "If I so much as smell another man's scent on you ever again. HELL WILL DANCE." he stormed out. Darkness finally came and took over my sight. Me: "Khayalam." I breathed..... ***** "Spho..." I sat up and saw him walking toward the bed. Me: "You came for me." Kom: "I'd do anything for you. You know that." he climbed on the bed. Kom: "In order for me to protect you....certain rules have to be in order. You are my wife now." Me: "I am your daughter." he was on top of me, his shirt off. All the tattoos on his body showing off on his muscles and chest. Including the snake up his neck. Kom: "Not from this moment. We are one." he breathed into my mouth. I exhaled and coughed. Kom: "You are resisting. My queen," he kissed my shoulder and neck then looked at me. His eyes whiskey brown with a thin line in the middle. A slow smile curved the side of his face. Kom: "Resistance turns me on." ... I jumped up from the bed. Total darkness. There was no one here. I'd had a vision. My body crashed back into bed because of the agony. I could barely move. I crawled to the closet with tears stinging my right eye. My left was completely swollen now. I remember there being a phone somewhere around here. After I found it, I switched it on and dialed the only number I knew. After hearing it ring, it was answered. "Hello?" I coughed to clear my throat. "Hellooo?" Me: "Help....please...hellpp." the phone switched off.....

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Siyanda walked in his house after a long shift. Siya: "I can't feel my legs." he breathed. Siya: "I don't even think I can eat. Where's Niny? He owes me a sandwich." he sat on the couch arm rest. Siya: "Graham?" he looked at his friend. Graham was kneeling at his newly created private altar where he prayed and worshiped while in the house and not at church. It was an undisturbed place. No ornaments allowed around it. No other humans. Just him and his bible. Siya stood up and looked closely. Siya: "Mans, you're scaring me." still no response. Siya: "Oh hell no..." he held Graham's shoulder and pulled him up. Blood was running down his nostrils. Siya: "Graham?! I need you to wake up man!!!" Graham: "Spho..." he breathed. Siya: "What's wrong with Spho???" Graham sat down. Siya: "what's going on!!!!!" Graham: "I'm getting really strong visions Siya. Sometimes I can't pull myself out of it. I've been living in another world and sometimes they go on for so long I lose myself completely." Siya: "Is that why you couldn't hear me?" Graham: "Probably." Siya took off his t shirt and wiped the bloodied nose. Siya: "What's wrong with Spho?" Graham: "I haven't seen her yet but....the army is coming for her. Siya, they want to take her. They're not even waiting for Lakhe to marry her anymore. They're running out of time and getting desperate. Kadir wants to marry her." Siya: "WHAT!!!!!" he stood up marching to the door. Graham: "Where the hell do you think you're going!!! Get back here!!" he picked himself up and ran after Siyanda. Graham: "Stop this!! They will torture your soul for years. Do not do this-" Siya: "He can't take her Graham! he can't take Spho again. Please don't let it happen! I beg you. Do something!!" Graham: "I'm trying Siya. Get back inside the house. Look at you, running to a demon army half naked. What are you smoking in that hospital? Geez." they walked in the house and stood in the dining room. Siya: "Where's Niny? He can protect her. The Queen Mother said so right? Where is the queen mother? Why isn't she preventing this!!" Graham: "She will be helping. We need to have faith." Siya: "I need to call Sandile." Graham: "He was here. He received a call and just bolted out the house without warning. He was complaining about his girlfriend kicking him out the house so I don't know. I have a feeling its not related." Siya: "And Niny?" Graham gave it some thought. Graham: "Get a shirt. You'll find me in the car." Siya ran up the stairs. Graham waited on him with the engine on. Siya: "So where we going?" Graham: "as soon as Sandile left the house Niny started mumbling something I couldn't understand. I gave him a bit of space. This is when he started pacing and running around in a circle, screaming then he just ran out. That's when my first vision started." Siya: "Shit!! What if he was being commanded again?"

What if they are luring him back in to their cult!! Graham I can't lose Niny!!"
Graham: "You're not going to lose him. Niny is part of us. I pray with him every hour. He will not slip. The light of God is protecting him." Siya: "Then why did he run? Graham, do you know how powerful the Komanders are? I don't think you understand the fact that they have just about everything imaginable including supernatural strength. They bulldoze through religions and ruin spiritual relationships." Graham: "I know exactly what they're capable of, but their power isn't even one tenth compared to God. They will not win." Siya: "Where are we going?" Graham: "To get Spho. We're starting at her house." Siya: "What about Lakhe? I don't want to face Kadir the successor of Komander." Graham: "He raped Spho." Siya stared out the window with a hard expression on his face. Graham: "She's denying it but I saw it. When she came here this morning, it was written all over her face. She's tired, and in pain but She wants to protect him-" Siya: "Stop Talking." he warned. Graham: "Siya, I know you're hurting-" Siya: "Hurt? Do you know what hurt is? You didn't stop him!!!! You didn't make her stay!!!! You let her go back to that animal!!!!" Graham: "Siya I work with God and His command-" Siya: "FUCK HIS COMMANDS!!!!!!!!!" he smashed the dashboard in and hard-knocked the passenger window with his elbow shattering it to pieces, screaming. Siya: "How could you let this happen!!" Graham stopped the car staring at the damage and his friend, shocked. Graham: "Siyanda, have you been praying daily like I'd suggested? Reading your daily devoti-" Siya: "You better drive this car." Graham stared into his eyes. Graham: "Siya don't do this, don't let it consume you again. You are not a demo-" Siya: "DRIVE." ***** My crawling had reached only just outside the bedroom door. In the darkness. I couldn't see. One eye throbbing, the other just barely trying to keep it together. I think a few if not all my ribs were broken. Maybe my spine too. I started feeling dizzy again, Oh Lord please don't do this to me now. "Spho!!" Thank you God. "Spho!!" Me: "Here..." barely a whisper. I heard footsteps and his scent. I started trembling again. Sands: "What the hell....Spho?" Me: "the baby...the baby..." Sands: "Where is he??" Me: "nursery." he stood up and went on the search. In a few minutes he was back. Sands: "Where is Lakhe?" Me: "Is my baby fine?" Sands: "Yes." he pulled me up. Me: "I can't.." he scooped me in his arms when I heard yelling. "SPHO!!!!!!!!" Sandile walked with me out to the lounge and placed me on the sofa. Siya: "Spho!!" he kneeled on the floor next to me. Siya: "You're alive.." Me: "I'm fine. We need to go. Sandile fetch the baby." Niny walked in. Niny: "My queen." Sands: "Niny take Spho to the car." Niny scooped me up and walked to the car. Graham: "Leave everything else as is. Get the baby. We'll take Chris from school. We spend no more time here." Siya: "I'm going to kill that bastard!!!!" Graham: "Siyanda, Spho needs you. The queen needs you. You can't focus on Lakhe

right now." Siya followed Niny to the car. Graham: "He's gone, isn't he." Sandile nodded. Graham: "Damn it!!" Sands: "Now what? Spho is not gonna leave this place without her son!" Graham: "Then we're not leaving." Sands: "She can barely walk or speak. Do you see what he's done to her? Graham, Where is this supposed queen mother you're always talking about? My sister has been living in this house with a full dark demon, which you convinced us would be okay and she'd be safe. Who knows what else he's done to her. Graham, I'm about to kill my own brother because of your lies. You need to tell me the truth right now. Either way, I see a dead body. Summon that old woman, tell her to fix this. I am giving you ten minutes." he walked away. Graham: "This house is riddled by evil. How am I supposed to summon pure spirits in here in ten minutes." Sands: "You will make do. Or else you'll be living like Spho has been living these past days for the rest of your life. I have attempted to kill that Komander thing before. I won't stop until I do. Try me." Graham: "Sandile-" Sands: "You better get on your knees pastor. You have 9 minutes left." he walked down the passage, switching on the lights. He ransacked the entire house without any sign of the baby. Sands: "FUCK!!!!!!!" he kicked a door. Why couldn't Komander stay away? Why couldn't Khaya say no? He literally brought a demon into this house and changed their lives forever. They were so happy before this. Spho was happy. Now she's broken. "Sandile." Sands: "Please leave me alone." he sniffed. Graham: "You need to be strong. You can't let these feelings get the better of yo-" Sands: "You don't know anything Graham. You don't know. How many times has Spho saved my life? How many times has she been there for me? Cared for me when no one else could? My own mother didn't pay attention to me before Spho came. She taught me love. Gave me love. She taught me God and showed me God. And I didn't protect her." he covered his face. Sands: "What kind of person does that make me? I'm going to kill him Graham, I'm going to kill him for hurting her." he stood up from the floor wiping his tears. Sands: "Don't fucking touch me. Tell that old woman to bring back my child or I swear to God I will hang you in your church with your congregation watching." he walked out the house.

Komander paced the house after the bomb Lakhe just brought. Everytime he attempted to speak, all the words stuck at his throat and paced again. Its been an hour. Balo: "Sooo, I'm about to bring up the elephant in the room. Who's gonna change this nigga nappy? I for one, am not going to do it. I've already been burnt by his mom today." Khaya: "Leave changing him. What's he going to eat?" Kom: "Shut. Up." he hissed then finally stood still. He had a baby in his house. His grandson. One he couldn't touch. But loved. Lakhe:

"Lam's blood is of pure." he stated. Kom: "Do I look dumb to you?" Lakhe: "No but you've been pacing for an hour." Kom: "He is my grandchild. Your son!" Lakhe: "Yes. And his mother will give birth to another him. And another, and another. Until the end of time." Kom: "I am not going to sacrifice my grandson. Its not happening. Take him back." Lakhe: "Can't. That stupid pastor has locked my house." Kom: "What the fuck were you thinking." he was seething with anger. Lakhe: "I did what I had-" a hard knock connected with his face and he stumbled to the floor spitting blood. Kom: "I said to you, I built you and I can destroy you." he stated, dark smoke collecting around his feet. He was changing into demon mode quicker than he anticipated. Balo: "No. Hey!! No." Kom: "Stay out of this." Balo: "I am part of this! I am your advisor! Striking a King is not law-" Kom: "Lakhe is not a King until he is married to Spho. Now.... He is a peasant." Khaya: "He is a King. He was married to her. She still belongs to him." the house was dead silent. Lakhe: "Listen to your advisers." he stood up. Kom: "Take the child back to its mother." Lakhe: "I will do no such thing. Spho is leaving me-" Kom: "Obviously she's leaving you, look at what You've done to her, you incompetent fool!!!!!!!" he roared. Balo: "Kadi-" Kom: "Shut up." his eyes ablaze. Balo: "Fine but we need the baby. This is the only way to get Spho." Komander closed his eyes. Suddenly his three elites clung to the ceilings with their necks bound by invisible ties. Spirit ties. They struggled and kicked. Kom: "You will stay there until all three of you learn to respect me and my commands. And you..." he set Lakhe's hands alight with fire. Lakhe screamed. Kom: "Should know who's King." ***** I'd been waiting over an hour now. Something was wrong. I kept slipping in and out of consciousness still in excruciating agony. Me: "Where are my children." I opened the door. Siya: "Let me help you." he got me out the car and we walked back to the house which felt like years. Me: "Where are my kids." Sands: "I've called Dubs. She's with Chris, Julie, Dave and Kev for dinner." Me: "Where is Khayalam." he kept quiet. Me: "Where. Is. Khayalam." Sands: "He's not here." I felt my spirit leaving my body as I collapsed into ready arms. I woke up in a bright room with four pairs of eyes staring at me. Hospital. Me: "Where is Christian?" Siya: "He's with Dabawo. They're asleep in the next room. There's security." Me: "Security? Against demons?" I sat up and felt my back cracking. Sands: "You're feeling okay? We can go home now." Me: "I'm not going home. I need to go fetch my son from those psychopaths." my voice was trembling. I knew what they were capable of. I was scared. How could Lakhe kidnap his own child? Phof it was the same Lakhe that almost killed me a few hours ago. Graham: "You can't. That's what they want Spho. Kadir has visited you. You know what he wants. He'll go through lengths." Sands: "And what does he want?" Me: "he wants me to marry him, so he can impregnate me and save his kind." Sandile looked at Graham. Sands: "Bendithen kuwe ngothetha inyan

kwedin?" (What did I tell you about speaking the truth boy?) Graham: "I don't understand-" Sands: "I ought to punch you in the fucking throat!" Graham: "Sandile-" Sands: "Had I known, had you told me this shit!! I would've taken the child and protected him!!! But no! You must be fucking Superm- Oh Lord, help me not beat the shits out this man. Help me Lord!! Ooooh I can't!" he stormed out the hospital room. Graham started to follow. Siya: "Leave him if you're not trying to be admitted. He needs to cool off." This one doesn't know Sandile, admitted to hospital would be a minimum. He would be lucky. Raki raka raaak yak'lo mamayo leya. Me: "Why didn't you say anything Graham? You have visions way before they happen-" Graham: "Usually. Yes. I haven't even seen Lam in my visions. The only visions I've had are of Kadir and his plans. All day long. Nothing else. Not even you. Which means this was not planned." Me: "But how?" Graham: "I don't know. What I do know is, he's weak right now. He has only one soft spot and that's you. He can feel you're hurt. And this is the time to strike him." Me: "I don't care about his feelings. We are striking." Siya: "I personally offer myself first. I am bringing the boy home." Niny: "I too." Graham: "I'm in." Me: "I don't care if you have to kill them all. Just bring me back my son." Siya: "Done." he marched out. Followed by Niny. Graham: "Spho, there's something I need to tell you-" Me: "Siyanda is the least of our problems. My child is missing!!!!" Graham: "He's turning back Spho! His anger, his pain is going to relapse him back into a demon!!" Me: "I don't care-" Graham: "He will die. If they find him. He is a traitor to them. Him turning back into a demon, won't be on their account. He is a threat and they will kill him." Me: "What do we do?" Graham: "Siyanda obeys your every word. Talk to him." Me: "Bring him in here." within a few minutes, Siyanda was back sitting on my bed with a concerned look in his eyes. I hate playing this card but at this point... Me: "You know I love you." his eyes gleamed, breaking my heart. Why couldn't I really truly love him? He didn't deserve this. Me: "I want you to be safe. I want you to be the Siyanda I have been associating with recently. The clean Siyanda. I don't want you back on the dark side. I prefer you like this." he nodded. Me: "Promise me." Siya: "I promise." he said in a heartbeat. I held his hands. Me: "May the Glory of God rest in your heart from this moment. His every word to resonate with your soul and take over your spirit. His strength and might to guide you in your path and pull you out of darkness. Believe in Him. I ask the Lord to protect this soul. Wash him over with the blood of Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Cleanse his heart and renew his faith. In the name of Jesus, I pray, Amen." he kissed my hand. Siya: "Thank you. I needed that." Me: "Believe in Him." Siya: "I do. And I promise you, I will come back as I leave. I won't disappoint you." he stood up and walked out. Now the wait begins.....

#173

Have you ever opened your eyes and still saw darkness just with a glimmer of light. No it wasn't sunrise. The room was brightly lit for sure but my left eye had swelled to a close. My right eye provided my vision now and I tried to look around. The pain my body was in felt as if tons of bricks and a truck were on top of me. I could barely move. I looked to my side and saw Sandile. He was fast asleep next to me. Only this sociopath can fall asleep angry. I know for a fact he still is and he will wake up still angry. And how big does he think this bed is? He thinks we're on the titanic. I shifted and he opened his eyes. Sands: "Am I hurting you?" Me: "No. Visiting hours are long over." Sands: "Fuck visiting hours." Me: "You okay?" Sands: "Baby Lam is missing. A part of me. I haven't heard from Siya in two hours. I don't even know if they're still alive." Me: "They are." he looked at me. Sands: "How do you feel?" Me: "Still sore. He didn't even hit me that long. Its his super strength that did the damage. One more blow and he could have killed me." he closed his eyes and sighed. Me: "I'm fine now." Sands: "If I ever see him again." Me: "He's your brother. He is possessed by a powerful demon. He doesn't even know what he's doing. You can't blame him." Sands: "I can. I will." Me: "have you seen Sibub?" Sands: "he went back to Durban. He said he's moving to Abu Dhabi by the end of the week." I nodded. Can't really blame Sibub. If I could I'd probably move to Switzerland. Me: "As long as he's free." he pulled me closer to him. Me: "I can't believe the Komander's destroyed our family within two months." Sands: "Its crazy. I couldn't believe they are actually demons. No wonder they get away with so much. An international criminal, without a face. We are the only people who know what he looks like. What do you think will happen to us after this?" Me: "We will rebuild. We will live. They tried but God succeeded." Sands: "I'm sorry about what they did to your mom." Me: "Me too. But she was one of them. She knew the consequences. I just wish she didn't risk it for me. All in all I didn't even get the book she spoke to me about." Sands: "I did. I read it over night the day before my accident." Me: "What did it say?" I looked at him. He looked into my eyes. Sands: "It spoke about you. A victorious queen. One who loved others more than herself. She who saved the world from darkness. The human light." I smiled. Me: "Now you're being extra." Sands: "I'm serious, that's exactly what it said." Me: "You're lying. Tell me more." Sands: "Fine, it spoke about the history. How the whole bloodline started. Kind of disgusting actually. But in the end, I realized one thing. There's two different books. One from the pure, which I assume is what I read. The other from the dark which is held by Rex. This is why they tried to kill me. There could be clues in the pure book about how to reign." Me: "Sandile. If I let this

thing go. What do you think would happen?" Sands: "I think the Komander's would recruit more army, turning people into demons, destroying the world we live in. Killing innocents. It would be a mess." Me: "I know. Its just so tiring. I feel like its been going on for years." Sands: "Yes, but its almost the end. You can't give up. Not if you've come this far." he kissed my shoulder. Sands: "You need your rest." Me: "I won't give up." I closed my eyes. Me: "Let's pray. Graham needs us."

Graham was kneeling inside Komander's house still praying. The spirit around them was too big. Siya and Kompany couldn't enter. Graham: "Who are you!!!!" "I am the Komander." the spirit hissed. "You thought, I existed in just mere flesh? Hahahaaa. I'm more than that. More than your so called God. If he loved you so much, would he have let you come to me knowing exactly what I am?" he snarled. Graham: "You are the Komander spirit that made Rex." Spirit: "Now we're getting somewhere. Those ties you have on him won't hold him forever. I will release him and he will come running for you." Graham: "What do you want." Spirit: "Domination. This earth is mine. I have won it before and I will do it again. These human things are only loyal to material. Something they can see. If I present myself in material they will happily follow me. I am in the deepest desires of all humans. I already exist in them. All I have to do, is whisper... I make them crave. I make them envy. In them, just like that, I began to grow. Its easy." Graham: "You use them." Spirit: "They're weak. Claiming to love God yet disobey. What they truly want is freedom. As temporary as it is. I'll give it to them. They don't care about the cost. As long as they have a better car then their neighbor, a bigger house, a better life. And once I'm done with them.... They're mine." Graham: "No more. They are no longer yours!!!! I command you to return to your hell and perish!!!!" Spirit: "I will not die!!!!" Graham: "God send the fires of heaven setting this place alight!! Grab onto the spirit of Komander and pin him down!! Rip every power he has off him and burn it to ash! Reign for us Father!!! Show them Who's God!!!" everything inside the house lifted and swirled around him. The three elites had dropped to the floor and still lay unconscious. Spirit: "Stop!!!" Graham: "Favor us Dear Father! Shield us from this evil!!! Return him to his place God and make him bow to your feet!!!" Lam sneezed. The furniture dropped down to the ground. Graham opened his eyes. Graham: "King?" the baby cooed in his corner. There was a blinding light inside the house. Graham got to his feet rushing to the baby. Graham: "Hey..." he picked him up and rushed outside. Siya and Kompany stood next to the car. Siya: "What happened in there?! We heard screaming for hours." Graham: "Screaming?" Niny: "Mr Lakhe spirit is weak." Graham: "Of course. Help me." he gave Siya

the baby. Siya: "What about the others?" Graham: "We'll come back for them. Lakhe was the only full dark, so it hit him the worst. At least the two still have their human side to hold on to." he went in with Kompany now able to enter. The dark spirit had left. Left the house and left the lives it once held. Kompany pulled up Lakhe's limp body and carried him out to the car. Graham drove to his church and took Lakhe inside it. Graham: "Take the car, Spho needs her baby. Then you and Niny go back to get Khaya and Babalo out of that house. Bring them straight here." Siya: "What if Komander comes back?" Graham: "Komander is never coming back." Siya: "I mean Kadir." Graham: "That's exactly who I'm talking about. He's already gone. Disappeared once again. He knew what would happen if Spho lost her baby. He panicked. He knew we were coming. That is why he wasn't there." Siya: "What if he finds us?" Graham: "Not while you're under Spho's protection. He won't try. He's gone Siya. Now I need you to get me those two here soon." Siya carrying Lam and Niny walked behind him out to the car.

The next time I woke up Sandile wasn't next to me anymore. We'd prayed for such a long time I probably lost consciousness again. I scanned the room with my one working eye. The pain had subsided a tiny bit. Sandile had Lam in his arms rocking him and singing softly. Me: "Hey..." he looked at me. Sands: "Hey." Me: "I probably look like shit." Sands: "Yeah..." he sat on the bed. Sands: "More like a baboon though." I giggled. Sands: "He's back." I held out my arms and took my baby. Me: "Its over. He's gone." Sands: "Who?" Me: "The devil." I couldn't breast feed my baby because of the medication I was given. Me: "I need you to get him formula." Sands: "Dabawo already did. I've made the bottle." he gave it to me. I really couldn't see hey. After feeding the baby and burping him. I lay back on my bed. Me: "I need to go help Graha-" Sands: "You're not going anywhere. If you can't pray it from here then its not happening." Me: "but he needs m-" Sands: "NO. He does not. You need to get better and that's that. Graham has it handled." Me: "Lakhe can't hurt me anymore. The demon is out of him. I can feel it. The Komander is gone Sandile-" Sands: "I don't care whether its gone, in the club making it rain or taking a nap. You are not going anywhere near Masilakhe Sobukwe. And that's it. I'll chain you to this bed if I have to." Me: "Sandile." he took something from the cupboard and gave it to me. Turns out it was a mirror. I could see my face. How swollen I was. How bruised my neck was. I didn't even want to see my body. A lone tear escaped my good eye. Sands: "I don't care if he was possessed, you are my sister. I will be damned if I let him try to kill you again." he walked out. I looked at Lam in my arm and he yawned rubbing his eye with his fist. Me: "God is in you my son. A power lives in you. I love you so

much." In my peripheral vision I saw a shadow standing there, looking at us. I looked to that direction and saw nothing. Me: "I thought you'd have left by now. You really like to risk things." Kadir: "I'm going to miss you. I'm going to miss seeing your face. Feeling your pure heart. The incredible amount of love it has even for a cruel monster like me. I want you to know that your psychopath really does love you. You're probably the only person I've ever had. Goodbye." I felt him fade away. In my presence and in my heart. Komander had finally left us.

#174

One month later.

I sat in my lounge, dressed in my all black attire. It was almost two hours after my mom's memorial. I'd only gotten out of hospital two weeks ago, since we hadn't gotten around to this, today was her day. After lunch had been served, her church friends came to me for a word of sympathy one by one as they left. I really just wanted them gone. I wanted to be alone. I was finally left with four people around my house. Fez, who was cleaning up. Sandile who was holding Lam resting on the couch. Zingi who I was not really sure what exactly it is she was doing and Dubs. Dubs was as miserable as I am and she said she wanted to be alone then went to lock herself in her room with Chris. Unlike the coward that was me always worrying about what people would say. Even though I had every right since I'm the one who is grieving. The house was comfortably quiet. Fez was unusually silent throughout his cleaning which I appreciated with all I had. Zingi stayed far from the lounge. Sandile was on the first couch, focused on nothing but the baby on his chest. He'd even dressed him in a grey fluffy onesie because he said and I quote "Black clothing isn't suitable for a King". I had a coffee mug in my hand that didn't contain coffee thanks to him. I silently sipped my wine. Graham was the one who did the program today and honestly I feel like it was the best service I could have hoped for my mother. Unfortunately he had to leave right after because of a stupid council meeting with his church board. I wanted him to stay. Siya and Niny had gone with him of course but were to be back in about an hour from now. Sandile put the baby in his bassinet and sat next to me, laying on his side to rest his head on my lap. His feet hung on the arm rest loosely. Me: "My first born." Sands: "My mama." Me: "Where is your supermodel?" Sands: "I told her to stay behind. This part of my life doesn't concern her." we stayed quiet for a while. I drew patterns on his head with the tips of my fingers. Sands: "So Lakhe is finally awake." Me: "Graham told me." Sands: "Yeah but he's mute for some reason. I don't think he remembers

what happened." Me: "His brain was dead from the time they compelled him. It would be a miracle if he remembers anything." Sands: "Even the way he beat you?" Me: "You need to let that go." Sands: "I unfortunately can't. He swore to protect you and he's the one to just decide to hurt you? Un-fucking-acceptable." Me: "Lakhe wasn't in his correct mind. He's never hit me before, ever. And he never will. That was Kadir the second. Not your brother." Sands: "Speaking of Kadir..." this one was very good at changing topics that made him uncomfortable these days. Sands: "What if he comes back?" Me: "He won't." Sands: "He's Kadir. A Komander. He doesn't necessarily follow rules. What if he goes after Sibuh?" Me: "Kadir loves his children more than anything. He won't hurt Sibuh. And he's not coming back here. He lost a war he didn't fight in. He has dignity." Sands: "So now we rebuild?" Me: "Now, we rebuild." Sands: "Are you going to take him back?" Me: "Lakhe and I love each other. We were starting to build our lives bac-" Sands: "You mean Kadir the Second. Because you just said, that wasn't Lakhe." Me: "Well...Yes, Kadir the second. I'd like to believe part of Lakhe was there too. A major part." Sands: "No can do. If romantic Lakhe was part of Kadir the second so was the abusive one. Both those traits live in one person. You can't choose to ignore the ugly part and embrace the pretty one." Me: "Sometimes I hate you." Sands: "You hate me because I give you spanking hot truth." Me: "Are your parents back together?" Sands: "Not that I know of. Mom is still seeing her boy toy and dad has this drama student he's dating. But they're happy. You saw them earlier?" Me: "Yes, I thought they were together. Do they know about..." Sands: "Kadir the second? Hell no. Mom would flip the torch. But dad did notice your bruising. And he says that his assistant or whoever saw you and Lakhe together and confirmed you were back together. He's concerned. He thinks he's beating you. As does everyone else." Me: "That's not what they're thinking." Sands: "Look how angry Fez is. If Lakhe walked through that door, he'd break his legs. Zingi just huffed and attempted to break the dishes by washing them. They really hate him. Not to mention journalists are camping out your yard." Me: "WHAT!!!!" Sands: "Oh shit. This was the detail I was told not to tell you. You're playing with my ear so you know I'm naturally slippery with my tongue. I'm sorry sis." I took a deep breath and let it out slowly. Me: "Have there been articles?" Sands: "Dubs will smack me if I say more." Me: "I will do more than smack you if you keep quiet." Sands: "A lot of articles." Me: "Give me your phone." Sands: "No." Me: "Give it!" Sands: "There's no point hurting yourself over these stupid people!" Me: "I said. Give it to me!" he fished out his iPhone from his pants pocket and handed it to me unlocked. I went on Google and the articles flooded in just by entering "Sobukwe." I stared at the latest article: 'Memorial with no corpse?' I scanned through it. 'A shock to many who have been following the story of telecommunications tycoon

couple. It seems the wife's mother, Zama Ngudla wife to Dr Khaya Ngudla has (not so recently) passed away. The most confusing part about this tale is that there is no body. The corpse was declared missing and the memorial was held regardless a WHOLE MONTH AND A HALF LATER. So what could have been the delay? Is it because they were still looking? Or maybe just a throw off for the public?' I stopped reading. That was just disrespectful!! They don't even know me. I read the next one. Titled : 'Tragedy in Paradise.' I read it slowly, seething in anger. 'Multimillionaire, Masilakhe Sobukwe was admitted to hospital due to severe burns and a concussion. This is following his wife's admittance to hospital just a few days before. She is also being treated for a sever concussion, broken ribs, a fractured jaw and swollen eye. It is by no coincidence that there are no witnesses since this couple has absolutely no housekeepers whatsoever. In a 15 bedroomed house. The brother of Masilakhe refused to comment, only just snarled at any sight of human life and broke two cameras stationed outside the hospital. It is said that, the wife is now stable and it is only the husband who is in a coma. So, what exactly happened at the Sobukwe house? As we listen closely for an exclusive, we can't help but understand: Money does not buy happiness.' I was so pissed off. I wanted to find this journalist and strangle her. How dare she? She doesn't even know my family!! There was also one about Lam and his birth and also Chris. These people are fucking ridiculous! Sands: "I'll have the legal team sort it out. These things should be taken off the internet." Me: "How did they know so much!" Sands: "The nurses obviously. You'd be surprised at how much these people are willing to pay for a scoop." I scrolled down. Sands: "You might not want to read the rest." 'Affair with younger brother.' The next one was titled. I looked at him. Sands: "I'll sort him out." Me: "You are fueling their suspicions." Sands: "They have no right to probe in our lives!" Me: "Like it or not, Lakhe is a high profile figure. Everything that happens in his life is their right. Down to the ducks." Sandile stood up in the living room. Sands: "I need some air." he walked out the house. I gulped the wine and read through these stupid articles that pecked my entire life apart. Zingi grabbed the phone and sat next to me. Zingi: "Is it true?" Me: "What is." Zingi: "You and Sandile. Is that why you're always telling me to stay away from him? You're in love with him." Have you ever seen a robot, just all of a sudden freeze, then retrace itself, reprograms and start moving again? That was my brain. Zingi: "It makes so much sense. He follows you around like a puppy. Does everything you says. Sleeps in your bed and rests his head on your lap! Your own brother in law Spho!!!!" Me: "I'm not having an affair with Sandile!" Zingi: "Why lie about it!!! Is that why Lakhe is in hospital? He caught you red handed and Sandile attacked him!!!! He was trying to kill him!!!! For you!!!!" I was honestly stunned. How the HELL did she reach this conclusion!? Zingi: "You are disgusting! Telling

me he has a live in girlfriend when she doesn't even exist! There are pictures of you all over the internet hogging on to Sandile at some event that Lakhe isn't even invited to! Heavily pregnant with his child at the time! Is it even Lakhe's child!? Is that why you divorced!! Sies!!" Me: "Okay, give me my boyfriend's phone and get the hell out of my house Zingisa!!" she threw the phone at me. Zingi: "with pleasure, whore!!!!" she stomped out the house. Fez was oddly quiet during this whole altercation. He was probably also mad thinking I'm fucking Sandile on the downlow. Me: "I didn't do it." Fez: "I don't want to hear it. I'm only here to pay respect to your mother because I loved her." he took his bag and walked out. It was a good 10 minutes later that Sandile walked in. Sands: "You don't need them." he smelled like cigarette. Me: "They think I'm sleeping with you!" Sands: "Would you rather they know we were surrounded by demons these past few months? That Lakhe was their King? You know they'd burn us and our houses calling us witches." Me: "You could have defended me to the journalists." Sands: "and said what? Defending you would sound much more suspicious. That's what they want, a reaction." Me: "They still outside?" Sands: "Only a few. Come here." he enveloped me in a bear hug. Sands: "Its going to be okay." Me: "You love me?" Sands: "Yes. More than anything." Me: "I mean the other love." he chuckled. Sands: "Are you trying to seduce me Mrs Sobukwe?" Me: "No." my cheeks burned involuntarily. Sands: "Not more than Siya and Graham. They're basically twinning at their crushes for you. They even share notes on how your skin glows better at sunset." I laughed out loud. Me: "You're an idiot." I heard an unfamiliar clicking sound and I pulled back from his embrace. Sands: "I need you to go and rest. Take a nap. I'll lock the house and take care of peanut over here." Me: "Thank you Sands. You're a lamb." Sands: "Of course. I'm God's favorite sacrifice to happiness." he smiled. Sands: "Go rest, my queen."

I woke up the next morning quite early. The clock at my bedside said it was 6:30. Last night was not so eventful. We had an early dinner and everyone retired to their bedrooms. I stayed with Chris and Lam, playing until midnight then we slept. I got out of bed and went to the bathroom. Chris was fast asleep in my bed and Lam in his cot. I brushed my teeth and sneaked a quick shower and got dressed in green and white flowered Adidas leggings, a matching crop sweater and white fur slides. I had to get breakfast ready. I went out to the kitchen, opening the curtains and windows to let in fresh air. I got breakfast ready. In my family, everyone had their specialty when it came to breakfast. Never the same as the next persons. Sands: "Good morning." Me: "Hey. How'd you sleep?" Sands: "I slept fine." he tied up my hair in a pony

tail. Me: "Breakfast is almost ready. I'm going to visit Lakhe today." Sands: "I see." he walked to the table. Me: "What." Sands: "Nothing. Just stay clear of cameras and these vampires out here. I'm going to order security for you and here." Me: "I don't need security." Sands: "It wasn't a request. Journalists are very sneaky. They will do just about anything. I don't want them feeling free to walk into this house." Me: "Fine. But no bulky people following me. People already think I'm the world's biggest whore." Sands: "The bulkier the better. They just jealous cause you're whoring for the two sexiest men alive. Me being the first of course. Which is why you jumped ship." I laughed. Dubs: "Sandile yeka udlala, this is a serious." Sands: "hayi Kodwa Dabawo. Wena xa sow'cinga, would Spho really cheat on Lakhe?" Dubs: "Hayi, but suqala uchuku. Kukho abantwana kaloku. Andifuni babe confuse." (Don't start drama. There's kids here and I don't want them confused.) Sands: "Lam is a baby. Chris knows better than anyone what happens in this house. Bayeke baziphambanise abaya." (Let those out there act crazy.) I set the table for breakfast. Me: "He's right. We don't have to explain ourselves Dabawo. Lakhe, me, Sandile, you, the kids know the truth and that's it. That's all that matters." Sands: "Yeah. Even mom and dad aren't paying any attention to it. We won't adjust our lives for them." we had our breakfast normally. Graham and Niny joined us for our prayer hour at 8:30am. Siya was at work on an early morning shift. At around 9:30 we finished up and I made some brunch. Graham: "I should've guessed the first time I saw the mansion that you guys were some sort of celebrities." there was a hint of disappointment in his voice. I don't know why but I could even see it in his eyes. Me: "Well....not by choice. Lakhe is a multimillionaire, his father is a former boxing champion turned self made billionaire. Its hardly avoidable. Journalists gain these exclusive imaginary rights to people who work hard for their fortune." Graham: "They work hard huh." Me: "What's this about Graham? Why am I getting a vibe from you?" Graham: "Maybe I'm a little out of my league here. I've just never seen this type of wealth before. It just attracts bad energy. I'm sorry." I looked at him. Graham: "The articles are funny. They think they got it but they couldn't be further from the truth. Its actually hilarious how they're running around in circles trying to figure you out." Me: "Are you jealous?" Graham: "Of the attention you're getting? Absolutely not." Me: "of Lakhe." Graham: "No." I carried on with my task. Graham: "Maybe a little. I always wondered if I ventured into business if I'd be successful.....probably not half to his caliber but nonetheless still successful." Me: "You are more successful than anyone I know. You are connected to God in a way that no one I've ever met is. If that's not wealth, I don't know what is." he smiled. Graham: "Thank you." I left them to eat and I went to feed Lam. Chris was running around the house singing. After I'd made sure Lam was clean, fed and taking his morning nap. I

ran after Christian Sobukwe. Oh was it a mission. He just whizzed past me and laughing and finally sneaking out the back door and running in the yard. Sandile grabbed him and tossed him in the air, catching him again. Chris burst in giggles. I stood on the patio with my hands on my hips, smiling. Me: "Guys, I need to get you cleaned up, its almost time to go." Sands: "Tell your mama you're a big boy, you got this handled." Chris: "Mama, I'm a big bo-" Me: "You better get here Christian." Chris: "Yoh hayi ke." he wiggled to the ground and ran to me. I held his hand back into the house to bath and dress him. Finally, everyone was clean. I couldn't take Chris and Lam to the hospital because well....I'm a bit overprotective when it comes to hospital germs. He and Chrissie would stay behind with Dubs. Sandile was going home to his girlfriend and Boogie. Graham would drive me to hospital and back by Sandile's instructions until he got me a bodyguard or three. We arrived at hospital and walked in. I thought I saw my father(Khaya) but when I looked he had vanished. Graham: "He's running. Embarrassed." Me: "Should be." we walked to Lakhe's private room. Me: "Do you think he'll be delighted to see me?" Graham: "Of course. You're his wife." Me: "ex wife still. We're working things out now." Graham: "Then he'll be delighted to see you. You've been here everyday to pray for his wake." we stood by the door. Graham: "I'll go sign us in. Go ahead." I pushed open the door as he walked away. I stepped in the room and looked at him. He sat up on the bed. His hands bandaged and obviously not quite useful. He stared at me coldly. Me: "Baby." I smiled trying to liven him up. He kept still. Me: "Its been a while. I heard yesterday you woke up but we had the memorial and I couldn't come right away. I wish You'd been there. Lakhe we miss you. Me and your children. We can't wait to have you home with us. I love you sooo much. We can start rebuilding our lives again. I am truly sorry for what has happened. I'm sorry for bringing the Komanders in our lives. I'm sorry they did what they did to you. We're going to fix this." All the while he had not blinked at all. I was unsure why. Was he awake? The door pushed open and I looked back. Onika walked in carrying a tupperware. Onika: "Oh, hi." Me: "hey." I wanted to ask what she was doing here. Me: "So...what brings you by." Onika: "My boyfriend obviously. Where are the kids?" she pursed her lips. Me: "Lakhe is not your boyfriend." Lakhe: "Get out." Me: "There you have it." Lakhe: "I said Get Out." I looked at him. He was staring at me. Lakhe: "You have done nothing but ruin my entire life with your family. I want absolutely nothing to do with you ever again. Get the fuck out of my room, get the fuck out my life and don't ever come back!!!!" Me: "Lakhe? Wha-" Lakhe: "Are you fucking deaf? I said get out!!!!!!!" tears stung the corners of my eyes. I can't believe this. Lakhe: "Onika call security. I never want to see this woman ever again."

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I'd locked myself in the bedroom when I came home from that hospital. I couldn't believe it. Broken was an understatement of how I felt. I just curled into a ball on my bed remembering the way Simphiwe left me and how Lakhe said he never would. Would he have stayed if this was him? I mean he was a bit of a wuss but part of Simphiwe that I liked the most was him trying to show me he's a man and can protect me even when he was scared as hell. Well, to be honest, which man could stand this? I am a complicated mess. My family is a complicated mess. Being with me is simply potential suicide. Would I be able to stand it if someone I loved had a demonic family? Probably. Knowing me I'd find ways to help them. Sometimes I just disgust myself. Why can't I be cruel? Perhaps if I were a of dark blood I would be able to handle this or even better, make people do as I say. Pure blood live the hardest lives to be honest. Always fighting battle after battle. It would have been better if I was just dark. I wiped my tears with the wrists of my sweater. My phone rang and I sat up. It must be Lakhe. Maybe he changed his mind? I stared at the caller I. D unable to recall the number. I answered it anyway. "Baby? Is that you?" Person: "Hi Mrs Sobukwe. This is Belinda from the Herald, I'd like a few moments of your time if you don't mind. Everything portrayed about you in the media is negative and I feel that you're so much more than that. It would be a great honor to hear and write your side of the story." I just froze. This person had some nerve. She droned on and on, I was just deaf at this point of time. Me: "What story is this?" She: "This morning's exclusive about you and Sandile Sobukwe. You haven't read it maam? Absolute utter rubbish if I may say so-" I hung up. This morning's exclusive? What fucking exclusive? I grabbed my Macbook and switched it on. My phone rang again. Different number. Now they were all leaching on. What the hell is going on! I went on a quick Internet search and there it was. I almost choked in horror. If people saw this, they'd be convinced this was the truth!! Wait.. these pictures are from my backyard. Whoever this is, was in my backyard!! There's a picture of Sandile on the couch, his head on my lap when we were talking. The other one of Zingi, arguing with me, the next one of Sandile hugging me and laughing. All of Yesterday!! Following those, were a picture of me in the kitchen in the morning, Sandile tying up my hair in a ponytail. Our prayer meeting about an hour later. Him playing with Chris outside tossing him and me standing on the patio. Oh God. The biggest picture of them all. Him holding Lam on his chest, both fast asleep with the title "The baby daddy." I clenched my teeth and read through it. The story about our love affair was even more ridiculous. I'm appalled to be honest.

'Sandile Sobukwe, the troublesome middle child has always been after his older brother's assets. He felt threatened by him and always tried to pull him down from his success. He had nothing of his own which is why he met with Simphiwe.' A small picture of him talking to Simphiwe in what looks like a public area. 'If most of you don't know, Simphiwe is the ex boyfriend of Sphosenkosi Ngudla. They had been living together at the time, Simphiwe refuses to comment on this matter because of his businesses. We have reason to believe that Simphiwe offered Masilakhe a place to stay in which Spho seduced him(Masilakhe). Simphiwe threw her out of the house and she went straight to Masilakhe as planned. Knowing Masilakhe best, Sandile knew it would be in no time which he lost interest so he schemed with his lady and cut off her brakes which landed her in an accident. This is how Masilakhe felt utterly responsible for her. He took care of her and fell in love with her. This is where the plot thickens. Sandile is jailed for an imaginary robbery. Who comes to his "rescue" obviously his queen. She brings him back to the palace and he lives with them. Masilakhe knows no better, it's his brother after all.' My eyes are blurred with tears by now. I just want to scream. They turned everything upside down! It continues: 'In the few months, Sandile seemingly disappears off the face of the earth. It is said that Spho knew exactly where he was but this was all to torment Masilakhe. It takes weeks for Sandile to reappear. In this case, older brother feels compelled to give him some sort of stability and signs his hotel over to him. Lakhe marries Spho. His mother had not approved since the day she met her and her comment was "I've never trusted her". Right after the wedding, boom! She's pregnant. And right after that, boom! Lakhe is in jail for murdering his ex girlfriend. One who which, only Sandile knows. Sandile had framed his own brother for murder! Later on it was established that was not the case, apparently another man came forward to admit to the crime. (No doubt, paid off by Sandile and his now rich woman, sponsored by Masilakhe's money.) The family carries on happily. Or not so happily? Soon after, Spho quits her job working as Lakhe's MD. She then works with Sandile at his hotel for the event critiques described as "A Once in a lifetime fairytale night." With the "Most exclusive crowd in the country." So Sandile, whom has no job experience at all has just inherited a whole 5 star hotel and the same person he's been in an elaborate scheme with for months helps him get it off the ground. She's a genius, that woman, when it comes to marketing. It is no surprise the event made double more than the projected income. The hotel has seen more business and running more effectively. Making Sandile, a very rich, none experience having, hotel owner. A mystery. Spho is pregnant remember? The question here is, why is Masilakhe not at the hotel event? His chair sat empty which implies there was an invitation in which he declined. There are also photos of their whole family

while Spoho's father was in hospital. An all white photoshoot where Lakhe seems to be missing. This is seemingly where trouble started. It is also said, Lakhe was not there when the baby was born, he was separated from Spoho a week prior. Now come to think of it, why would such a noble man, separate from his very pregnant wife right before she gives birth to their first son. It is no surprise that Sandile Sobukwe made it first to see the baby. Lakhe asked for a divorce a few weeks after that. That baby is not his. They all knew it. He does not even connect with it. A child knows it's father and that is why Sandile has a better grasp on him. It is alleged that a fight broke out in the Sobukwe house when Lakhe tried to get Spoho back and forgive her but Sandile wasn't having it. He said he won't let him steal his family from him again. He has taken everything he's wanted from his own brother and left him to die. At this point, he is living with his baby mama and their sons at her rented house. Masilakhe Sobukwe is recovering in hospital with burn marks on his hands. Lucky to be alive. #WomenAreTrash !!' from a reliable source. I stared at the picture of me on the red carpet, Sandile next to me, arm around me, both of us smiling foolishly at the camera. Had we known it would turn into this big circus of lies. My entire life, ruined for a scoop! Who would work with me after this! "Spoho!!" He knocked on my door. Sands: "Mntase please open!" How did these people get into my yard? Well of course there was a memorial yesterday which is the perfect opportunity to be a snake. And this reliable source is definitely Zingi. My phone was ringing loudly next to me, emails pinging in, smses. All at once. I quickly switched it off. Sands: "Spoho please.." he begged. Sands: "I'm going to kill that bitch!" I heard him marching down the passage. I really didn't care which bitch was about to be killed anymore because clearly they hadn't cared about me. Siya: "You're not going anywhere!!! Hey!! Listen to me!!! You're not killing anyone! You want to prove these vultures right about you!" Sands: "You saw that article!!" Siya: "Everyone saw that article and everyone will forget it by tomorrow!! You cannot let them win Sandile, I cannot afford you in jail! Everyone inside this family knows the real truth! That's all that matters! Do you think if they knew about the demon saga they would let us live!!?? Don't be stupid. This is the best solution. Rather they believe you had an affair with Spoho instead of them accusing us of witchcraft and burning us alive!! Leave this!" Sands:" I can't let them hurt Spoho like this! Who knows what she's doing in that room to herself Siyanda!" Siya:" Spoho loves her kids. She'd never hurt herself because of lies. We need to believe that and give her some space." Sands: "I need a smoke." Siya:"Might want to change the baby first, daddy." Sands: "Really?" Siya: "I'm sorry. Its too soon but it's ridiculously funny. Since when do you smoke?" Sands: "old habit." He took out a cigarette and placed it on his lips. He flicked the light and took a long puff. Siya: "Not in the house." Sandile stood outside and

smoked three cigarettes continuously. Graham walked in the house with Niny. Graham: "What's happening outside!! It's a circus!! There's like 50 of them with cameras and mics and everything. Niny was terrified!" He sat Niny down on the couch, patting his forehead with a handkerchief. Siya: "It's going to get worse Graham. Sandile is already breaking off, dabawo won't leave her room with the kids, Spho has locked herself in too. If a camera catches any of us outside now, it's going to be a mess. Sandile is not in his right mind-" Graham: "But who would be Siyanda? That is a complete violation of privacy! You saw those pictures were from someone who hopped into the backyard. These people are blocking us from going out. I am calling the police." Siya: "No. I don't want to scare the kids." Graham: "The kids won't see this. What other choice do we have now?" Siya: "Let me try Dumini for legal advice. I don't know him that well but he's Spho's friend." He searched and dialed the number. Dumini: "Hello?" Siya: "Hi Dumini. This is Siya, we met twice before. Do you have a minute?" Dumini: "Oh hi Siya. What's up?" Siya: "We're dealing with hectic media violence at Spho's house and we're not sure how to continue. Is there a possibility you could be able to help?" Dumini: "No unfortunately not. I am Masilakhe's lawyer. Spho needs to consult her own lawyer." Siya: "She's your friend." Silence. Siya: "Dumisani." Dumini: "Look, I'm sorry about everything you're going through there. But it really isn't any of my business. And also please don't call my number again. Thank you." He hung up. Siya: "Okay." Graham: "Don't let it get to you. Right now. Spho only has the people in this house in her corner. That's all she needs. We're going to focus on getting her better. Everything else out there does not matter. She doesn't have family. She doesn't have friends. We're all she's got." Siya: "What about Rob? He loves her, he would do anyth-" Sands: "Rob has disowned me for allegedly trying to kill his first son. It's clear, he's disowned Spho too. Stella was the first to appear to comment talking about not trusting her and all. Graham is right. We're all Spho has. And that's all she needs."

The next day I heard a knock on the front door. I knew everyone was probably still sleeping. I hadn't left my room yet nor even opened the door. I didn't want to talk to anyone. I knew Graham, Siya and Niny were still here too. Nobody had left. So who was at my door because I swear if one of those bull dozer nosy ass bitches start knocking on my doors for attention, I'm swinging a bitch. They don't even know me. The door opened and I heard Sandile speak. Sands: "What are you doing here?" "Where is she!" Who was this. Sands: "Hey you can't come in here!" This person was in my house? I jumped off the bed and yanked open the door. Me: "What the hell do you think you're- Oh." It was Kevin. Julie's other dad. Kev: "Sweetheart I came as

soon as I heard. Don't tell me nothing. What do you need me to do?" I was shocked. I didn't even know what to say. Kevin wasn't really my close friend but we spoke regularly. For him to not even care about "What happened" and just offer his help. Me: "I don't know Kev. At this point, I don't know. We can't even leave the house." Upon hearing my voice, Chris came out Dubs' room and ran to me, hugging my legs. I pulled him up and placed him on my hip. Kev: "Fine. I'll get my team. Those bitches are getting off your yard. Stay here. Don't move." He walked out. As I've mentioned before, Kevin is really built. Like a body building rugby player. And quite tall. When he is angry, you can't even tell he's gay. He just becomes a beast. All I heard after that was screaming outside and running at all directions. Kev: "And if I see you here again, I will bloody well set you alight!!!!" He roared. Sands: "Okay, wow. Here's your bodyguard." Kevin marched back in. Kev: "I'm contacting my family law firm and suing all these hoes pants off. Just watch." And he punched angrily on his phone. Sandile was so amused. Kev: "Dimitri. I need you here, NOW!! Do you hear me? NOW!" He hung up. Kev: "They'll know me today." I was so confused. Kevin was not that rich right? Like I remember his story. Yena, he's a teacher even and Dave is an accountant. Now I'm trying to do math in French so it's not working out. He could see the confusion on my face. Kev: "My grandfather is Stalaston." Sands: "Oh shit. Henry Stalaston? Shit." Me: "Who's that?" Sands: "Another Komander, but without the....." the demons he wanted to say but obviously couldn't. Kev: "He's not that bad. Komander is just he's not like Komander. My grandfather is head of mafia, which means he needs an entire firm of the best Lawyers. Which the whole family uses because he barely needs them. Sphe, I need you to keep this secret. Nobody can know this, not even Dave. Please." Me: "I promise. It's between you, Sandile and me. But Kevin, why are you helping me?" Kev: "You're the only person who's never judged me and showed me love instead. You're always there for me. You drop everything to run to me. Every single time. You're a great friend." Me: "You don't ask if I did it." Kev: "Does it matter? Is it not your vagina? Hop on to whatever you want! Why do you care what people, who equally use their own vaginas by the way, why do you care what they think about you? Just because your vagina is much more expensive than their musty ones." I quickly covered Chris' ears at the first mention of vagina. Sandile laughed out loud. Sands: "Keep him." He walked to his room. Kev: "Get yourself some rest. I'll make breakfast and brief Dimitri when he gets here. Don't worry, I got your back." Me: "Thank you Kevin." I walked to my room. Kev: "Oh and Sphe? Sandile really is the hotter choice." I frowned at him. Kev: "I'm kidding." I went to my room and snuggled with Chris. Me: "Are you okay sweetie?" Chris: "I missed you." Me: "I missed you too. I'll never disappear like that again okay? Mommy just needed some time alone

for a while." Chris: "I get that sometimes too. I understand. If you need time again just tell me and I'll take care of Lam and Uncle Sandile." Me: "Uncle Sandile?" Chris: "Yeah, he slept at your door last night." Me: "He was sad." Chris: "Yeah. I'll get him a flower later." Me: "Thank you my sweet boy." Chris: "Are you sad because of the outside people?" Me: "Partly yes." Chris: "Do you want me to get rid of them?" Me: "Its okay baby. Uncle Kev sorted them out. You're such a brave boy, taking care of your mama." Chris: "I promised dad I would." Me: "When?" Chris: "In my dream." Me: "Uhm...okay. Let's get you some sleep." Chris: "No school today?" Me: "No honey. You can't go while those people are still lurking." Chris: "Oh wow. Teacher Susan won't be too happy." Me: "She'll have to deal with it. I'll call her." Chris: "She's an unhappy lady that one. Walks around with a tomato face all day. Maybe its her husband. Do you think I should sell him husband tips?" I laughed. Me: "No sweetie. You can't sell husband tips. Its illegal." Chris: "Really? Why?" Me: "You're still young and you're not a husband." Chris: "My tips work, ask Stacy." Me: "I'll be sure to ask." Chris: "Uncle Sandile said he's bringing Boogie over here to keep us company." Me: "That's sweet of him. It would be nice to have Boogie around." Chris: "It would. He's a good boy but uncle Sandile calls him my cousin." I chuckled. Me: "he's playing with you. You are no where near a dog's cousin." after our chatting, we took a nap. I woke up in about an hour. Chris was sitting up right playing with my hair behind me. Me: "Sweetie what are you doing?" Chris: "Its one of my husband tips. Doesn't it feel nice when I massage your head while you sleep? Hm?" I couldn't help but laugh. Having a child like Chris is a blessing. Me: "Yes baby. It feels nice. Who taught you this?" Chris: "I can't reveal my supplier mama. Now, on your other side there's a card and a flower and a chocolate. The chocolate is for after breakfast. You can't eat sweets before proper food. Then we have a garden date. Go on." I sat up and read the card. "To the best mama ever. Lammy and Chrissie cakes love you." I had tears in my eyes. Me: "Thank you so much baby." I hugged him. Chris: "You're welcome. Let me go see if breakfast is ready." he jumped off the bed and ran out the room. I made the bed quick and took a shower. After getting dressed in a short pink summer dress and sandals I made my way out to fetch Lam. 3 months old now. Sandile had him on his lap. There were four guys sitting in my lounge that I didn't know. Two bulky ones by the door. Kevin was setting the table. Kev: "Morning princess. Breakfast is served." Me: "Who are these people?" Kev: "Lawyers and security. We're having a meeting after brekkie. Is everyone awake?" Siya and Niny just came out their room. Siya: "Hey you." Me: "Hey." I hugged him. Siya: "Feeling better?" I nodded. Siya: "Good. Graham is praying with aunt, he'll be out in a minute. We're having the prayer hour at 12 today. Is that okay?" Me: "Yes it is." we all settled down for breakfast. I fed Lam his milk in a bottle and afterwards

tried to eat. Impossible. After breakfast and table cleared, we began. Kev: "Spho, this is Dimitri and his team of advocates." I shook their hands. Dimitri looked super slimy. The type of lawyer that could weasel his way out of a double homicide. He had wet ink-black hair tousled neatly on his head. Striking blue blues that had quite an intimidating look which I realize this is probably what makes him slimy. He had a dashing smile that probably sent girls knees wobbly. His frame was quite slender and tall. More like a surfer. Dimitri. Wow. His colleagues looked like his minions honestly. Dimitri: "First things first. I'm hunting this so called reliable source down. Spho, I need you to let me know what you want me to do with them." YEYI. His eyes danced like they're on fire, you hear? This guy took pleasure in ruining people's lives. Me: "I just need my name cleared. Everything in that stupid story is false. I never planned anything with Sandile, I've never slept with him-" Dimitri: "That's all I need to know. Stefan, calculate me a lawsuit of this magnitude, nothing below a million. Daniel, get me all the names of all these publications within the hour, dig out their sources. Tar, dig some dirt." now Tar looked nothing like a lawyer. He looked like he'd just escaped Polsmoor prison and stole a suit which surprisingly, he looked very good in. If you tell Tar to bring dirt I had no doubt in my mind, he'd bring you the filthiest. My heart rate accelerated. Dimitri: "Perfect. Now everyone gets to working. Spho, do you mind if we use this table as our meeting point?" Me: "No, take over." Dimitri: "Thank you. Worry not my love, Dimitri is here. I'm about to tear each and every one of them to shreds. They'll walk home carrying their genitals in their hands if they know who they're fucking with." and that was it. Dimitri was here. ***** Kev: "This side Spho." he led me to the lounge followed by the two muscle men. Kev: "Skull and Bones, this is Spho. You are to take care of her and her children at every second of everyday. Crush everything that comes even 10 steps near. Every camera in sight. When she's inside the house, you're outside checking the perimeter. I don't ever want to see a picture that was taken from her backyard again. Do I make myself clear?" Them: "Yes sir." Kev: "To your positions then." and they walked off. Kev: "Pheww!!! Finally. Now we can have some cocktails and rest." he said in his gay voice, he'd been macho man ever since he arrived. I couldn't stop laughing. Me: "Kevin, its 10am. Come on." Kev: "its 5pm somewhere." Me: "That is the mantra of a drunkard. I'm breastfeeding so I can't join you." Kev: "Its fine. I like drinking alone. As long as I have someone to talk to." Siya: "So what happens now." Kev: "Trust in Dimitri. All Spho has to do is wear her civil bob wig and look pretty. Whoever touched her name is in for a very rude, very expensive and very hurtful awakening." Sands: "That is scary. I'd rather someone come beat me instead. I don't think I want to be professionally hurt." Kev: "Connect to the right crowd then." Sands: "Listen, Dimitri is My lawyer now. Did you hear him say he's not

accepting anything below a million for a lawsuit? Had my elbows sweating." Me: "but I don't want mon-" Kev: "Well that's what you deserve mami." Sands: "And to think Lakhe didn't give her any money when they divorced even though they didn't sign a pre-nup-" Dimitri: "WHAT!!!!!" he roared. Oh shit. Sands: "Uhm..." he scratched his head. Dimitri: "Ohh...he'll know me. Tar, Masilakhe Sobukwe is on that list." Sands: "It might be time for me to move out the country." Chris: "Mamo, we have a garden date." he walked in carrying a basket. Sands: "All this time you make me take items out the fridge so you can pack them in your purse?" Chris: "Its not a purse Uncle Sandile!!" Sands: "You're carrying it over your shoulder. Its a purse." Chris: "It is heavy. And I am not letting you ruin my date. Move. Come mama." he stopped at the sliding door. Chris: "Now why is there a Danger and a Demolish walking around our yard ma?" everyone laughed. Gosh, Chris. Me: "They are Skull and Bones." Chris: "Because those are much better names alright, I'll play along, but they better get off my garden." I giggled, walking behind him carrying Lam. When last did I have a date? Its lovely raising gentlemen. The weather was perfect outside but I couldn't help but feel a storm coming. One that was ready to break things apart. I was ready.

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Masilakhe arrived in his mansion. Walking in slowly after being discharged from the hospital. The house looked abandoned and tired now. No signs of life inside it. Onika: "This is a beautiful house baby!! Why didn't we come live here before?" Lakhe: "I bought it for my family." Onika: "Yes but they're gone now. And gosh your ex had terrible taste. We need to get rid of those couches." Lakhe: "I chose those couches." He stared at the couches. Onika: "Oh. I didn't mean-" Lakhe: "I bought them because she was afraid of what my brother had done. What he'd left there for her to see on the old ones." Onika: "And that being?" Lakhe: "I need some time alone." Onika: "Okay. I'll make dinner so long. Dumi will be here any minute." Lakhe walked down the passage to the bedroom. On the floor and on the walls were drops and a slither of dry blood. He stood in his bedroom doorway and his heart stopped. Onika: "What. The. Hell." The room was a blood bath. The wall on the side of the bed splashed a spot clearly with blood. The bed. He closed his eyes and swallowed. Onika: "What animal did this!!" Lakhe: "Get out." Onika: "No Masilakhe. You can't stay here-" Lakhe: "Leave!!" He growled. She walked away. Lakhe stared at his bandaged hands and pushed the door closed behind him. The smell of dry blood wafting in the air. A trail of blood slithering to the closet and back again towards the exit he stood at. A soft knock on

the door disturbed him. Lakhe: "Leave me alone." His voice shaky with pain. Dumisani: "It's me man. Let me in." Lakhe: "I can't. Dumisani I can't." Dumisani: "I can open myself, it's okay." Lakhe: "No. You can't see this. Nobody can. Ever." Dumisani: "I'm your lawyer and your best friend. There's no secret of yours I can't keep. Let me in." He opened the door and wheeled himself inside. Zingi followed him in. Zingi: "Oh God. What did you do!" Lakhe: "I need you to help me Dumisani. This can't get out. This is attempted murder." Dumisani: "We'll get a cleaning compa-" Lakhe: "NO!! No cleaning company." Dumisani looked at Zingi. Zingi: "You're not serious." Lakhe stared at her. Zingi: "All of this is Spho's blood? How is she alive!! Lakhe what were you thinking? Oh God, I can't go to jail!" Lakhe: "That is what will happen if this got out." Onika stood by the door. Onika: "I'll clean it up. It will take a while since it's dried up. Zingi will have to make the dinner." she folded her arms on her chest uncomfortably. Lakhe: "I owe you my life." Onika: "Don't forget that." She walked out to fetch the cleaning supplies. Lakhe: "None of this gets out. Both of you will know me if it ever does. Do you hear me?" Zingi: "Yes." She walked out. Dumisani: "Lakhe.." he whispered. Lakhe: "What." Dumisani: "Why would you try to kill Spho? Did you catch them red handed?" Lakhe: "Catch who red handed?" Dumisani: "Her and Sandile." Lakhe: "Spho is fucking Sandile?" Dumisani: "I'm sorry." Lakhe: "Exactly why are you sorry Dumisani?" Dumisani: "It's just not a nice thing to go through. I can't imagine seeing it...." he looked at the blood on the wall. Lakhe: "I need to be alone." Dumisani wheeled himself out. Lakhe stared at his bedroom once more. His solitude turned into a nightmare now. He walked to his closet seeing the empty space where her clothes had been. She came back, saw this and still came to welcome him at hospital. Onika: "I've set up a room down the hall for you to rest in so long. You okay?" Lakhe: "Without being able to use my hands and coming home to my favorite place a bloody mess, yes I'm actually terrific." Onika: "We could go to our own little house." Lakhe: "This is my house." Onika: "Okay. You want to talk about this mess and why you tried to kill her." Lakhe: "That is not any of your business." Onika: "I'm about to scrub her blood off your walls so I think it is." Lakhe: "I need to be alone Onika. Please." She walked back to the room. He walked to the drawer on his right. The bottom one had blood on its handle. He opened it and found it empty. Something was missing. He stood back up and looked around. The camera in the corner caught his eye. The red light was on. Which meant it had stopped rolling and the tape had been removed. He went to look at the one in the bedroom. Also the same. The tapes were gone. Onika: "What's wrong?" Lakhe: "No..." Onika: "Babe? What is it?" he tried to breath. Onika: "Dumisani!!!" Dumisani wheeled in the bedroom as fast as he could. Onika: "Baby, talk to me. Come on!!" Lakhe slid down the wall. Lakhe: "Can't...breath...." Onika: "Look at me! Focus on my eyes. Inhale and exhale." he breathed slowly. Dumisani:

"What happened!" Onika: "I don't know. Its like something freaked him out."
Zingi: "Should we call a doctor?" Lakhe: "No...." he breathed. Lakhe: "Just get out. Both of you." Zingi and Onika walked out. Lakhe: "Dumisani. I need to talk to Spho."

The previous day was a lot. Dimitri and his team had researched and turned everything inside out for information. They eventually left around 6pm and I finally felt relaxed after a while. They would be back at 7am today. I had an appointment at 9. Right now I woke up and washed up. I wrapped a gown around my body and went to the kitchen. Graham and Niny were in Siya's house, him of course being here. He was standing there in the kitchen holding a mug. He looked at me and smiled. Siya: "Good morning." Me: "Hey.." he enveloped me in a hug. Siya: "How did you sleep?" Me: "peacefully. You know I'm not a baby right? I can stay by myself." I walked to the fridge. Siya: "I know. I just thought I'd be here for today." He held my shoulders, standing behind me. Siya: "I haven't been able to do much to remove your pain. I mean I'm not a lawyer or judge or anything. So I wanted to do something for you that showed you are loved and appreciated by all of us in the house." He turned me to the dining table. Breakfast was already set up and covered. He turned me to the lounge and a mobile salon had been set up there. Me: "Siyanda!" Siya: "They will massage you for 30 minutes. Then do your hair and nails. You can have some strawberries and pink champagne during." I hugged him. Me: "This is beautiful. Thank you. I love it." Siya: "And I love you." He kissed my hair. Siya: "Enjoy." He gently pushed me to the lounge. ***** After my luxurious treatment, I sported plum short hair and nude stiletto nails. My body felt relaxed and energized at the same time. After my second shower and getting dressed, today was the truth day Dimitri had said. I wore a maroon body con dress with long sleeves, did my make up and walked out to the lounge. Chris was having his coco pops in the lounge. I took Lam for his feeding, covering my dress. A knock on my door. 07:00 on the dot. I can't believe Siya managed to pamper me at 5 in the morning. I mean who does that? I just had a silly smile on my face. What exactly do you have to do for people to wake up that early to come work in your house? I opened the door. Tar was the first to arrive. He stood tall at the door, dressed in a navy perfectly fitted 3 piece suit. Unganya sana ngoTar. Say what you will about his face but the man knew his cloth and scent mabhabha. Me: "Hi Tar. Come in." Tar: "Miss Ngudla." He nodded and made his way in with his brief case in his hand. We had established yesterday that I would not use the name Sobukwe. I didn't want it anymore. Tar: "Dimitri is a running a tad bit late. I'm here to advise on today's meeting." Me: "Sure thing. Help yourself to some

breakfast and juice. I need to put the baby down. Come Chris." Chris followed me to the bedroom. I came back from Dubs room. Me: "No breakfast?" Tar: "I only eat once I've done my specified tasks Miss Ngudla but thank you." Me: "Okay. So what's happening today." Tar: "We've sent emails and letters to all publications to retract their stories and write public apologies within 24 hours. If they refuse to do so, we're of course going ahead with the lawsuits. Dimitri is close to uncovering the sources, apparently it's more than one. Once he has the concrete names, shredding them will take about an hour max." He spoke about ruining people's lives like it's taking out the trash. I was shook. Tar: "Today, you are at Robert Sobukwe's office for your appointment at 9am. You know the reason for this meeting?" Me: "The project associated with his company belongs to me. Therefore without me being a part of it we have a problem." Tar: "Good. Gerard Kuche would like to speak to you when you've got time." They had taken my cell phone the previous day not for any other reason other than the fact I had a device installed in my phone for recording calls. I did it months ago mostly because of work and when I needed a reference from my conversations. I didn't think it'd be a big deal. Tar: "Masilakhe Sobukwe's lawyer has also just received his letter this morning. This being for maintenance, settlement and obvious breach of contract. That one won't take more than a week. Have you come up with an amount of distress yet?" Me: "Amount of distress?" what the hell? Tar: "For the emotional pain he's caused you and the physical." Me: "No.." I couldn't tell that he wasn't in his right mind. They would ask questions. Me: "Lakhe didn't beat me." Tar: "I don't care. He was in the house when it happened. I'm thinking R10 million would be enough. Unless of course he denies it and we up the sugar by taking it to the press. The media pressure for him being garbage will make him fork out three times more. Anyway," Tar didn't seem like the type to feel sorry for anything or anyone. To him, it was all just black and white qha. You did wrong, you pay, we move on. Tar: "Maintenance, he's looking up to R50k per child every month." Me: "That is just ridiculous. No. R5000 is enough." Tar: "Do you think if he was still married to you these kids would cost 5000 a month? Lakhe is a multimillionaire. His profile costs him, not you. R100k a month is nothing to him." Me: "I'm not accepting R50 000 per child Tar. It's unnecessary. Lam doesn't even eat yet, all he does is suck a nipple." Tar: "Then open up a trust fund and fix deposit 80k a month for the kids. They'll appreciate the money when they've grown up." Me: "Lakhe already hates me enou-" Tar: "Unfortunately. He's about to hate you much more. I'll lessen the amount to R30 000 each child. I'm not going lower." I sighed. Me: "Fine." I'll have to go to an investment banker to open a trust fund for Lam and Chris. There's no way each kid would need 30k a month. I just need 5000 qha. Then the 25k each will be fixed. Tar: "Do you want him to see

the kids?" Me: "I'm not going to keep the kids from their dad." Tar: "That's if he wants to see them." He turned a page. Tar: "You have a doctor's appointment tomorrow. Your MRI results are in." I had an MRI scan the previous week to check for any possible damage to my head because of the way I was thrown into a wall. The doctor had really panicked everytime I slipped into concussion. Which I understand is probably a serious thing considering I might just slip into a coma and never wake up again. Me: "Thank you Tar. I'll be there." He closed his papers and brief case. Dimitri walked in followed by the two minions. They exchanged greeting. Dimitri: "Spho my angel. You look alarmingly sexy for a vulnerable woman taken for granted. You need to look distraught. I need you to change." I couldn't help but laugh. Me: "I really can't dress any different than this. It's my style." Dimitri: "I know. I've seen your pictures. But today I need you to look like a grandma. It'll be easier to hurt people when you look like You've given up on life. Less make up. You might need to cry a bit." Me: "Cry?" Dimitri: "Yes. We don't have much time." I went to my room and looked for my blue and white pencil skirt. It wasn't tight just fitted right. I wore a white blouse on top of it and high heeled pumps. I reduced my make up to minimal and off I left with Dimitri in his black Mercedes. He was on his iPad the whole time clicking away. Dimitri: "Your husband lawyer in a wheelchair?" Me: "Yeah. He was our friend." Dimitri: "What happened." Me: "His wife, my then friend was sleeping with Sandile, he found out and on their way home she steered the car and caused them to crash." Dimitri: "Zingi." Me: "Yeah." He chuckled. Dimitri: "They reconciled?" Me: "No, Dumi came to live with us. Lakhe got him a private nurse. I made sure he ate and was comfortable at all times. Sibuy, my brother took care of his intimate needs and Sandile kept him company." Dimitri: "The Sandile that was sleeping with his wife?" Me: "That's the one." He nodded. The car stopped in front of Robert's office building. Dimitri: "Let the games begin."

I walked into the boardroom where Robert and his two lawyers waited. Lwando was also here. As soon as Dimitri walked in behind me, their eyes almost popped out their heads. Yaasss bitches. I'm here to get my guap.(money). Rob: "Spho." Me: "Mr Sobukwe." Rob: "What is it can I do for you?" I could hear the coldness in his voice and my heart broke because this was the man I called Tata. This was the man who would be on my couch when I came home from work. I cooked for him. Listened and advised him. Today this was what he thought of me. Me: "I have come for the commencement of our project. I'd like to know the way forward from now." Rob: "You must have not read the contract properly. Any failure to pitch for appointments, deliver due work and appoint a team were not favored by

the board. Which has forfeited you from the responsibility of this project. It is under my company after all." I swallowed the lump in my throat. Me: "I had been in and out of hospital-" Rob: "With failure to report to us your whereabouts Miss Ngudla. We are a multi billion rand company. We don't work with "I heard".. If you can't take care of your personal business and simultaneously fail to inform us, we have no choice but to take you off the project." Me: "The project that I came with?" Rob: "It is undertaken by my company. You signed a contract. It no longer belongs to you." His lawyers looked at him. Dimitri: "Is that your final statement?" Rob looked at him. Piercing blue eyes worked their magic. Rob: "Yes." He cleared his throat. Rob: "It is in the contract." Dimitri looked out the glass doors. A few employees had gathered and held their phones. Dimitri: "Lets go Spho-" Me: "But Dimitri-" My voice shaking. Dimitri: "It doesn't matter. We heard what the mighty Mr Sobukwe said. Let's go." He helped me up. "What are you doing." One lawyer in the boardroom hissed as we walked out. As we made our way to the door, I could hear whispers and "whore" was one of them. Tears were blurring my eyes. Dimitri held me close to him as we walked out and a mob of journalists stood at the entrance. I literally broke down. He held me up and pushed his way through to his car and we got inside. He spoke on his phone briefly. Dimitri: "Tar. Robert Sobukwe."

That evening there was another story. This time they said I was begging for a job. A picture of me walking down the steps with Dimitri's arm protecting me was splashed on the article. Dimitri: "They don't learn." We sat at our dining table. The meeting point. Every one of them held an iPad reading the news. Dimitri: "Tar, hit me." Tar: "None of them have responded." Dimitri: "Absolutely perfect. Call Mandla." Mandla was called and arrived some 20 minutes later. Dabawo and Sandile joined me with Dimitri and his team. Dimitri: "It's time for dirt. Mandla, how soon can this get to the public?" Mandla: "They'll be chewing straws in the morning." Dimitri: "Tar. The filth. Zingisa Jolobe." Tar: "Source number 1. Drop out drama student and former stripper at Maverick Gentleman's club in Cape Town." Dimitri: "oooh I like that place." Tar: "Met Dumisani as a client. Formed a relationship with him and they moved to Port Elizabeth together when she got pregnant. She met Spho and became friends. Dumisani on the other hand building his law firm handling arms dealings and wiping murder charges. Reference cases being, the Peter twins murder trial, Kular arms dealing, and the missing witnesses of Jamie the Cement killer." My mouth hung open. Tar: "His finances shot to the roof. He's known for paying off judges with his wife and her former friends. Such a cute marriage. We also have pictures. Blackmail purposes of course." he pulled out

various pictures of Zingi and two women with various older men in bed. How did Tar..... Tar: "Two kids later. Dumi cheating with varsity students and Zingi tired of wrinkled judge dick, lands herself a Sandile Sobukwe." Sandile was seething in ultimate rage. You could tell by the look on his face he wanted to kill. Tar: "Poor Dumi finds out, Sandile will you tell us ho-" Sands: "I told him." He hissed. Tar: "Sandile told him. Being the good friend he is. Where was Masilakhe Spho?" Me: "He disappeared to his room and said it was none of his business." Dimitri: "He did? Wow. What a friend." Tar: "Spho, how do you know Zingi steered the car." Me: "She told me in hospital when I visited her. She said she wanted him dead. Dumisani knows it too. When he lived with us, he said so himself." Dimitri: "Got that Mandla?" Mandla: "Yall bout to make my career." Dimitri: "Next on the list. Onika Morgan." Me: "That's not her surname." Tar: "Oh but it is Spho. Onika's real surname is Morgan. She is from East London and she is Desiree Morgan's sister." Sands: "but Dez didn't have a sister." Tar: "That she knew of. Daddy's infidelities. Onika is with Lakhe to fulfill her dream of winning. She was the last person to see Desiree Morgan. And she paid the man behind bars to kill her. Don't your problems feel much smaller now?" Dimitri: "Talk about hot tea. Stella Sobukwe." Tar: "Awww. Diplomat. Disowned by family after forcing Robert to marry her. Must have been nice. Stella's family is known for hippy magic up north. She's secured most of Robert's success. How else would a boxer who is unqualified for anything else be able to start an empire worth billions? Humor me. I'm not done with her yet, her files are still coming in." Dimitri: "Robert Sobukwe." Tar: "International fraud master of the last three decades. Through his puppet Lwando. He illegally obtains shares for struggling companies and sells them off at lower prices. Crippling their owner and bankrupting them in the process. There's 14 who have come forward so far and still counting." Dubs was beyond stunned. Tar: "Sir Dimitri, would you like for us to call our good friend the Taxman?" Dimitri: "My unofficial best friend. Please do. I want him there first in the morning. Robbie's heart about to twerk." Hayini ababhuti. Dimitri: "Last but not least. Man of the moment. Masilakhe Killian Sobukwe." I was never ready. The world stood still as Tar started talking. I knew Lakhe wasn't clean what I didn't know was how dirty he actually was. Tar: "So, my favorite boy. He's my role model to be honest. Listen. 7 year old boy found in a shack with a rotting body. This is a story only a few human beings on planet earth know. And one of them is now disabled thanks to yours truly. The boy was found with the rotting body in that heat infested shack when a neighbor came to investigate the smell. They took him and placed him with one of the other neighbors for the meanwhile. When the police found the body the confusing part was that, the woman's body showed signs of strangulation around her neck and that's what the coroner reckoned killed her. Nobody else had stepped into that

house for months prior so who could have possibly choked her? The boy on the other hand had temper problems confesses the neighbor in which he once said "I'll strangle you the same way I did my mother. And you don't even mean nothing to me." and with that he was gone. Here's a signed statement that Robert made disappear once he adopted him." He pushed forward the paper. Tar: "Lakhe found an orphanage in which he finally stayed in. This is where Rob found him and adopted him. The good life started for the boy. Soon after, he had a little brother, Sandile. My guy, do you remember a certain time, where your brother fought on your behalf at school?" Sands: "I was being bullied. Lakhe came to my rescue." Tar: "Sweet. Do you know that boy is partially blind today because of that incident and that your father has been paying that family since that day. It's not as if Rob doesn't know, he knows very well his son has a problem and he chooses to ignore it. And he ignored it when it happened to Spho as well. Did he even once visit you at hospital?" Me: "he didn't." Tar: "That's odd. Anyway, Lakhe is finally done with school and joins a gang. Hear that Dimitri? A gang." Dimitri: "I hear you brother." Tar: "He transported drugs for Sepua. Guns and all. Then he started to sell them. He started the laundromat in Durban called Washit Clean to scrub his dirty money. He wasn't this important then. It wasn't a problem. He escalated and became top dog with clients such as Loco. Who has been murdered by the way along with his brother. So how does a thug, land a CEO position without experience?" Dimitri: "Must be nice having a rich daddy." Tar: "Indeed. What does Lakhe's job consist of? Does anyone know? Does he know? I'll get into that later. So, upon good judgement, I decided to have my cop friend in Durban raid Washit Clean and keep all evidence safe for me. You would be sad to know amongst drugs and illegal firearms, they found under age girls, drugged and packaged to be sold. Such a bad boy." Sands: "What." His voice a mere whisper. Tar: "You think you know your brother? The ruthless Gazi? You're smarter than that Sandile." Sandile had his head in his hands. Tar: "It's cruel that Spho fell victim to his abuse. Here are pictures, Mandla. Of Spho, of the scene and hospital records." Sands: "where the hell did you get those!" Tar: "It is my job to get them. Also, this is to confirm the time which Lakhe was attacked by whatever, Sandile is at his own hotel with his girlfriend, and Spho unconscious in hospital and He, Masilakhe Sobukwe was not even in contact with the two.. So Mr Man got himself into some trouble then blamed Sandile for it. That is the temporary end." Mandla: "I'll write it and publish it first thing in the morning-" Sands: "You can't. This would ruin him. Please. I beg of you." Dimitri and Tar looked at me. Dimitri: "Its your call my angel." Me: "He's right. Masilakhe might be a cruel man but you can't publish him. All those stories he knew nothing about. He was in a coma too." Tar: "Very well. We'll send it to him and his lawyers then?" Me: "Yeah. He

should know that we know. He needs to piss his pants." Dimitri: "Done. Hear that Mandla. Everything but Masilakhe." His eyes held a death glare at Mandla that warned him not to try anything stupid or else. Mandla: "Yes sir." Dimitri: "Let us retire for the evening. We're filing 5 lawsuits in the morning at the court house. Those publications will be shitting red bricks. Oh and before I forget. Mandla, I need you to leak the audio I've sent you with Zingisa admitting to Spho that's she's in love with Sandile not her wheelchair bound husband. Nothing like an angry husband to brighten my morning." Mandla: "Those mornings are my favorite." And out he went. Tar and the other two packed their things, saying goodbye and went to their cars. Dabawo went to check on the kids. Dimitri: "You're a good woman. I don't even know you well but your heart is made of gold but I need you to know one thing, Not everyone deserves gold. Some of them deserve ashes in their mouth, others deserve sulphur burning their eyes and others deserve to rot. If you need just about anything, it doesn't matter what it is or what time of night. Let me know. Ash, sulphur and rot are my favorite ingredients." Me: "Thank you Dimitri." he walked out. Sandile was still sitting in the same spot holding his head. Me: "Hey.." Sands: "Spho... Lakhe is a cruel man, that I know. I am a cruel man, that you know." Me: "and I still love you both. You're my brother Sandile." Sands: "You can't. I need to go shut down that thing in Durban and a lot of other things before they land us in trouble." he stood up. Sands: "I need to get rid of my old life. Tar has opened my eyes. You can run but there'll always be someone, ready and willing to find and destroy you." my phone rang. I stared at it in my hand. He stared at it too. Masilakhe K. Sobukwe.....

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I pressed reject. If he had something to say then it would be best through my lawyer. Sands: "I know you love him. It can't be easy going through this." Me: "I'll be fine. Are you staying for dinner?" Sands: "We already had dinner an hour ago." Me: "Oh. Yeah." Sands: "Spho? You okay?" Me: "I am. I think I'd love some ice cream." I went to the fridge. Sands: "Spho.." Me: "I'm okay. I promise." Sands: "Please call me if you need anything." Me: "I will." Sands: "Spho." I took out the ice cream tub. Sands: "Do you want me to stay?" Me: "It's okay Sandile. Your girlfriend is waiting for you. It's bad enough there's all these lies about us out there. I don't want to ruin your relationship. I'm fine mna. Dubs is here. Plus the kids." Sands: "Liz understands. But I hear you. Please call though." Me: "I will. Thank Liz for me." He walked out. I dished my ice cream onto a bowl. I know Sandile had come back. I could feel him

standing behind me still. He probably thinks I'm going to break down. Me: "Sandile. You're gonna drive me crazy. I mean I love you and everything but you need to leave." "So it's true." My heart stopped. I spun around and came face to face with Masilakhe. Lakhe: "You love him." Me: "How did you get in my house." Lakhe: "Your boyfriend left the door open." Me: "What do you want." Lakhe: "My own brother Spho? Actually I refuse to believe this. Yet it makes so much sense. That's why you want him around all the time." Me: "You of all people know me. I don't need to explain anything to you. If you feel the need to believe gossip rags over someone you shared a life with. So be it but get out of my house." Lakhe: "Spho." He moved closer. Me: "Stay away from me." His hands were covered but clearly could see they were bandaged still. Lakhe: "You know what was going on in our family. You know I wasn't well." Me: "I know nothing." Lakhe: "I was possessed. You know I never would've touched you." Me: "I don't know that." Lakhe: "Spho where are the tapes?" Me: "How am I supposed to know?" Lakhe: "You were the last one there. Your clothes are gone so you obviously took the tapes." Me: "And do what with them? What interest do I have in seeing you beat me up?" He cringed. Lakhe: "Spho.... I know you hate me for leaving you but what choice do I have? Look at my hands. Look!!" He held up his covered hands. Lakhe: "I can't do anything by myself. I can't go through what I went through ever again. I remember waking up in a forest surrounded by Komander and an army. He never gave me a choice. He told me it was either me or my family's heads. I couldn't let him kill my family. I never asked to be a demon." Me: "And I asked to be his daughter right? Mighty wonderful. Please leave my house." Lakhe: "So you want to destroy my whole life for something I had no control over." Me: "Lakhe. I don't have any tapes on me!!" Lakhe: "Then who does!! They not in my house!" Me: "I don't know. I don't care." Lakhe: "You are vindictive!" Me: "I got it from my father... Ohh wait, 'OUR' father. Because if I remember correctly, you were his son too." Lakhe: "You are a bitter woman and people will learn that about you. And if those videos ever surface on line, nobody will ever see you again. Not even your precious Sandile. Sphosenkosi. I want those tapes." He walked out.

Lakhe was back in his house. Dumisani waiting for him in the lounge. Lakhe: "This driver you hired is slow." Dumisani: "They didn't have race car drivers available." Lakhe: "What is it." Dumisani: "You have mail." Lakhe: "Again? They want more money? This is fucking ridiculous. Spho is trying to milk me dry!" Dumisani: "I don't think it's from them. I didn't open it. It's just written Masilakhe Kadir Sobukwe. I thought your middle name was Killian." Lakhe: "Open it and show me." Dumisani: "Do I need to use gloves?" Lakhe: "No." Dumisani opened the

envelope showing him the single paper. "If you so much as touch her again, your hands will be the least of your problems. A plenum sectione infernum manet." Dumisani: "What the hell is this?" A tiny bottle was in the envelope. Brown flesh was stuck on its container and inside containing red liquid. Lakhe: "My flesh and blood." Dumisani: "Do you mean that literally or....." Lakhe: "Yes." Dumisani: "Masilakhe. Why the hell would your flesh be glued onto a bottle containing your blood. Man, what kind of things are you involved in!!" Lakhe: "Nobody can ever know Dumisani. Not about this. Spho doesn't have the tapes." Dumisani: "Then who does." Lakhe: "Her father." Dumisani shook his head. Dumisani: "What now." Lakhe: "He won't do anything. He's not dumb." Dumisani: "What if he wants revenge?" Lakhe: "He's already had his revenge." Dumisani: "Lakhe. Look at this bottle." Lakhe: "I've seen worse. Look, give Spho everything. Settlement, maintenance and the money for stress or whatever it is. Just sign the thing, I'll do the transfers in the evening." Dumisani: "If we can prove that she was negligent as your wife and there was something with Sandi-" Lakhe: "THERE WAS NOTHING WITH SANDILE. IT IS A LIE." He growled. Lakhe: "He would never try me like that. He knows. Give Spho the money and make her leave me alone." Dumisani: "Fine. But this is ridiculous. Why would she need R60k every month for the kids?" Lakhe: "Masilakhe Sobukwe's kids not just any kids. No child of mine is going hungry." He stood up. Lakhe: "Get rid of this." He walked to the bedroom, stopping halfway. Lakhe: "Dumisani. I not only pay you to be my lawyer. The things you find, hear or see in my life can never be known not even by your children and wife. I won't be able to control the dangers that will follow them if they do. I hope I've made myself clear." He continued walking. Dumisani stared at the tiny bottle swallowing a lump of saliva...

The next day was an eventful day. I woke up from bed after 7. I'd had my phone off while I was sleeping. I couldn't stop thinking of Lakhe, even dreaming of him. Well, Kadir the second. I hated it. I washed up and went to the kitchen dressed in my gown. Skull and Bones were stationed outside the house. One in front, the other at the back. Dimitri knocked. I opened for him and Tar. I always looked forward to seeing what he had on and today, he (Tar) was dressed in a chocolate brown 3 piece suit that hung tight around his muscles. Navy Blue suede shoes and a matching tie. And of course, the cologne. Must be that new Versace. I smiled. Dimitri was always in black, always smart but Tar? Man... Dimitri: "Good morning Spho." Me: "My Dimitri and Tar. Coffee? Breakfast?" Tar: "Good morning. No thank you." Dimitri: "Tar is extremely sensitive to food. He'll marry anyone who cooks for him." Tar: "Stop it." Dimitri and I laughed. Dimitri: "I kid. Are you ready for the headlines?" Me: "I had my phone off since last night. What do they say?" Tar gave me his tablet.

Oh God, Twitter was the worst. I sat down to read the tweets. 'OMG, So all these people tryna discredit one person who took care of all of them? Lol, life.' Another one: 'Dirty laundry has been hung, save us Lord' another 'What is interesting here is that we haven't heard from the two people actually involved, Man and Wife.' It was a thread. 'Both were in hospital when stories came out, neither commented or anything.' A friend responded 'I think the friends were jealous. Look at that life. They're hella rich.' Another tweeted 'but what's with the brotha? Is it there or not? The pics say Alot. They close.' Another replied 'Idk if I believe all this. Perhaps just a publicity stunt. Kardashian wannabes. Wouldn't be shocked if a sex tape was leaked soon.' 'Wouldn't it be hot if it was her and the brother?' I went on to another timeline. There was a hash tag with my name. Great. I went viral. 'I'd like to be the first to say, I'm sorry to this lady for bashing her the other day. I should've kept quiet. This isn't how women shud treat each other. I apologize sisi. Uyimbokodo 4 keeping this family 2getha.' And thousands more followed after that. Me: "This is sweet." Dimitri: "And, the publications." Tar showed me the articles from that morning. Public Apologies from all. Me: "This is good right?" Dimitri: "No its not. Their apologies are more for the lawsuit than anything else. It's not even front pages because it's not gossip. We're going right ahead and suing them to hell. No out of court settlements. They're damn disrespectful." Tar: "Two of them will probably need to shut down. They won't be able to afford this." Now I felt bad but they shouldn't have gone and messed with me then. It's a good lesson. Me: "Thank you so much for this guys. It means a lot to me." Dimitri: "We're not done. Sit." I sat down. Dimitri: "You own 15% of Lakhe's company. You know this, correct?" Me: "We never signed a contract." Dimitri: "Yes you did. You won't remember because he never told you. Anyway, the dividends of those shares will pay out in a few weeks. On the other hand Robert's company is sinking. The shares plummeted, the minute SARS walked in there. By the time they're done, you'll be able to afford that company with Lakhe's settlement money and the lawsuits combined. Should I put in an offer for you in the meanwhile? You'll be first choice." Oh my God. Dimitri is a beast. Me: "An offer? On the whole Sobukwe empire? Can I afford it? Isn't it worth billions?" Dimitri: "Not anymore. You will be able to afford once we peck it to pieces. It will be all yours to rebuild. Just say the word."

Rebuild.....

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I looked at Dimitri and shook my head. Me: "Make an offer. I'll buy the empire. But I'm not doing it for me. I love Robert, he is my father. Perhaps this will be the time for him to actually reflect. I'll buy, rebuild and give it back to him." Tar: "Give?" Me: "Yes. Give." Dimitri and Tar looked at each other. Dimitri: "Where are you from? I certainly want to go." Tar: "I want to go find a wife there." Me: "I can't break that family like this. I don't have a family to begin with. Perhaps I was a little har-" Dimitri: "Do you know how much your project has generated for this past two months? R1.2 million. Do you know he will turn it into an annual program, with investors from all over the world within a year the projected income close to R200 million. Do you have R200 million Sphe? That is YOUR idea he is working on. YOURS. That entire proposal. That entire program, you created it from scratch. And he will make money off it until he dies. You were in that boardroom when he ripped you off." Me: "I know but I'm not that person. I won't be able to forgive myself." Dimitri: "Fine. There will be emails and calls coming through to your phone trying to bribe you for the lawsuits. Don't take it. Don't be weak. These people had no problem dragging your name in the mud." He packed his things. Dimitri: "Our court dates are next week." Me: "D, how much do I owe you?" Dimitri: "What do you mean?" Me: "I mean, how much does this cost? All of it. You're a phenomenal lawyer." Dimitri: "No honey, you don't pay me. I'm already paid. This is my job." Me: "I'm confused." Dimitri: "Don't worry about all this. I am just doing a job I'm already paid to do. Kev's family pays shit loads already and they don't even need me for long. It's nice to do something big once in a while. Your name gives me exposure and that pays enough. Don't worry." He pinched my cheek and walked out. Me: "So... waffles?" Tar looked down, smiling. Tar: "No thank you. I should get going. Enjoy the rest of your day." He was ready to leave. Skull walked in. Skull: "There's a Fez at the gate." Tar stood still. Me: "Let him in." Skull went back out. Tar: "Who's this." Me: "one of the so called friends." Tar: "Okay." He sat on the table with one juicy leg. Me: "Who dresses you?" Tar: "Myself of course. Why?" Me: "You look like a model." Tar: "With this face? Nah." Me: "Nothing a little make up can't fix. I use make up all the time." Tar: "You're a woman. Make up is for women." Me: "Everyone who appears on TV uses make up." Tar: "I'm not putting on make up." Fez cleared his throat. We looked at him. Me: "What do you want." Fez: "to talk to you." He took off the sunglasses looking at Tar. Tar: "I'm not going anywhere so you can go ahead cry if you want." Fez rolled his eyes. Fez: "Did you see what they wrote about Zingi today? That she is one of the sources that lied about you?" Me: "Why does this interest you?" Fez: "Are you being serious? She sold lies about her own best friend! How have you not beaten her yet?" Me: "You knew about this Fezile. Why do you care?" Fez: "How would I have known! I've been in this house cleaning, nguZingi who had nothing to do walking in and out. I didn't

think nothing of it at first. Only now it makes sense that she was here to let those people in. Spho, I was the one who told you to watch out for Zingi months ago before you even married Lakhe. I was the one who told you of the things she does in your absence and things she says about you. Do you think I'd let her go and spread lies about you to the public? Would I not have told you!" Me: "You were mad at me for some reason-" Fez: "Of course I was mad when I heard you took the love of my life! You and Zingi never include me in your gossip sessions so when you fight you expect me to know what's going on!" Tar stood up now. Tar: "Back up." He warned. Fez: "It hurts to even think Sandile could do such a thing." He folded his arms. Fez: "I mean I know he's not mine but can the bitch he fucks not be my best friend? I don't want to talk trash about my best friend. If it's some stupid hoe out there. I don't care. I can say all I want about her and we can laugh it out. I thought about how would I talk to you about Sandile when he holds you at night. It would be weird. I liked it better when I fussed over him and you'd encourage me. I didn't know what to think Spho. Then I saw those pictures and I knew it couldn't be true. None of it. Anyway, I never knew about Zingi's plans. Zintle didn't either, she's back in Dubai with her old man by the way. She asked me to come and talk to you. I came yesterday but the whole place was on lock down, they wouldn't let me see you. I am still hurt Spho. Sandile explained though, so I'm okay." I looked at Tar. His eyes were fixed on Fez. Me: "Okay Fez. I hear you." Fez: "I hope one day, you forgive my behavior. I'm not here to pry on your life. I've just realized, there is no such thing as friends for what Zingi did to you. I'll see you around. I hope you get your groove back. Don't listen to what these armpits of Satan are saying about you." He walked out. Tar: "He's dating Sandile?" Me: "Imaginary relationship. Sandile let's it be. They're good friends." Tar: "Ohh.. but yeah, he didn't show up as any of the sources. He wasn't involved." Me: "That doesn't mean I'll let him slide back into my life." Skull: "Delivery." He brought in a bunch of flowers. Tar took them. Tar: "I think I need to hire one more security in here." He pulled out the card and gave it to me. Tar: "Do you have any allergies?" Me: "Not for flowers." I opened the card. "I know you're innocent. Forget them all. Love Simphiwe." Me: "My ex." Tar: "Trying his luck?" Me: "Who would want to try their luck with me after this week? I'm basically a rag." I boiled the water. Tar: "You're not a rag. You're amazing with a great heart. Who wouldn't." I looked at him. Me: "Lakhe was here. He said he's looking for tapes. I'm guessing from the cameras in his house." Tar: "There's cameras in the house? Well it does make sense. It's a huge house. Did you take the tapes?" Me: "No. I haven't been there since that day." Tar: "Then who?" Me: "Even if anyone else went there Tar, they won't be able to remove the tapes without a security code. That's why he's blaming me. Only him and I know the code for our bedroom." Tar: "But if he's

looking for them that means they're not there. Someone must have taken them. Someone who knew what happened in there." OR something... Komander visited me at that hospital. He knew. He is the only other entity that could have taken the tapes. Me: "Would you like a cup?" Tar: "I think I've overstayed my welcome." He stood up and took his brief case. Me: "You haven't. Thanks for everything Tar." He nodded and smiled, walking out. I looked out the window as he reached his blue Mercedes Benz CLA. He opened the backseat and leaned in to drop his case, take off his blazer and hang it. God, he had a beautiful butt. It was like two big grape fruits, plopped on meaty sticks which could pass as horse legs. I wonder how long he spends at the gym. He closed the door and walked to the driver side. Chris: "What are we looking at?" I got a bit of fright. Me: "Nothing honey. Just fixing this curtain. Would you like some cereal?" Chris: "Yes please mama. Lam is up also." Dabawo brought him to me. Me: "Hello dubs. Unjani?" Dubs: "Ndiphilile mntanam. Oko kumke ababantu bendaba kuthu hum aphe ntloko." (Since the newspaper people left, I'm feeling fine.) Me: "I'm sorry about it dubs. How about namhlanje siyeni to the movies with the kids?" Dub: "Uyeza uVuyi mntanam. Uzuhambe naye. Mna ndizoshiyeka apha." (Vuyi is on her way. You can take her with you. I'm staying right here.) I knew she was still shaken with the whole thing. I was too but I couldn't hide forever. If I stay another day in this house, I'll go crazy. I organized an Uber to fetch Vuyi from the station then bathed Lam and Chris after him. I was still running after this child when Vuyi arrived. Thank God she took over. My breasts were aching a bit and my tummy cramping. I had to go fetch my MRI results from the doctor before I went out. After a quick shower because that's all I get now. Chris and Lam are my source of happiness and strength but they're very demanding. I got dressed in simple jeans and a loose white shirt. Sands: "Knock knock." He entered the front door. I came out the bedroom. Sands: "Ready?" Me: "For?" Sands: "I'm taking you to the doctor. I sent a text." Me: "Oh. My phone is off. You don't have to act-" Sands: "I insist. I'll put in the car seat. Oh hey Vuyi. Looking fabulous babe." I got the baby stuff ready and off we went. Me: "You're a Jeep person now. I like it." I was in the back with the kids. Vuyi in the front seat. Sands: "I hired it for the week. I'm not sure I like it." Me: "It suits you. How is Liz?" Sands: "Crazy. She wants a baby now. Imagine a whole baby." Me: "You like babies." Sands: "I told you months ago. I don't want kids. Boogie is enough for me. Thanks." Me: "Boogie is a dog." Sands: "I'm not having a child. Vuyi, how's your internship?" Vuyi: "It's great bhuti." Sands: "Promising?" Vuyi: "Not entirely. There's a number of us." Sands: "Hmm..don't worry too much about it. Just do your best." When we arrived in the hospital. Vuyi asked to stay behind with the kids. Whereas Sandile was insisting on coming in. I followed him to my doctor's office. The eyes and whispers again. I don't know

if I was used to it or just didn't care. The doctor welcomed us in and we sat down. Doc: "So, we did the MRI. The results are here. You're going to be fine. Very lucky to be honest. That hit was nasty." Me: "I'm not sure if I should say thank you..." Doc: "Don't worry about it. I'd like to do another ultrasound. To be absolutely certain tha-" Sands: "You've already done enough tests." Me: "Okay. I can't help but feel a vibe between you two. Whats going on?" Sands: "Nothing." He glared at the doctor. Doc: "She's going to find out anyway." Me: "Find out what?" Sands: "I don't want you to stress. You needed to be okay first. Especially with the whole media circus." Me: "I'm fine. Please tell me what's going on?" I was panicking a great deal now. Doc: "So... uhm. There's a possibility, you may be pregnant." Me: "I beg your pardon?" Doc: "It's too early to tell for now. Which is why I wan-" Me: "NO. I can't. I just had a baby three months ago. I had a concussion, internal injuries, how could it survive. We didn't even have....." Sands: "Didn't have what?" Me: "How possible is possible?" Doc: "I need to do that ultrasound to make sure."

Masilakhe was in his lounge awaiting breakfast. The chef Dumi hired brought the tray in. Chef: "There's someone at the gate sir." Lakhe: "Because I have all the power to open that damn gate?" Chef: "Sorry." He went to open. Lakhe: "How the hell am I supposed to eat this shit? Where's Sarah?" Chef: "Sarah?" Lakhe: "Fucking useless. Call Dumisani. I want his ass here in 10 minutes." Chef: "Yes sir." He hurried off. Onika walked in the house. Onika: "Baby." Lakhe stared at her. Onika: "Do you need some help with your foo-" Lakhe: "What the fuck are you doing here?" Onika: "I came to my boy-" Lakhe: "Don't call me that! You lied to me!! How could you not tell me your real name? Or the fact that your sister was my ex? What the hell are you doing in my life Onika?" Onika: "Lakhe I love you. Dez isn't here anymore. Why worr-" Lakhe: "I am not fucking worried about Dez. I am worried about the snake that's been sleeping in my bed!" Onika: "You're one to talk Lakhe. I have been taking shit from you this whole relationship. You even had the audacity of moving back with your ex without informing me. I always have to pick up the pieces after you. I just washed her blood off your walls just yeste-" Lakhe: "Did I ask you? Look here. If that shit ever surfaces this earth, I promise on Satan, I will burn your entire family. Do you fucking understand me?" Onika: "Bu-" Lakhe: "DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME!!!!" She flinched. Onika: "Yes." Lakhe: "Get out of my face." Onika: "Lakhe, I really do love you." He rose up from his seat. Lakhe: "You sold my life to the media. My whole entire life is splashed out there because of your contribution!! Get out." Onika: "I'm not leaving. Not until we sort this out." Lakhe: "So you want me to throw you out? Say no more. Chester!" A bulky man appeared from the back yard. Lakhe: "Throw her out."

Onika: "Masilakhe!" He sat back down as Chester escorted Onika out the estate. Within 10 minutes Dumi arrived driven by Zingi. When they walked in and saw him on the couch waiting, they stood still. Lakhe: "You better wait at the gate. I don't want to see your face here." He said to Zingi. She immediately turned around and walked out. Dumi: "What's going on?" Lakhe: "I need a home assistant Dumisani. You said Sarah would be here. How the hell am I supposed to get anything done if I can't use my hands?" Dumi: "I thought Onika was-" Lakhe: "I want a home assistant." Dumi: "I'll hurry them up. I'm really sorry about th-" Lakhe: "Shut up." He had his iPad resting on his lap. Lakhe: "Well get the fuck on it then Dumisani. I need to eat!!" Dumi: "Your mother asked about you." No response. He got out his phone and made a call. After some negotiating he ended the call. Dumi: "They're sending someone in 30 minutes." Lakhe stared at his screen quietly. Dumi: "Did you see her." Silence. Dumi: "I could request for the kids to visit.. They miss you." Lakhe glared at him. Dumi: "I'm sorry for assuming that she.... I know Spho is not that kind of person. She never has been. It's just that...with Sandile, I just can't trust anything." Lakhe still stared icily at him. Dumi: "I'll get on with work then." He continued on his own iPad. Dumi: "Oh no. Lakhe!" Lakhe: "What is it now!!" Dumi: "Your father's company. It's being sold." Lakhe: "Put an offer quickly. Right now!!!" Dumi made the call. Dumi: "What do you mean!" He said on the line. Dumi: "My client is willing to double the amount. Let Mr Sobukwe know." He waited. Dumi: "Triple then!!" Lakhe: "What is going on!" He walked to him. Dumi hung up. Dumi: "It's gone." Lakhe: "WHAT!!!" He roared. Lakhe: "How the fuck did this happen!!!" Dumi: "SARS was there earlier. Somebody planned this." Lakhe: "Call my dad." Dumi dialed the number and it hit voice-mail. He dialed for Stella and it rang to voice-mail. Lakhe: "Who bought it?" Dumi: "Anonymous buyer." Lakhe: "I pay you to find out." Dumi: "That's illegal." Lakhe: "Dumisani." He warned. Lakhe: "Do you want to hang on the ceiling with your feet?" Dumi: "No." He squirmed. Lakhe: "Then find me the son of a bitch."

Through out the day, my thoughts kept rewinding to that evening. The evening I should've fought back. His words still lingered in my head 'We are going to be happy. Without them. You're going to love me like I love you and nobody will stop it.' Pushing himself and tearing through me. The pain I felt then in my heart I felt it now. And that pain now growing in my womb. I hadn't been able to focus all day while out with the kids. Back home, we arrived to Dabawo cooking. I went to bath Lam first and put him to bed after feeding him then I bathed Chris, for the first time he wasn't fussing and running around acting crazy. Probably tired. I dressed him and he went to take his afternoon nap. In my bedroom, I changed my bed linen and put in

clean ones. Sandile closed the door behind him. Sands: "How you feeling?" Me: "Fine." Sands: "Graham wanted to speak to you." Me: "I don't feel like speaking to anyone right now." Sands: "I know." I finished the bedding. He took my arm. Sands: "I'm sorry I didn't say anything before. I really wanted to protect you." Me: "I know." I sat down. Sands: "Please speak to Graham. I'm really bad at this." Me: "I'll be fine Sandile. I just need to be alone with my children please." Sands: "Okay. Call me. I have to check on my dad." Me: "Is he okay?" Sands: "He's in the hospital. He had a heart attack about an hour ago." Me: "You should go Sandile. I'm fine here. I have dubs and Vuyi to keep me company. Sands: "You're my sis. I care about you-" Me: "Yeah but I'm not in hospital right now. Go to him." Sands: "Fine. I'll see you later." Me: "Please update me." Sands: "I will." He walked. I kneeled on the floor next to my bed. As I opened my mouth, my shoulders shook and I just broke down silently. I prayed to God for his forgiveness....

Sandile walked into the hospital room. His father was asleep, his mother sitting in the chair next to his bed. Lakhe was standing in a corner leaning on the wall. Nosi sat at the edge of the bed. They all stared at him except Robert who was asleep. He walked to his mother. Sands: "How is he." She held on to his jacket. Stella: "They say stable. He hasn't woken up." Sands: "Are they doing anything to wake him up?" Lakhe: "Do you think we're sitting here waiting for a fucking miracle?" Sands: "You talk a lot of shit for a person who can't even feed themselves. How do you go to the toilet?" Stella: "Sandile!" Sands: "No Mama. If Masilakhe wants a go at me, then he should square up. I'm not going to be licking his arse." Lakhe: "Say that again." Sands: "I'm not going to be licking YOUR ar-" Stella: "Stop it!! Your father is hooked on a machine and all you can do is bicker?" Lakhe: "Sandile is Disrespectful mama." Stella: "Both of you are disrespectful!!" Lakhe: "I am older than him. Is this the way he's supposed to be talking to me after all the shit he has caused?" Sands: "Oh please. Don't play that elder card. What shit? What shit did I cause? Because if I remember correctly, I didn't send you to beat your wife, I didn't send you to abandon your family!! I'm not the reason why your wife is so scared of you and scared of keeping your baby!!!" Lakhe: "What baby." Sands: "Don't act fake humble. I'm disrespectful according to you remember?" Lakhe: "Sandile." Sands: "Mama, who's dad's doctor?" Lakhe: "I'm talking to you!!!!" He yelled. Sands: "Don't you dare. I will knock you the fuck out." Lakhe: "Since when did you start speaking me to like this?" Sands: "Since I lost all respect for you bhuti. You may not have wanted to be with her, it was wrong of us to pressure you but there was no need to beat her. Possession or not, you had control of what you were doing. You let the darkness consume

you. If Kadir and his dad know when to stop and go, why the hell couldn't you? I don't know what it must have felt like but I know for a fact I would've fought myself to the grave before I hurt someone who loves me. Fine, blame the demons but do not come at me with the same attitude. I am done with you." Lakhe: "What baby are you talking about? Lammy? Is Spho pregnant?" Sands: "I don't know." Stella: "Sandile." Sands: "I don't know." He repeated. Nosi: "Bhuti, you're close to her. If she's pregnant she'd tell you." Stella: "Sandile, please." Sands: "You were all horrible to her mama, why do you care if she's pregnant or not?" Stella: "Look at where we are. This is not what family does to each other. We have to fix things. If Spho is pregnant with your-" Sands: "I'm not sleeping with her. I never did. Why would I do that?" Stella: "The pap-" Sands: "Forget the papers. We lived together in that house. All of us as a family. We were happy. Spho took care of every one of us. She brought YOU back into our lives mama. Where have you ever heard of a divorced couple living happily with their kids? Why would you think such filth about her?" She kept quiet. Sands: "Now that dad is here you want to act like a family again so that she can pray for you. Knowing Spho she's probably praying right now. I'm not the person who's going to be feeding you information. If you want to apologize or ask anything, you will go straight to her. I am not going to be a part of it." Lakhe walked out.

#179

That late afternoon, it had started to drizzle outside. Tar arrived, today in a maroon 3 piece suit and brown formal shoes. I smiled shyly. Tar: "Evening." He came in. Me: "Where is Dimitri?" Tar: "He's a little busy. Sends his regards. How are you?" Me: "I'm okay." Tar: "You don't look okay." We stood in the kitchen, both of us leaning on the counter top. Me: "Maybe I'm not. I don't know. I'm just....heart broken." Tar: "About Robert?" Me: "Partly yeah. I do wish he gets better." Tar: "Do you want us to give it back to him? The company will be signed to your name in a week." Me: "Lets see if he gets better first. I'll try to stabilize things in the meantime." He stood in front of me and held my cheek. Tar: "What's wrong?" Me: "Nothing." Tar: "Talk to me." I sighed. Me: "Not yet." Tar: "Okay. Fine. But if you need anything, call me." Me: "Thank you." Tar: "Spho, you know what I learnt growing up? I didn't enjoy my childhood because I had to toughen up very early. I was the ugly little brother of a chick magnet. Imagine. I had to put up with being called a lot of names but the one that hit me most was people calling me a monster as if I chose to be born ugly." Me: "You're not ugly." Tar: "To you. You only see the good in people. I was like this too but always forgiving them dragged me down and

depressed me because of the heavy burdens of not fully healing. I became the monster that always laughed at. I gave myself a chance to be happy. When someone did me wrong, I would reciprocate it times by 2. Sooner rather than later, they stopped. Completely. Nobody dares say a thing about me. Nobody even tries me. Yes, you being a good person is right but sometimes, it is just wise to give people what they want. A monster." I hugged him right there. He didn't know how difficult it was to do that. Yes, it made sense but it was hard. Tar: "You're a good human. And a great friend." Wow, did he just friendzone me? Me: "Thank you Tar." I pulled away and looked at the door. Masilakhe was standing there staring at us. Tar looked at him. Tar: "Where's your lawyer. We don't speak to you without him." Lakhe: "So this is the guy who's encouraging you to milk my money so you can pay him to buy Tom Ford suits." Me: "What do you want." Lakhe: "I want to talk to you." Me: "I have nothing to say to you." Lakhe: "You're pregnant." Of course Sandile told him where to get off. Sometimes he can be a hot head. Lakhe: "Is it true?" He took one step closer. So he wasn't sure. Me: "No." I said. Lakhe: "Are you lying to me?" He looked really confused and a bit...shaken. Me: "What do you want from me?" Lakhe: "I want you to tell me the truth." Me: "And then? What next? Celebrate and do the dab? You heard my lawyer, I can't talk to you without yours present." Lakhe: "Fuck the lawyers Spho! This is our family! Is this how you're going to treat us? Like we're some damaged goods?" Me: "Masilakhe. Leave my house." Lakhe: "So it's true." Tar: "LEAVE." Lakhe sucked his teeth and walked out. Tar looked at me. Tar: "So that's why you're not okay." I was so embarrassed. I couldn't even look at him. Tar: "Spho, I remember the pictures from the scene. The pictures we sent him and his lawyer. Did..." he breathed. Tar: "Did he rape you?" I folded my arms on my chest. Me: "No." Tar: "Don't lie to me." With every bit of strength I had, I controlled my tears from bubbling out my eyes. Tar: "Spho." Me: "Lakhe didn't rape me." I stated boldly, with a shaky voice. Tar: "Son of a bitch...." he walked to the door, I pulled his arm. Me: "Stop it! Please?" Tar: "You're protecting him! I know you are!" Me: "He didn't do it. I swear." It was Kadir the second. And I could never let him know or anyone else for that matter. Me: "Seeing Lakhe is just, alot for me. That's all." Tar: "I can make him stop. Pull a restraining order even." Me: "No that's not necessary." Tar: "No. It is. How does he get through Skull and Bones? He just walks in here?" I nodded. Me: "Just leave it Tar. He's the father of my kids." Tar: "This is YOUR house. And he is going to respect it. Trust me." ...

It was very difficult to sleep that evening. I just lay awake and stared at my ceiling. I could never have an abortion. Not even thinking about it. It was

crazy. My phone rang again. I rejected the call. Lakhe has been bombing my phone since he walked out. My door opened and Chris walked in. Chris: "Mama." Me: "Hey sweet pea. Can't sleep?" He got into my bed and snuggled on my side. Chris: "Just want my mama." Me: "I'm here my angel." Chris: "Why were you sad today?" Me: "Uhm..I'm not sad baby. I'm just feeling a little sick." Chris: "Oh. Good. Did you take medicine?" Me: "I did. I should be okay by tomorrow." A message beeped on my phone. I checked. Lakhe: "I want to see my children." It was a quarter to ten! Mxim. Chris: "Is that daddy? Is he coming home?" Me: "No honey." Chris: "Why not?" Me: "Your daddy and I are working some stuff out." Chris: "Oh. Okay. So he's gonna come home right?" Me: "Not tonight baby." Chris: "But soon..right?" I sighed. A knock on the door jolted me awake. Skull: "Miss Spho." Me: "Yes?" I got out of bed and pulled on my gown walking to to kitchen. Skull: "Kids dad." I opened the door. Me: "Are you fucking serious?" Lakhe: " You didn't respond to my text." Me: "I got it 30 seconds ago! And what are you doing in my house! How did the guards let you in!" Lakhe: "I know them. They used to work for me." Chris: "Daddy!!" He came running. Lakhe scooped him up. Lakhe: "Hey big boy." Chris: "Finally. So are we gonna go back to our house now? But I like this one? I always get lost in the big one. Maybe we can stay here. Right daddy?" Lakhe:"Definitely." Me: "Masilakhe. What you're doing is illegal." Lakhe: "Seeing my kids is illegal?" Me: "It's a quarter to ten! You bribe mg guards and think I have time to stand here with you!" Lakhe: "Your feet are a little swelled. You really are pregnant." Me: "I'm not." I folded my arms. Lakhe: "Another boy would be amazing. Imagine 3 Lakhe's. I'm going to be the happiest dad. I've always wanted Alot of kids." I just stared at him. Lakhe: "Are you gonna need anything? I'll hire a nanny so you can have peace. We can work out a monthly amount to get you anything you may need plus you'll need a driver and car since you crashed the Range Rover. Is a Porsche Panamera okay? Blue or black? I'll order it tomor-" Me: "STOP IT!! I don't want nothing from you!! Absolute nothing!! Leave my house. I don't want to yell at you in front of our child." Lakhe: "I'm not going anywhere. I've got kids in this house and one inside you. Talk to me however you please but I'm taking care of my brood." Oh I see, so I can be the crazy bitch to our kids? No. I'm not letting that happen. Me: "I'm going to bed. Tell your friends to lock up when you're done." Lakhe: "I'm not done talking to you." Me: "Well I am." Lakhe: "Listen if we're going to be parents to three ki-" Me: "I didn't choose!!" He took a step back. Me: "I was a mother to two. I was comfortable and bonding with them both happily. Now I have to accept this and find a way of getting it together. I don't even know if this isn't a Kadir baby because you were not-" Lakhe: "He's mine." Me: "Masilakhe you did things to me that you would've never done if it wasn't for that thing!" Lakhe: "I know. I'm not proud. But Spho, that's still me

inside of you. Look, we are divorced, yes. But we love our kids. We just can't be together. We will co parent. I'll be here every morning if I have to. These kids are going to grow up loved and taken care of. That's how I was raised. Me: "Don't rock up at my door at 10 in the evening. It's rude." Lakhe: "What choice did I have, you weren't taking my calls." Me: "How do you even make phone calls." Lakhe: "I have an assista-" Me: "Of course you do." Lakhe: "nt. It was only two letters left." Me: "I can't stand you right now so I'm going to bed." Lakhe: "Where's my other lamb?" Me: "He's asleep." Lakhe: "If we have another boy, what should we name him?" Me: "You're not naming my child. You failed at naming the first one. What makes you think I'll let you name this one?" Lakhe: "Because you're in love With me and you'll let me do whatever I want." I felt a pang inside my heart. Perhaps I've given him too much platform. Perhaps I should let him know the little ounce of love I had left for him disappeared when I exited that doctors office yesterday. I felt nothing for him. Me: "Fine." I walked to my room and got into bed.

The next morning I was up and definitely in no mood. I bathed Lam and dressed him up in his tiger suit. He looked adorable and smiling alot today. I finally walked out the bedroom to the kitchen and found Lakhe standing there with Chris in his arms. My anger boiled in my throat. Lakhe: "I couldn't leave before you woke up and leave Chris alone. Also couldn't come into your bedroom cuz that would've been rude." I kept still and warmed Lam's milk. Me: "Chris do you want mommy to run your bath sweety?" Chris: "Yes mama." I went to the bathroom to run a bath then back to fetch the milk. Lakhe: "So you're just gonna ignore me?" Me: "Which cereal my angel cakes?" Chris: "Coco pops please mama." Me: "Great." I took down the box and the milk in the fridge. Lakhe: "I'll be taking my bandages off today. I can't wait to touch things." I made Chris his cereal while he went to bath. Lakhe: "Can I hold the baby?" I gave him his son and started on breakfast. Lakhe: "Okay, what did I do wrong now?" Dabawo walked into the kitchen. Dubs: "Molweni." Me: "Hello dubs." Lakhe: "Spho akathethi nam." (Spho isn't talking to me.) Dubs: "Haibo Spho!" I carried on with breakfast quietly. Dubs: "Uleli njani?" (how'd you sleep) Lakhe: "Kakuhle Dubs. Been a while since I slept that well." Dubs: "Good. Uhleli nosapho lwakho kaloku ngoku. Not abanondindwa ubachola estratweni. Pheeeewu." (You're with your family now. Not your hoes.) I couldn't help but giggle. Lakhe: "Cacile ke funeke ndiyolanda impahla yam." (Clearly I have to go fetch my clothes.) Me: "You're not welcome in my house. It's MY house. The same way you threw me out of yours. Or did your burns affect your brain? You cannot live in my house. You made your choice to leave. It was only courtesy to let you even come in here

last night. I should've called the police. But you are NOT going to jolly ride on my head Masilakhe. I refuse. You're not going to come in here at 10 in the evening demanding kids. They're asleep at that time. You will make appointments like the weekend dad you chose to be!" Lakhe: "I didn't choose to be a weekend dad. I just chose not to be with you. Are you going to punish me for that?" Me: "No. I'm not punishing you but you're not going to walk into My house and demand anything. I don't do that in your house. You will make appointments to see these kids!" Lakhe: "I'll never make appointments to see my kids!" Me: "Then you're not gonna see them." Lakhe: "Spho. Why are you so mean to me?" Me: "I'm the mean one? Me? Please leave my house." Lakhe: "I'm not leaving." Me: "So you want to go to jail." Lakhe: "You wouldn't." I took my phone and dialed a number. Lakhe: "You don't know me by now?" He smirked. Me: "Tar, I need your help." The smile vanished from his face. Lakhe: "Why are you like this!?" Me: "If you think I'm gonna let you bully me any longer, you're fucking crazy!!" Lakhe: "I'm trying to take care of you and our kids!! You're pregnant and stressed and losing weight, damn it!! Do you expect me to watch you die!!" Me: "Get. Out." Lakhe: "Drag me." I put down the spoon. Dabawo held my arm. Dubs: "Okay. Ndidikiwe nini mna ngoku. Ndizothatha abantwana ndihambe nabo. Nina nishiyeke nincokole." She looked at Lakhe. Kanene she is his aunt. Not mine. I went back to the stove. Dubs went to the room. Lakhe: "I'm trying to make amends here. We don't have to be happy but can we at least try and not kill each other? There's no reason our kids have to suffer. I can be here every morning to help out. You can rest. I am trying here." Me: "I don't want your trying Lakhe. I can handle this. If you want the kids, just let me know in advance and I'll prepare them for you." Lakhe: "I can't help feeling guilty. A toddler, an infant and pregnancy all over again." Me: "I'll be fine." Lakhe: "Thank you." Me: "For what?" Lakhe: "For having my kids and never complaining. They're my joy. I can't think of a better person to be their mom." Me: "You're welcome." Lakhe: "But I'm not gonna make appointments for my children. Ever." Me: "If that's what you say." Chris came into the kitchen wearing only his slippers. Completely naked. Lakhe: "Haibo boy. Where's your gown?" Chris: "in the wash. Mama what do I wear?" I was laughing uncontrollably. The fact that he wore his slippers even though it was his only item on. He looked so cute. Me: "Can you take out the first shorts in the drawer? You know where your underwear is sweetie. Why did you have to come bless us?" He giggled to the bedroom. Lakhe: "He has one gown?" Me: "Two. He's lazy to look for the second." Lakhe: "When last did you go shopping?" I looked at him. Lakhe: "Not in a bad way. I'm just saying perhaps we could get him at least 3 more. For options." Me: "First of all, he's a toddler. He doesn't need 5 options of gowns." Lakhe: "Fine. At least four options. The

other two could be for sleepovers. Let's go shopping-" Me: "I'm not going shopping with you. Tell you what. Since you already sent me the maintenance money, I'll go shopping. I'll buy him his 3 gowns, plenty of underwear, he needs shoes so there's gonna be a lot of those plus vests. I'll take a picture and send it to you." Lakhe: "And Lam too." Me: "Lam has entire wardrobe of clothes he hasn't worn. He has diapers to last him 2 months from now. I was thinking of getting a diaper shed. Since that's gonna be my life for the next 3 years now." Lakhe: "Definitely a great idea. And breast feeding?" Me: "I don't think it's safe but I'll ask the doctor. I'll email him today." Lakhe: "Okay. And you? You good on outfits? Remember the first time we got together and we went shopping? You put on a show for me." Me: "I do have enough clothes. Thank you." Lakhe: "Shoes? I know for a fact you're obsessed with shoes. There's this red glove boot made of Lycra material. You would love it. Must I order it?" Me: "No. Thank you." Lakhe: "Okay. I understand." Chris came back, finally dressed. Lakhe: "Chris. Dad has to go now okay? You gonna take care of mommy and Lam?" Chris: "Yes. I have plans." Lakhe: "Good boy. I'll call you later." He said to me. I don't know why he was acting so innocent all of a sudden but it reminded me of Kadir the second. He was this nice too. Me: "Okay." He walked out. I was just waiting for Tar. I need new security not Lakhe's friends who gave him access whenever he liked. He needed to know boundaries.

Lakhe walked back into his house. His assistant came straight to him. Sarah was a built woman. Quite tall with broad shoulders. Sarah: "Sir, a woman was here asking to speak to you. She said she was your girlfriend but she wasn't on the list of people allowed in here." Lakhe: "What did you do?" Sarah: "I threw her out obviously. She won't be bothering you sir. Unless you want to be bothered." Lakhe: "No I don't. Thank you Sarah. Also, I need you to get me a brand new Porsche Panamera in black, red rims perhaps. As soon as humanly possible." Sarah: "Yes sir." She wrote it down. Lakhe: "It's for my baby mama. Crashed her first car when we met then crashed the second one after giving birth to our kid. Now she's pregnant again and I can't let her struggle. So I need a car and a driver for her." Sarah: "She's a lucky lady." Lakhe: "She hates me." Sarah: "I can't imagine why. You're a delight." Lakhe: "Well...i don't want to be with her. And I said it in a very... rude way. Just that ever since I found out she's pregnant again, I feel really bad." Sarah: "It is an uncomfortable situation but buying a car isn't going to help it. Probably gonna make it worse. If she really loves you, cars won't mean anything to her." Lakhe: "They really don't. You know she bought her own car even while we were married? A whole Range Rover. Never asked for help. Nothing. She just bought it and

parked it out on the driveway. Damn impressive." Sarah: "Sir can I ask why you don't want to be with her?" Lakhe: "It's complicated." Sarah: "Very well." She opened the gate. Sarah: "Doctor is here. Is there anything you'll need for now?" Lakhe: "No thank you Sarah. Thank you for listening. You're actually the only person who doesn't look at me with pity and talk to me like I'm stupid." Sarah: "Because you're not. I'll be in the study." She walked away. Khaya walked in. Khaya: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Tata." He got up and hugged him. Khaya: "So... what do you need." Lakhe: "I need to find Komander."

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Khaya looked at Masilakhe and smiled. Khaya: "No." He stated. Lakhe: "Why." Khaya: "See, the thing that people don't understand is being a demon is addictive. You miss the power, the thrill, the strength. Once it leaves you, you want it back. It's part of moving on. Look, nobody can find Komander. Not even I. Not until he talks to me. He's gone Lakhe. Why do you want him anyway." He sat down and took Lakhe's hands, starting to unbandage them. Lakhe: "We ended on a bad note. We have unfinished business. I just need to see him." Khaya: "Resist it." Lakhe: "How?" Khaya: "Pray. Work. Just resist your thoughts. Stay away from your original life. Evil acts will make it easier for the demon to find you. Lakhe, we are lucky Spho didn't wipe us all out. Can we just not take it for granted?" He stretched out the hand. Khaya: "How is it" Lakhe: "It's fine." Khaya: "You touched Lam?" Lakhe: "Yes." Khaya: "Makes sense. You barely have scars." Lakhe: "So uhm... how are you?" Khaya: "Holding it together I suppose. Komander was the only thing I had left. I have no wife. Spho despises me. He was the only one now he's gone." Lakhe: "He exists somewhere." Khaya: "Yeah but not with me." He took the other hand. Lakhe: "Spho is... pregnant." Khaya looked up at him. Khaya: "What?" Lakhe: "Just found out." Khaya: "But... that would mean... you were full dark." Lakhe: "Does that even mean anything?" Khaya: "It does. Look at Komander. His father was full dark, his mother was pure and look how he turned out. Spho is a pure Queen. This child will be dangerous to the entire world, not even she can stop it." Lakhe: "So you want her to have an abortion?" Khaya: "If you want to raise Satan, do you." Lakhe: "Spho is determined to keep it. She won't have an abortion." Khaya: "Obviously not. She's pure. She's not allowed to, but you can-" Lakhe: "I'm not murdering my child. Forget it." Khaya: "I'm not saying murder him. Just make him stop growing. Lam will be in danger Masilakhe. This baby will kill him. Do you want your son to murder the other?" Lakhe: "We'll consult a prophet or whatever it takes but I'm not killing my child Tata." Khaya: "Fine. Go to that Pastor Graham. He'll be able to help you.

How's this hand?" Lakhe: "Great. I can finally touch things." Khaya: "Easy.. don't take on too much." Lakhe: "I won't. Thank you. I wouldn't have known my own son could heal my wounds like this." Khaya: "You're welcome. How are they?" Lakhe: "They could be better. We're all just trying to survive this part of our lives." Khaya: "And Your father?" Lakhe: "He's awake. Recovering. Although we don't know who stole his company." Khaya: "Wasn't it bought?" Lakhe: "Then why are they hiding their identity? Damn cowards." Khaya: "Maybe because they know you and what you'd do. You would threaten them into giving it back." Lakhe: "My father worked his whole life for that company!" Khaya: "I know. It's sad." Lakhe: "Whoever did this planned it very well. The moment my family was having problems, they decide to strike. I wouldn't be surprised if it was the same person that aired all our laundry in the papers." Khaya: "As long as Rob is alive." Lakhe: "He's broken. Everything he's ever worked for, has just been swiped off. I couldn't even buy it." Khaya: "But he has YOU and the rest of his family. You make enough money for all of you." Lakhe: "I need to find Sibulele. He can trace whoever this is." Khaya: "You're really stubborn. Let me get going." Lakhe: "Why? You're just going to be alone anyway. Why don't you stay here for a while?" Khaya: "I prefer being alone. Sometimes I just....lose it." Lakhe: "You're welcome here any time you want." Khaya: "Thank you Lakhe. Just promise me you'll take care of yourself." Lakhe: "Yeah. And you didn't even like me much a month ago." Khaya: "You're not my favorite as a demon. I don't think there's anyone I like as a demon. Well... except him." Lakhe: "Promise me something." Khaya: "What?" Lakhe: "If he comes back, you'll tell me." Khaya: "Why do you want Komander so bad-" Lakhe: "I've been having dreams about him! Really scary dreams. Sometimes I feel like, my whole body is on fire and I can't wake up then he pulls me up. It's only yesterday, I slept freely." Khaya: "That is because that house you slept in is secured by prayer. This place is riddled with evil." Lakhe: "Please just let me know." Khaya: "Fine. I'll let you know. I'll check on you later." He walked out as Dumi came in, his wheelchair now automatic but a young man followed behind him. Lakhe: "Who the fuck is this?" Dumi: "Since you don't want Zingi around, I had to hire an assistant to drive me and help me." Lakhe: "Okay. What are you doing here. We don't have an appointment." Dumi: "My clients are dropping out and investors have also drawn back from my firm." Lakhe: "Because of your dirt?" Dumi: "It was a way of survival-" Lakhe: "It was stupid. Look how much of a fool you look like because of a stupid wife who couldn't keep her mouth shut. Zingisa has done nothing but cost you." Dumi: "She is the mother of my children." Lakhe: "Then you have poor choice. She was a stripper. Mostly likely a prostitute in the process. If she was truly a woman of value she would have found a way to help you network and make money instead of sleeping with other men at your command. What woman does

that? Does she even love you?" Dumisani: "Don't.." Lakhe: "What you gonna do? Drop your only remaining client and investor to go back to sucking dick with your wife? Some old men have weird fantasies like fucking a cripple. That's where you wanna go?" Dumisani: "You're supposed to be my friend." Lakhe: "I don't have friends. The minute you and your little whore went to the newspapers, you lost me. You're an employee now. And let me assure you, the secrets of mine you keep are your kids life insurance." Dumisani: "I didn't know she would do this!! I never knew!!" Lakhe: "You live in the same house and can't control your woman? Pathetic. Leave my house. I'll call when I need you." Dumisani turned his chair and strolled out....

Chris and Dubs were at school today. I just had trouble staying awake. Lucky for me Vuyi was still here helping me out with Lam. I finally gave myself a chance to bath properly and dress. I pull on tight skinny jeans and a vest. Tar knocked on the front door. I went to open for him. Me: "Morning." Tar: "Hey you. How are you?" Me: "A little tired. Did you get my message?" Tar: "Yes. Your new security is outside. And Lakhe does not know them. I have assured it. He won't come near you." After introducing me to them, I boiled some water for tea. Tar: "So what happened this morning?" Me: "It's crazy. He got here late last night and demanded to see the kids. I left him here in the kitchen, unbeknownst to me, he would sleep over." Tar: "Are you serious? Did he hurt you?" Me: "No. He was disturbingly nice. Would a protection order against him be appropriate since we have kids and he has to see them?" Tar: "Yes it's appropriate. He will send someone on his behalf. As long as he stays away. Should I do it?" Me: "Yes." Tar: "Are you sure?" Me: "Of course. The sooner the better please." Tar: "What did he do to you?" Me: "Nothing. I'm just tired of talking and fighting. Besides, he doesn't respect my space." Tar: "Wow. I thought you loved the guy." Me: "Well not anymore. Tea?" Tar: "No thank you." My phone rang. Susan. Chris' principal. Goodness, what now. Me: "Hello?" I answered. Susan: "Mrs Sobukwe. Will you report to the school immediately please?" Me: "Is Chris okay?" Susan: "Christian is very well. I just need to see you and his father urgently." Me: "I'm not near his father but I'll be there." She hung up. Me: "God, what did he do now." Tar: "Who?" Me: "Chris. This is his principal. She seems mad. She summoned me." Tar: "Come, let me drive you there." I packed Lam's bag and Vuyi brought him to me after I changed my top and shoes. Tar and I left for the day care. I would send Lakhe a letter or note. I really didn't want to see him right now. To my disappointment, his car was parked at the lot. Great. Tar: "I'll wait here." Me: "Thank you Tar." I took the baby into the building, to the teachers desk. Dubs was in the playground with the kids. Susan, Stacy(who looked very

uncomfortable) and Lakhe sat in their desk. I greeted everyone and sat down. Lam looked at his dad. Lakhe smiled. Lakhe: "Hey you. Hey my little pumpkin. How's my peanut? Huh? Daddy's happy baby. Give me a kiss." He smudged his cheek. Lakhe: "Daddy didn't get his kiss. He didn't get his pumpkins kissie." He kissed the other cheek. Lakhe: "Awww. You don't want daddy?" Lam smiled. Lakhe: "That's my baby boy." Me: "Miss Susan. What is this about." I was getting nauseated with this one already. Susan: "Christian is a very bright boy." Lakhe: "We know that. We're his parents." He pulled my hand onto his. I unnoticeably pulled it back to fix the baby's onesie. Susan: "Do you also know that he's an entrepreneur? He sells candy to the other kids and they pay him for the jungle gym. Parents are complaining that their kids should be playing for free here all the while, Chris is conning them into rental." Lakhe: "So?" I stared at him. Susan: "So it's wrong. He sells tips for whatever and also flowers which he takes from the garden. It is stealing. It is fraud. He's 4." Lakhe: "Why then don't you tell him that?" Susan: "We did. He and Julie asked to see the papers which state that the garden belongs to the school or me and not public property." Lakhe: "And do you have the papers?" Me: "Are you serious!" Lakhe: "It is a viable question. Does she or not? Is there a rule that states kids can't sell things here? Have these so called tips hurt anyone or put them in any danger?" Susan: "That is not the point." Lakhe: "What is the point? The fact that a four year old could make more money than you?" Susan: "Mr Sobukwe, this is not a supermarket. It is a learning environment-" Lakhe: "Then teach him something to his caliber. He thrives better in business." Me: "Susan, I understand your frustration. I'll have a word with Chris. Where is he?" Lakhe: "The boy did nothing wrong." Me: "This is a school. Christian is going to follow it's rules and stop disobeying authority. I'm not going to raise a gangster. You will either be beside me when I talk to him, or you'll encourage hooligan behavior and bail him out of jail when he's 16." I got up and went to find him outside. Lakhe followed me. Lakhe: "Spho, give the child a break. He's just a kid." Me: "Where have you ever heard of a child asking for documents to support property claims? What will he ask to see next? No Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Fine. Can you at least be gentle on him? The kid is just having fun." Chris came running to me. Me: "Hi sweetie." Chris: "Hi mama. You came to fetch me?" Me: "Not really. I want us to talk. Sit with me." Chris: "What's wrong mama?" We sat down. Me: "You're not allowed to sell tips and flowers and candy. It is wrong for your age. You're supposed to be a child and play not be busy with money." Chris: "But I like it." Me: "I know honey but this is for when you're older okay? Not right now. All these kids' parents pay school fees like me and daddy to come here everyday. They can't be paying you for playing." Chris: "Oh. I'm sorry." His face staring at the floor. Lakhe: "Tell you what... how about you sell in my office instead? Only twice a week." Chris:

"Really?" Lakhe: "Definitely. My employees needs some tips from you but not here at school okay? Never here at school. Where is the money you collected from the other kids?" Chris: "In my room." Me: "You have to give it back to them and apologize." Chris: "All of it?" Me: "All of it." He looked at his dad. Lakhe: "Yes. You have to my boy. I'm sorry." Chris: "Okay ke. I will stop for you mama." Lakhe: "Tell me why you started this?" Chris: "I buy mama nice things with my money." Lakhe: "Who taught you?" Chris: "Uncle Sandile." Of course he did. Lakhe: "Alright son. You can go and play now. No more business. No more selling. No more stealing. Do you hear me?" Chris: "Yes Tata. Bye." He ran off. Well that was that. I turned and walked to the gate. Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "I'm late for an appointment." Lakhe: "I won't take a minute." Me: "What do you want." Lakhe: "Why are you so hostile toward me?" Me: "I said I have an appointment!" Lakhe: "For the baby?" Me: "No! Not for the baby. What do you want." Lakhe: "I know that I was garbage for a while. I'm sorry about that. We need to talk about Chris' behavior." Me: "Chris will be fine. If you stop encouraging him." Lakhe: "Chris has entrepreneurial spirit. If he starts at this age, what will he have by 16?" Me: "Lakhe I really have to go." Lakhe: "Okay. I'll come by later." Tar was standing outside his car leaning on it. Lakhe: "What the hell is he doing here?" Me: "He brought me." Lakhe: "Why!" Me: "Hayi ke." Lakhe: "You have my child in your arm! Look at this person Sphosenkosi!" Me: "I know exactly what he looks like. Goodbye Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Are you dating him?" Me: "Yes." Lakhe: "Like fucking hell. Let me see you get into that car." Me: "What you gonna do Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "I will tear his face off!!" A sharp blaze erupted in his eyes that made me jump back. A familiar look... A deadly familiar look...

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For a second I thought I felt a shift in the environment. No... it was a shift actually. Me: "What are you doing?" He blinked almost shaking his head. Lakhe: "You can't do this Spho. You do not know him." He whispered. Me: "I do." He stepped toward me. Lakhe: "He isn't who he says he is. He's not what you think. Please." Me: "I think I can take care of myself and kids, thanks. I got to where I am and I had you." Lakhe: "Fine. But I can't let you do this to my kids. I won't." Me: "Look at me. You are not in charge of who I see, talk to or spend time with. These kids, I'm raising, are mine too. You're not going to undermine me. So I suggest, you go back to your house, to your girlfriend and leave me alone. Can you do that? Thanks." I walked to Tar. Lakhe stood there, seething in rage. Tar drove us home. Tar: "So what was that all about?" Me: "Sorry to put you on the spot." Tar: "I don't mind. But what happened?"

Me: "He freaked out that I was with you." Tar: "You said we're dating." Me: "I wanted him to hurt." He smiled. Tar: "Okay. Want some brunch?" Me: "No I'm okay. I just need to see my banker for the kids' trust funds. It's going to be quite meeting." Tar: "Will you need me? To iron out legal details that is." Me: "Yes." I agreed a little too quickly. Tar: "Okay. But I have to go somewhere first. Just to pick up a few documents. Is that okay?" Me: "Yes. It's okay." I was only too happy. I don't know why but running errands with someone is fun. My phone rang. Urrg. Me: "How soon can we get that protection order?" Tar: "I'll work on it today." Me: "That would be great." I pressed reject. Tar: "Answer him. Perhaps it's about the kids." Me: "I know it's not." The phone rang again. Me: "Yes." Lakhe: "Where are you?" Me: "In Disneyland." Lakhe: "You think this is a game Spho?" Me: "I know it is. And you're upset because you're losing." Lakhe: "I'm not upset. Just come over so we can talk. We haven't broken it to Chris that we're divorced. I think we should do it together." Me: "I'll let you know when I'm free." Lakhe: "You're free now!" Me: "No, I'm not. Tar and I have an appointment." He hung up. I giggled. Tar: "You really enjoy provoking him, don't you?" Me: "A bit, yeah." Tar: "You still love him?" Me: "He's actually repulsive. I could say yes but I don't think I do. I don't want him near me, I can't stand his voice, seeing him or anything." Tar: "Why?" Me: "For the longest time, I took care of Lakhe. Sometimes I might have neglected him but nonetheless, I was always there. He's not the type to want to talk about stuff. Then when we fell apart. He told me he's leaving because I don't hear him out or pay any attention to him. I tried to work it out but he didn't want. Even after we broke up, there was a time we slipped back into bed but he made it clear that he didn't want us to continue. He even got himself a live in girlfriend. To cut a long story short, I only just realized that he just tolerated me." Tar: "He loves you.. he's just scared." He stared ahead while driving. Me: "Scared of what?" Tar: "You." Me: "I'm confused." Tar: "You have a certain energy about you that ordinary men fear. I don't know what it is. It's just incredible. Unfortunately, even high profile men like Lakhe can fall into that fear. You represent a part of him that he's never had. Purity." I stared at him in the rear view mirror, he stared out the windscreen without even a glance. I spent the rest of the journey with my lip shut. After collecting his documents, we went to my banker who invited us to his house instead. I was actually glad Tar had come with now because that was a little unsettling. I set up the funds and we ironed out the details. Once done, Tar drove me and Lam home. Me: "You had such a long day Mr CEO. Look at you attending meetings with mommy, making executive decisions for your future. You're such a big boy aren't you. Aren't you my little pumpkin?" I kissed him. Me: "You know you're gonna be a big brother? I don't think you do. He's probably gonna be more of your twin don't you think? Listen ke mntanam, funeke sithandaze, Now

more than ever. Andifuni ulwe no-mninawa wakho xanibadala. Funeke sifumane indlela simthandazele, simjike, abekwi cala lethu. This will be easy kuba akasekho utamkhulu wakho. Okay? That's a good boy. Mommy needs your help."(Listen my child. We have to pray. Now more than ever. I don't want you fighting with your brother when you're older. We have to start praying now, turning him to our side. This will be easier because your grandfather is no longer here.)Tar: "With?" Me: "Oh nothing. Just him being a little less fussy." Tar: "I can help anytime you need." Me: "That's sweet of you Tar but I don't think you know much about babies." Tar: "Dimitri has two kids. I know more than I intended to. They forced me to be their deputy dad." I laughed. Me: "Boys or girls?" Tar: "Girls." Me: "I actually wish this coming one is a little girl." Tar: "Tired of boys already?" Me: "Two of them is enough. Chris is ...incredible. Exhausting too. Soon, Lam will be running after him." Tar: "Trust me when I say this. Girls aren't any better. If I don't break into a sweat when I'm around them, I thank the heavens." My phone rang again. Me: "I can't do this. This is really annoying." Tar: "The protection order will be done by 5 pm today. He will sign it then and there too." Me: "Thank you." We arrived at my house. Me: "And thank you for the security." Tar: "I should've done it right the first time. Will you be okay?" Me: "Yes. I will. Thank you." It was quiet after that so I decided perhaps it was a sign I got out his car. I opened the door and stepped out, carrying my son in my arm and his bag on the other. Tar came around the car and stood in front of me. Tar: "I'm not the kind of guy you want." I froze. How did he reach the conclusion of what kind of guy I wanted. Tar: "I'm just..... I'm not blind, I see the way your eyes glitter when you look at me. And honestly, it feels so good to have someone finally look at me like I'm worth something. Like I'm some prize. It's amazing. I just can't.." Me: "Ok." I walked to my house without another word. I was already embarrassed enough. I was not about to go deeper. Men just didn't want me and I had to accept it and focus on myself. First Lakhe, then Siya now Tar. It was obvious, I was the problem here. Not Masilakhe. I walked in my house. Me: "You're my man, aren't you baby? You and your big brother." I walked into the lounge and halted. Babalo or was it Komodus?

Khaya was in his house after a full cleaning but he still looked around as if he missed a spot. He poured a whiskey into a glass and drank it. "As if that's gonna help." Khaya looked up. Komander walked in and smiled. Khaya: "You're back!" Kom: "No. I'm not." He looked around. Kom: "Stop cleaning this house. It's not gonna make her come back." Khaya looked at the floor. Kom: "And stop drinking." Khaya: "I've lost everything I love." His voice shook. Kom: "No, you haven't." He opened the door. She walked in and looked at him.

Khaya: "Zama?" He gasped. Kom: "No. Zuki. Her younger sister." Khaya: "She was supposed to have died. Decades ago. She wasn't older than 14 at the time! Zama told me!" Kom: "She was never in the car. I kept her in Germany for some time. I thought you might like a new friend in your time of grief." Khaya: "I'm confused." Kom: "Don't think too much about it. Zuki is happy to see you." Khaya: "Sir.. Spho doesn't know." Kom: "Tell me right now that you're joking." Khaya: "She thinks her mom was an only child. Now when she sees ... her. I don't know." Kom: "How many secrets have you kept from this child. Have you spoken to her?" Khaya: "No." Kom: "Speak to her. I can't stay long. She'll know I'm around sooner rather than later. Or maybe she already does know. All I'm sure of she won't be as kind to me now as she was before. I have to leave." Khaya: "Let me come with you." Kom: "No. I need you here." Khaya: "I can't stay in this house!" Kom: "Mine?" Khaya: "No!" Kom: "I'll get you new house. It'll be ready tomorrow afternoon." Khaya: "I don't want a new house. I don't want to be here period! Let me leave with you. Please." Kom: "I can't let you do that Khaya. It's not going to work. It'll be easier to track me if I'm with you. It's dangerous." Khaya: "Then what do I do? I still have the..." he looked at Zuki. Kom: "If it's cast out, you'll die immediately. I know." He sighed. Kom: "For now, I need you to stay put. I will never put you in any danger. I really have to go now." Khaya: "Lakhe wants to see you." Kom: "Lakhe is too weak." Khaya: "Just talk to him." Kom: "I can't. If I go near him, I'll absorb him. He'll never be the same again. He needs to stick next to Spho." Khaya: "Yeah..well.. She's pregnant." Kom: "Oh no. Kadir?" Khaya: "Seems like it. Is there any way-" Kom: "For that baby to turn pure? No. But she can't take it out either. It'll kill her." Khaya: "Shit. So she has to wait it through? What happens when she gives birth?" Kom: "I'll take it." Khaya: "For what?" Kom: "That baby does not belong here or with her. It will kill her and everybody in that house. It is beyond dark. Beyond me and my father combined." Khaya's eyes widened. Khaya: "What." Kom: "So you'll have to keep an eye on her. Okay? Closely." Khaya: "What...what do you mean beyond you and your father combined?" Kom: "Zuki give us a minute." Zuki went outside to the garden. Kom: "Khaya, Spho is about to give birth to Legendary King of the Evil Army. Lam's complete opposite. More powerful and more dangerous than anyone in the history of the Komander bloodline. You saw in section 12 of our book. The birth of this King will be a shake to the world." Khaya: "Isn't this what we wanted?" Kom: "Yes. But we needed Spho too. Without her turning to full dark, that baby is going to be unruly and a handful. She won't handle it." Khaya: "Okay. I hear you. Is there anything I can do?" Kom: "Just keep an eye on her. She needs a lot of support and love. And get Babalo out of her house." Khaya: "I will." Kom: "Thank you. Take care of Zuki. She isn't Zama. Nowhere near it. She's very quiet. Very shy. And ...innocent." Khaya: "You're kidding me. How the hell did

you manage that?" Kom: "Obeying me is easy for women. Look at me." He smiled. Khaya: "Well..true." Kom: "It's good to see you my friend. I trust you with my life. There's no one I'd rather sacrifice it for but you." Khaya: "Thank you." Komander walked out...

Sandile lay on his couch watching TV with a packet of chips on his stomach. Boogie lay beside him. Sands: "Did you just fart? That's nasty man." The doors opened. Sands: "Here's your mom." Liz: "Would be a real mom if you just got me pregnant." Sands: "Why are you so obsessed with getting pregnant! I don't want a baby with you!" Liz: "Is it because you already got someone pregnant?" Sands: "I'm in this house all day. How and where could I have gotten someone pregnant? Tell me." Liz: "I saw the scan in your drawer." Sands: "What the hell were you doing in my drawer?" Liz: "So it's true. Who's is it, baby daddy?" Sands: "Spho is pregnan-" Liz: "So it's true!!! The magazines weren't lying!!! You made me stay here with you knowing fully well you needed a cover because you got her pregnant!! You're disgusting!" She threw a pillow at him. Sands: "Are you done?" Liz: "Filthy!!" Sands: "Okay." Liz: "Okay? Okay? After cheating on me and getting your sister pregnant, all you have to say is okay?!!! You're dirt Sandile!!!!!!!" Sands: "That is not my baby." Liz: "You're lying! Who else could she have slept with! She broke up with Lakhe before Lam was born, that was over three months ago. You're the only one who's been around her. She's not a whore. You did this." She gasped. Liz: "You took advantage of her! She was vulnerable and you took advantage like you always do!!" Sands: "Where the fuck does that come from!" Liz: "You're trasshhhh!!" She screamed. Sandile stood up. Sands: "Say that one more time." Liz: "T. R. A. S. H. H. H!!" He charged toward her as she ran around the lounge. Liz: "Leave me alone!" He grabbed her arm, pinning her to the wall. Sands: "I didn't get Spho pregnant. I've never slept with her. Stop acting fucking crazy. I am not getting you pregnant. If you're not enough with Boogie then I don't know what to tell you. You're gonna stop screaming like a lunatic, do you understand me?" Liz: "Yes daddy." Sands: "What's this thing you're talking about taking advantage? When have I ever taken advantage of you? Is that what you're telling people Liz?! That I'm a rapist? Since when!!!" She smiled. Sands: "You need to stop that. People won't know you're playing and that you're damn crazy." Liz: "Fine. Are you hungry? I got some lasagna." Sands: "No." He sniffed her neck. She always smells so good. Sands: "I'm trying to take advantage." He kissed her. Liz: "Please do.." He laughed. Sands: "You wish." He walked back to his couch. Liz: "Garbage." The doors opened and Lakhe walked in. Liz: "See you later!" She grabbed her purse and ducked out. Lakhe: "And then? What's up with her?" Sands: "You kinda freak her out. The last time

you met her, you were still....Kadir. What do you want?" Lakhe: "I need your help." Sands: "We're not that close." Lakhe: "You're my brother." Sands: "You were the one to tell me I'm nothing to you." Lakhe: "I was not in my right mind Sandile. You know that." Sands: "You weren't in your right mind coming here either. Let's not insult us both. You need something, tell me what it is." Lakhe: "I want my brother back." Sands: "And?" Lakhe: "Spho is dating the Tar guy. You need to get rid of him." Sands: "Really? I like him. I think they make a cute couple. Beauty and the beast type." Lakhe: "Make it stop." Sands: "You don't even want her. Why do you care?" Lakhe: "Have you seen him? Sandile, please. I would do it myself but my hands are still recovering." Sands: "Your hands are tied. It was literally right there." Lakhe: "My hands aren't tied." Sands: "They were, in the literal sense. Now they're recovering but they're still-never mind. I'm not touching Tar. He has eyes at the back of his head. Plus he's my lawyer now. He's a nice guy." Lakhe: "I would rather prefer Siya. I promise I won't bother them." Sandile looked at him. Sands: "Are you running a fever?" Lakhe: "HELP ME!" Sands: "Fine! I'll help her fuck Siyanda." Lakhe: "Not like that!!!" Sands: "What do you want from me then?" Lakhe: "Just make them date. So that she's far away from Tar." Sands: "But if they date, they're gonna fuck. And Siya is A great guy." Lakhe: "Whatever. Just not Tar." Sands: "What do you have against Tar?" Lakhe: "Tar works with the most dangerous people Sandile. He does the most risky job. Digging into criminals lives. What if those people go after Spho?" Sands: "You're the most dangerous person I know. I don't think you've got to worry." Lakhe: "Have you seen dad?" Sands: "Yep." Lakhe: "He's going to be fine." Sands: "I suppose." Lakhe: "Sandile." Sands: "What." Lakhe: "I'm trying." Sands: "You didn't even apologize. What are you trying for?" Lakhe: "I'm sorry. I was a jerk." Sands: "It's too late Lakhe. You hurt my feelings. As gay as it sounds. I'm actually a human being and things hurt me. You being one of them. I'm not just going to forget it." Lakhe: "I know. If there's anything you need, just let me know. Also, come home." Sands: "This is my home now." Lakhe: "Okay. I'll see you around." He turned to the door. Sands: "bhuti.." Lakhe turned to him. Lakhe: "Yeah..?" Sands: "I'm sorry. I had no excuse for being disrespectful to you. I should've.... are you okay?" Lakhe: "Yeah.. yea.. no actually." He held on the couch. Sandile jumped up. Sands: "bhuti?!" Lakhe collapsed on the floor. His eyes still open, unblinking, crisp white....

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Sandile stood up and went to fetch his phone. Dialing for Graham. Sands: "Grey? I need you here right now!! Please hurry!!" Graham: "I'm coming." He

hung up. The doors of the apartment opened. Komander stepped in. Sands: "I should've fucking known. You again?" Komander looked at Lakhe unconscious on the floor. Kom: "I didn't know he was here-" Sands: "WHAT DO YOU WANT!!! HAVEN'T YOU DONE ENOUGH DAMAGE ALREADY!!" Kom: "I can't stay long. Lakhe will be okay once I'm gone. I need you to take care of Spho. Here." He handed him the book. Kom: "Take care of her with everything you have. That baby is going to hurt her. I need to know you're there to help her." Sands: "Get out." Kom: "I'm not leaving until I have your word and be warned your brother is sinking deeper with every second." Sands: "Of course I'll protect Spho!!" Kom: "You don't let anyone see that book. You don't tell anyone you have it. Protect it the way you do with your heart. It is for your eyes only. Not even Graham. Not even Spho. Do you understand me?" Sands: "Are you trying to capture my soul again man? That shit won't fly this time around!" Kom: "If I wanted to capture your soul, I would've done it before I walked in here. Don't be stupid. I am trusting you with the only lead to a Komander succession bloodline. I just need Spho to be safe. I promised her I'd never hurt her. I only trust you. You're the only one in existence, who has genuine love for her. Please Sandile." Sands: "Fine. I won't tell anyone. But if you try that freaky shit man." Kom: "What freaky shit?" Something touched Sandile's ear. He jumped up and down. Sands: "THAT FUCKING FREAKY SHIT!! GET OUT!!" Komander laughed. Kom: "You're an idiot." He walked out. Sands: "The fuck!" He held his ear. Sands: "Mans, I need you to get up!! Can you hear me? Shit." 10 minutes later, Graham walked in. Graham: "Siya is parking the car, What happened here!!" Sands: "He just collapsed. Help him." Graham kneeled next to Lakhe, holding his face. Graham: "Oh Dear God. Komander is back." He held Lakhe's chest. Graham: "He's around somewhere. His demons are excessively heavy for Lakhe. There's too many of them. He was near him." Sands: "Is he going to be okay?" Lakhe gasped and blinked. His eyes returning back to normal. He struggled up to his feet. Lakhe: "What the...." Graham: "Hi." Siya walked in. Siya: "Komander is around." Sands: "How.." Siya: "I can feel his presence. His demons linger where he has been. They left as soon as Graham walked in." He stood in front of Sandile. Siya: "What was he doing here." Sands: "He came to say Hi." Siya: "Seriously Sandile, this is not a game. Lakhe is going to collapse into a demon infused coma every single time he's around. What was Komander doing here?" Sands: "He needs someone to protect Spho. He's worried about the baby." Graham: "Lam?" Sands: "No. Spho is pregnant." Siya stared at Masilakhe, balling his fists. Graham held him still. Graham: "No." Lakhe: "Leave him. I deserve it." Graham: "What is it going to help!!! She's already pregnant! We just need to work together right now. This can't be good." Siya: "What does he want? Why did he come back HERE. Lakhe doesn't live here." Sands: "He says he trusts me. And only me." Lakhe:

"He wants the baby." He sat down. Lakhe: "It belongs to him." Graham: "No. The baby doesn't belong to him. That's your son. We'll find a way. God did this for a reason. There has to be a way out." Lakhe: "I have to go-" Siya: "You can't." Lakhe: "Why the hell not." Graham: "You're an easy target for demons. It's easier for you to be close to either me or Spho. Spiritual power is the only one that can help you now." Lakhe: "Spho can't stand me. And I can't stand YOU. How will that work?" Graham: "The baby can't stand you. It is a destroyer. Before it's even out of her womb, it will begin to shift you. Break you. It will change you. Yoh cannot let it Lakhe. You have to refuse." Lakhe: "How do I do that?" Graham: "Give yourself to the Lord." Lakhe: "I'm out of here." Siya: "They will follow you." Lakhe: "I've had them in me before. I can handle it ." Siya: "Can you? Weren't you on the floor just a few minutes ago?" Lakhe: "Are we gonna have a problem?" Siya: "We already do. Stop being a damn nuisance. For once in your life, get some balls and take care of yourself. How are you gonna be a father to your kids if you can't correct yourself?" Lakhe: "I can't correct myself? By refusing to be in your gay cult!?" Siya: "The real cult is what you're running to right now!!" Lakhe: "I will knock you the fuck out. Keep talking." Siya: "You know it's the truth. You cannot handle that something is stronger than you. That's why you can't handle Spho-" Lakhe lunged out to grab him. Sandile blocked and held him still. Sands: "Stop it!! Can we let this shit go!!" Lakhe: "You better leave Spho out of this Siyanda!!" Siya: "Be a man Masilakhe. Spho risked her life to save yours. For once, be grateful there's someone in this world who'd die for you." He walked out. Graham: "Either way. You need help. I can't let you be attacked like this." Lakhe: "Why the fuck do you care!" Graham: "I actually really don't. But I'm not in the business of letting people die." Lakhe: "I don't need your help." He walked out. Graham: "Lakhe is in real danger." Sands: "He knows how to take care of himself." Graham: "Really? And when he collapses also? Komander is not leaving until he has that baby Sandile. You honestly cannot trust him." Sands: "Wouldn't it be better if he took the baby? Considering how dangerous it is." Graham: "I saw it. In my visions. Sandile it does not look good. That child is powerful. He will look exactly like Kadir and be much worse in action." Sands: "Then what do we do?" Graham: "I'll start fasting. I need more guidance. Call me if you need anything. I have to go. I left Niny by himself." Sands: "Okay." Graham: "Why didn't you tell me." Sands: "Tell you what?" Graham: "Spho." Sands: "It wasn't my place. Plus she wasn't okay when she found out." Graham: "Of course she wouldn't be okay." Sands: "Meaning?" Graham looked at him. Graham: "Because Lam is still too young..and everything she's been through. It actually makes sense that she survived the attack Lakhe did on her. That baby protected her. Under normal circumstances they both would've died. No matter how much of a bad

person you are, you still love your mommy." Sands: "I suppose." Graham: "Let me get going." He walked out, leaving Sandile by himself. He locked the doors and went to his bedroom, opening his safe. The book was stored there for the meantime. Sands: "I don't know why but I'll have to trust you this one time Komander." He closed the safe and double locked it.

Babalalo had been sitting in my lounge for almost an hour without a word out of his mouth. He didn't respond either. How did he get in? Even security didn't know. Me: "Okay. I'm getting you thrown out. I'm not gonna sit and wait here with you for whatever it is you're waiting for." Balo: "I'm his head of army. His guardian." Me: "Who." Balo: "Your baby." How the fuck did he know." Me: "How?" Balo: "Komander visited me. The spirit not your dad. He komanded me to take care of the breeder plus the king until he is born." Me: "This is not a Komander household. Take your little spirit, and get the fuck out. I can protect my baby and he will grow up as pure as possible. GET OUT!!" Balo: "The choice is not ours to make, Spho. It is difficult, I kno-" Me: "You don't! I will do everything to save this child. You and your friends can forget him. Out with you." He stood up and walked out. Me: "The fucking nerve." My phone rang. Tar. Me: "Hello?" I answered. Tar: "Hey." I waited. Tar: "I got the protection order ready for you. Should I bring it or?" Me: "No need. I'll go to court and sort it out." Tar: "I feel like you're mad at me." Me: "I'm not." Tar: "I'm really not a great guy Spho. You're too much of a good person. You don't deserve someone like me." Me: "I did say okay before." Tar: "I just don't want things to change between us. I enjoy having you as a friend." Me: "Perhaps we should keep things professional." Tar: "Dont do this." Me: "Don't do what?" He kept quiet. I took out my pots to start cooking. Tar: "Fine. We'll talk some other time." I swallowed a lump in mg throat. I didn't think he'd let it go just like that. Me: "Ok." Tar: "I hope you forgive me. I don't want you hurt. Friendship is the only thing I can offer you." Me: "How many damn times must I say OKAY!" I snapped. Where the hell did that come from. Me: "I'm sorry." I muttered. Tar: "It's cool." I was going to cook samp and beef stew although I felt like insides(ulusu).. he still kept on the phone quietly. Me: "Is there anything you want to say? I'm gonna start cooking." Tar: "No. I just... never mind. We'll talk later." He hung up. Wow. I started my cooking. A couple hours later. Chris walked in, Sandile and Dubs right behind him. Sands: "Hey you." Me: "Hey. Thanks for fetching them. Hello dubs." Dubs: "Yuh mntanam, hello. Khawume ndiyothoba istress." (My child, hello. Let me go relieve stress) Chris: "Dubs is stressed because of the kids at school. They're alot." Me: "And are you helping her?" Chris: "Yes. I chase them away." I kissed his head. Me: "I want you to do me a favor. Remember the money you collected from your friends at school?"

I need it back sweetie." Chris: "Okay." He went to his room. Sands: "Where's Nipple-man?" Me: "He's asleep. Hectic upset because I made him stop the nipple." Sands: "Yeah I'd be mad as hell too." He took the bag I almost didn't notice to the bedroom. He came back in a few seconds. Me: "So...what's with the bag?" Sands: "Nothing." Me: "Your apartment being repainted?" Sands: "No." Me: "Girlfriend threw you out?" Sands: "She wouldn't dare. I just miss you and the kids." Me: "You're hiding something." Sands: "No I'm not." Me: "I know you. What is it?" Sands: "Don't freak out but Komander is around. He came to see me." Me: "I figured he might be around but why would he come see you?" Sands: "He wants me to make sure you're okay." Me: "Alright. I'm sure he didn't say move in." Sands: "No he didn't." Me: "What's really going on? You're very welcome here, anytime. I just need to know if everything is okay." Sands: "I'm scared. His demons linger everywhere he goes. Lakhe collapsed just before he even appeared. That's how powerful those things are. What if they're still in my apartment waiting for me to switch off my lights and sleep then they appear, wanting to play and twerk on my bed?" A giggle escaped my lips before I could stop it. Imagine demons twerking on your bed. Sandile is a lot yazi. Me: "I understand your predicament and it's true they're probably still lingering around your building. You just need to pray strongly and chase them away. It's not easy but it needs to be done." Sands: "Graham was there. I'll ask him again. Lakhe only woke up like 10 minutes later. Imagine." Me: "Those demons aren't powerful. They're just too many. And the only reason they affect Lakhe is because he's just been stripped off their cult or whatever it is and he's harboring a lot of anger with him. His thoughts alone can trigger demonic activities or in his case, summon them." Sands: "So what must he do." Me: "He has to pray. He needs to get spiritually stronger." I went to the kitchen to check on dinner. He followed behind me. Sands: "Can't you do it?" Me: "No." Sands: "You know Lakhe better than anyone. He's not gonna pray." Me: "Not my business if he wants to kill himself. Hey did you see my new security? I have to introduce you to them if you gonna be here for a while because they won't let you in if nobody's home." Sands: "Okay." He peeped in the pot. Me: "How is your father?" Sands: "Recovering. He'll be discharged tomorrow. He's upset about his company being swiped from under him though." Me: "He'll get the company. He needs to focus on getting himself better- Where is this child? Christian!!" Chris: "Mama?" He came into the kitchen with a book and a money bag. I switched off the stove. Sands: "Nooo." Me: "This will take a minute." I took the book and looked through it. Names. His classmates. He can write?? Amounts next to the names. There was a page for Monday, Tuesday and the rest of the week till Friday. What the... Me: "Where'd you get this?" Chris: "It's mine." At the bottom of Friday, there it was written 'Total'.. He can spell Wednesday but not Total? Okay. This kid was making money. Me:

"You can't write. Let alone calculate." Chris: "I can now. Julie taught me." Of course she did. I showed Sandile. Me: "What do I do with this?" I whispered. Sands: "Give it back to him. He can take care of himself." Me: "No! That's a school, not a.... spaza shop." Sands: "He recorded each and every amount every classmate paid him. Buy him ice cream." Me: "It's a good thing you don't want kids." I turned to Chris. Me: "Honey. We're giving this money back to the kids okay? This is not allowed. Chris: "If you give them the money back, they'll find another way of spending it. They won't give it to their mommies. Which is going to be worse because it will be wasted recklessly on candy. They're all gonna get sick mama." I have never been so confused. Let alone challenged by a four year old. Sands: "What do you suggest she do then?" Chris: "Keep it. Or give it to Teacher Stacy. She can put it in the jar bank we have at school. Every punishment, we can pay the jar R2 to activate our time out. Obviously still spending time being punished because honestly it's the only time I get some peace in class. Then maybe ending the year we buy Teacher Stacy a present to thank her for taking care of us." I looked at Sandile. I had tears in my eyes. What did I do to deserve such a beautiful child. Sands: "That's a great idea mans. Put it here." He fist bumped him. Me: "Okay sweetie. I'll speak to Teacher Stacy." Chris: "You can't. It has to be a surprise. Just tell her we're saving money for the school garden." Me: "Okay my angel." Chris: "Don't cry mama. I'm gonna cry if you cry." His voice quivered. Me: "I'm just happy baby." I hugged him. Me: "Happy that you're mine. Don't ever change your good heart okay? I want you to stay this sweet. You're a little King. Keep respecting your elders and taking care of the women around you. Forever." Chris: "Okay." I kissed his cheek. Me: "You can go take your afternoon nap now-" Chris: "Oh Thank goodness. My knees were getting loose." He ran to his room. I laughed. Sands: "Kid loves his sleep more than any human I know. He even beats Boogie in sleeping." Me: "He beats his little brother. And Lam is an actual baby who has nothing else to do." Sands: "So I see you're avoiding the Lakhe topic. Why don't you help him?" Me: "Lakhe has to help himself. I'm not his mom." Sands: "He's not that strong. You know that." Me: "Since when are you his advocate?" Sands: "He just seems broken. You should see him Spho." Me: "Oh I did see him. We made it clear that we're only co-parenting." Sands: "Okay. I'm hungry." Me: "Take out the plates." Sands: "Where's Vuyi?" Me: "She said she's going to the movies with a friend." Sands: "She doesn't have friends." Me: "Of course she does. She's a young woman." Sands: "Trust me. She's not at the movies with no friend." Me: "Where then? Why would she lie?" Sands: "Because she doesn't think you'll approve of her man." Me: "Why won't I approve?" Sands: "Because it's not exactly a man." Me: "You're confusing me." Sands: "Her man is a woman." Me: "You're saying Vuyi is lesbian?" Sands: "Yes." He wiped the plates. Me: "How

would you know?" Sands: "How won't I know? I keep tabs on every single person in my family. Like how you've been hanging with Tar." Me: "I wouldn't judge Vuyi for her sexual orientation. If she wants to be straight, lesbian or bi. It's not my place to judge. I just thought she was straight since I met one boyfriend of hers when I was in East London." Sands: "Maybe she's bisexual. Why are you avoiding the Tar topic?" Me: "I'm not." Sands: "You like him." Me: "I don't." Sands: "You're scared he might hurt you too? Or you're scared he might not. Perhaps you're still in love with Lakhe and you're hating yourself for it." Me: "Do you want to eat or not?" Sands: "My mouth is shut." I dished up our dinner. My appetite already dead. A quick flash of a picture ran through my mind. I closed my eyes and focused. There he was. Unresponsive. Stone cold. Me: "Can I borrow your car?" Sands: "Sure thing. Aren't you gonna eat?" Me: "Please feed the boys when they wake up. I'll bath them when I come back." I took his keys and drove his car out the yard.

I parked in front of Komanders house. Kadir to be exact. I walked to the front door and opened it, stepping inside. He stood there looking straight at me. Me: "You have some thick nerve." Kom: "I came to fix some things. I won't be here longer than tonight." Me: "Why should I believe you?" Kom: "Because you know deep down in your heart, I'm not here to harm you." Me: "I want you to listen carefully. You are going to stay away from Sandile, Masilakhe, My children and my close friends. Should anything happen to anyone of them, I will look for you and I'll find you then do you what I was supposed to do the first time I found you. Burn you alive. Get out of this city. I'm giving you two hours before I lose my mind. TWO. And take your brother with you." Kom: "That baby is making you really ferocious. Just don't let it consume you into violence." Me: "That was my last warning." I walked out, driving to Lakhe's house. The gate was open. Very unusual for him. I drove in and walked to the door. The evil aura was hanging heavily all over the estate. I walked in the door where a Caucasian woman was standing, with a notebook and pen in her hand. "Can I help you?" She asked. Me: "Where is he." She: "Who?" Me: "The owner of this house." She: "Your name?" I walked to the bedroom. She: "Hey!! You can't go in there!" Lakhe was laying in bed, drenched in sweat. A doctor attending to him. Me: "Get out." Doc: "You can't be in here. He's running a fever." Me: "I don't care. Leave." I sat on the bed. The demons were weighing down hard on his soul. It would only be a matter of time that nothing in him is left and just a shell. Big bold woman came in with security. She: "Get her out!" Lakhe: "Leave her." He breathed. She: "Boss. She is not on the list." Lakhe: "My wife doesn't need a list. She IS the list." She huffed and walked out. Lakhe: "Leave us." The doctor stood up and followed out too.

Lakhe: "What did you see." Me: "You dying. Slowly." Lakhe: "Guess it's just a matter of time then. It's true what they say, you don't leave the Komanders alive." Me: "I just need to keep everyone out of this room for a while. I need to revive it. No other energy can be inside while I work. Are you going to let me?" Lakhe: "That baby won't let you." Me: "The baby inside of me is not my master." Lakhe: "Go ahead then. Kill me."

#183

Lakhe lay in his bed, still and unresponsive. Like I'd seen him in my vision. The white woman was banging on the locked door making it very difficult to focus. I'd spent the last two hours praying violently and I was exhausted by now. I had candles lit in the bedroom to illuminate natural light instead of opening windows. Me: "God. You created Masilakhe. You know the inner depths of him. The number of hairs on his head. The alignment of tissue and fibre in his body. YOU are His creator, nobody else. I ask that rebuke all spirits that reside in his body dear Lord. Heal his soul and put together the brokenness. You are Jehovah-Rapha, the God who heals. You are the one with the final word. We come to You asking for divine healing and strength. I ask for your angels to descend and create new breath through his lungs and new life." "Why are you weak." I opened my eyes and saw Queen Mother sitting on the bed. I could not help but feel irritated. She always appeared when she felt like it and left me to deal with a problem until the last moments. Me: "I am not weak. I am tired." Mother: "Masi is relying on your power only." Me: "Masi knows I'm trying my best. This baby is weighing me down." Lakhe: "Baby is not your master." I looked at him. He had his eyes open. I knelt next to him. Lakhe: "You've been praying for two hours straight." Me: "I need to help you heal properly." Lakhe: "I feel better." He closed his eyes. I looked at Queen Mother. Me: "I'm sorry I snapped at you." Mother: "Hold him." I held Lakhe's hands. Mother: "He needs you strong. Hold on to him." I looked at him. Mother: "The next few months will be difficult Spho. You will need to take care of yourself, your children and your husband." Me: "Ex. We're divorced." Mother: "Be that as it may, you'll still take care of him. He has no one else but you. You're Queen of Pure blood, my angel. Caring for someone is in your blood. Look how you've destroyed the Evil aura in this bedroom. It is soaked in love because of you. Do not lose that element of yourself. It will protect you from the unborn King." And she disappeared. Lakhe: "Please hold me." Me: "I am holding you." Lakhe: "I can't feel it Spho." I climbed on the bed next to him and snuggled him in between my legs with his head on my chest. Lakhe: "My breast friends." Me: "I will leave." Lakhe: "Sorry." I brushed his head silently. Me:

"Father I'm giving you my all, worship at your feet. We come to Your presence. Our hearts yearn for you. We're singing for your glory, we are praising You dear father. Cover our family with the blood of Jesus Christ. Bring us Lord, to the place where you're vacant. We want to feel your love. We want to be touched by your grace. Dearest Comforter of the troubled, alleviate our worry and sorrow with Your gentle love, and grant us the grace and strength to accept this burden. We place our worries in Your hands. We ask that You restore Your servant to health again." Lakhe: "He's gone." I sighed in relief. Me: "Repeat after me. Dear Lord, it is my will to surrender to you everything that I am and everything that I'm striving to be." Lakhe: "Dear Lord, it is my will to surrender to you everything that I am and everything that I'm striving to be." Me: "I open the deepest recesses of my heart and invite Your Holy Spirit to dwell inside of me. I offer you my life, heart, mind, body, soul and spirit." Lakhe: "I open the deepest recesses of my heart and invite Your Holy Spirit to dwell inside of me. I offer you my life, heart, mind, body, soul and spirit." Me: "I surrender to you my past, present and future problems. I ask You to take hold over every aspect of my life. I surrender to You all my hurt, pain, worry, doubt, fear and anxiety, and I ask You to wash me clean. I release everything into Your compassionate care." Lakhe: "I surrender to you my past, present and future problems. I ask You to take hold over every aspect of my life. I surrender to You all my hurt, pain, worry, doubt, fear and anxiety, and I ask You to wash me clean. I release everything into Your compassionate care." Me: "Amen." Lakhe: "Amen." Me: "I need to let Miss Body builder in before she calls the cops." Lakhe: "In who's house?" Me: "Still. I have to go home. The kids are waiting." Lakhe: "You can't leave me here by myself Spho. Please. I am begging you." Me: "The children need me. And we're not together." Lakhe: "The children have Dubs. I don't have anyone. I know we're not together anymore. My mom and dad live together still and they're divorced too. We are not that complicated. This house is massive enough as is...and..." he coughed. Me: "I was wondering where you're getting all that confidence to speak regularly when you've just avoided the grave." Lakhe: "Funny." Me: "I hear what you're saying Lakhe but it's not a good idea." Lakhe: "Are you afraid that you're going to want me? It is rather troubling." Me: "I don't want you. I'm not going to." Lakhe: "Oh... you think I'll seduce you?" Me: "No." I couldn't bring myself to say to tell him. Lakhe: "Then what is it?" Me: "We're going to confuse the kids." Lakhe: "I don't understand that but okay. I guess I'll just have to accept your decision." Me: "Niny can come stay with you-" Lakhe: "You mean the demon? Wow." Me: "Niny is not a demon and you know that!" Lakhe: "I don't care. The fact that he was a part of them traumatized me enough Spho. I do not want those things near me! Look, I almost died twice!" Me: "Okay. Graham then?" Lakhe: "You mean your ex's

best friend." Me: "Graham has helped Siyanda thoroughly. He's prayed for and with him. He healed him daily after the demons took off." Lakhe: "I am not Siyanda." Me: "Why are you so stubborn? You wanted to be healed and now you don't? You need to make a decision Masilakhe do you want those things to creep up on you again and kill you. Or do you want to raise your kids peacefully and LIVE." Lakhe: "How could you even ask me that!! I saw her Spho." Me: "Who?" Lakhe: "Our daughter. She was so beautiful. Just like you. I want to take care of you and her." He kissed my stomach. Me: "This is a boy. Komander, Babalo even queen Mother call him King." Lakhe: "Just because she's a girl doesn't mean she can't be King. I know what I saw." He positioned his head again. Lakhe: "Big beautiful brown eyes. She had this huge smile on her face, mouth open type. I love her so much. We have to protect her. She's my little princess. God, I've wanted a daughter." I was so confused now. I know very well that Babalo and Komander both referred to the baby as he and so did Queen Mother. All three of which know our dilemma. Lakhe: "Don't stress please. Whether the baby is a boy or girl." Me: "You're right." Lakhe: "You're still stressing." Me: "Of course I am. She'll be full dark. Imagine what she'll do to Lam-" Lakhe: "I will never let that happen. Ever." Me: "I have been praying every single day since I came back from hospital. Yet there's no indication that this baby will be pure." Lakhe: "It's still early to tell. We have 8 months ahead to prepare. Anything can happen." Me: "I'm just tired Lakhe. Everything happens a tad little late for me. I have to fight and grovel the whole time." Lakhe: "Nothing good ever comes easy. Look at you. You were difficult for me in our relationship because you challenged me a lot. I couldn't take it at times so I acted out childishly." Me: "Thank you for admitting that." Lakhe cut you had your moments too." Me: "I wasn't childish." Lakhe: "You were childish and you know it." I giggled. He pulled himself up. Me: "You okay?" I helped him to my side. Lakhe: "Yeah." Me: "Should I call Graham?" Lakhe: "Sure." He looked away. Me: "I left Sandile with the kids. Sooner or later he will panic. You know him." Lakhe: "So he can stay with you but I can't." Me: "He just rocked up at my door. He was afraid Komander left his demons in his place." Lakhe: "So he gets shelter and I don't." Me: "Who's being childish now?" Lakhe: "Sandile." Me: "Ndikshiye?" Lakhe: "Of course, all three of your babies are waiting." I looked at him. He was hurt. Why did I just not care? Like a plug switched off.

Sandile was in the lounge with Chris and Lam on his lap. Chris: "Uncle Sandile." Sands: "What." Chris: "Why are you upset?" Sands: "I'm not upset boy, what's up?" Chris: "Okay. You want to play a game?" Sands: "Does it include you sleeping?" Chris: "That's funny but no." He stood up. Chris: "We're gonna have

to wiggle our legs first." Sands: "I am not wiggling my legs Chris." Chris: "It is part of the game." Sands: "I have a better game-" Chris: "I'm not going to sleep until my mom is back." Sands: "I will pay you." Chris: "I'm a wealthy boy Uncle Sandile." Sands: "You are you father's son. In every aspect." Chris: "Would you like a scone?" Sands: "Is it for sale?" Chris: "Of course it is. I'm running a business here." Sands: "Gosh. Luckily, here's your mum." Chris ran to the door and waited as the door pushed open. Chris: "Mama!!" I walked in and received a very warm hug. Me: "Good evening my angel. Why aren't you sleeping?" Chris: "Waiting for you mama." Me: "Okay. Thanks baby. But I need you to sleep. It's late." Chris: "Come tuck me in." He pulled me to his bedroom and I tucked him in bed. Chris: "Sing for me mama." Me: "Uhm. The duck parade?" Chris: "No that's my happy song. I want my sleep song." Me: "Sleep little lion, your mommy watches over you. The world will be waiting when you wake... Your mouth will roar, the earth will shake while mommy makes you a chocolate milkshake." He giggled. Me: "You need to sleep honey." Chris: "Mom. When is daddy coming home?" Me: "Do you miss him?" Chris: "Yeah." Me: "He misses you too. I saw him just now. I'll take you to him tomorrow." Chris: "Are you divorcing?" I sighed. Me: "Yes baby but I don't want you worrying about that. Me and your dad love you and Lam very much." Chris: "Then why? Do you hate each other?" Me: "No. We love each other alot. Too much. And too much love sometimes is suffocating." Chris: "Oh. Did you try the breathing exercises?" Me: "We did sweetie. We will always be here for you and your siblings. Tomorrow, I'll take you to him so that you can see him. And see that we love each other. We want to spend the day with you, playing with you." Chris: "I want us to live with him. I want to wake up at night when I have a nightmare and climb on his chest. He brushes my head and tells me to sleep. I want him to steal ice cream for me before dinner in the kitchen when you're not looking. I want to watch TV with him. Mama, I miss my daddy." I hugged him. Me: "I'm sorry baby. We'll try our best. I promise." Chris: "Try your best to stay with him. He's not a bad man mama. I don't want to live with aunty. Daddy loves mama mos not her." This child was breaking my heart. Me: "It's time for you to sleep my little lion." Chris: "Promise me you won't give up on daddy. I don't ask for much, do I? This is the only time, I promise." I was just defeated now. Me: "No you dont my angel. You can ask me for anything, anytime. And I promise. Sleep." He closed his eyes. Chris: "Love you mama." Me: "I love you too Christie cakes." ..

I went back in the lounge where Sandile still was. Me: "Time for bed peanut." Lam looked up at me and grinned. Me: "Don't give me that, baby. It's time to go." I picked him up. Me: "You okay?" I asked his uncle. Sands: "I'm just

thinking alot. About work. Chris been asking me some difficult questions also." Me: "About his dad?" Sands: "Yes. Where did he hear about divorce?" Me: "Obviously Julie told him. I just hate that my child is seeking out comfort from his friend. What kind of mom does that make me?" Sands: "You're a good mom Sphe. Chris is a kid. He's obviously going to talk. The important thing is that you and Lakhe don't shut him out. Give him a platform to express his feelings to you. He's your first born and the only one of your kids that understand communication." Me: "He wants me back with his father. Telling me not to give up on him Sandile." He looked at the TV. Me: "Did you tell him to do that? Sandile are you influencing the child?" Sands: "Of course not! I would never do that. I told Chris to ask any questions he had from you or his father. I couldn't answer him and he stopped." Me: "I know you told him about giving up." Sands: "Well. I'm not admitting anything." I sat down and gave him the baby. Me: "We had an amazing family. We were really happy. I ruined it. I made the mistake of trusting an actual demon. Inviting him into our lives and he tore it apart. Komander tore us all apart. Each and every one of us. I broke us and now there's no going back. Our only option is to rebuild. It's just never going to be the sa-" I stopped breathing and choked holding on to my throat. Sands: "Sphe!!" He put down the baby. Sands: "Dubs!!!!" Pulling my hand. Something was constricting my airway violently so. I could feel the life ebbing put of me and suddenly my eyes slowly covered with black lace....

#184

Sandile held Sphe's chest and forehead. Sands: "Spiritum. Ne regno Dei." She gasped and opened her eyes. Dubs stared at him. Me: "What..just happened?" Sands: "It's the baby." I sat up. Me: "I have to ..." I stood up and took Lam. He was fast asleep. When I picked him up he woke and started crying. Dubs: "Uyaphi Sphe?" Me: "Ndiyothandaza Dabawo." I locked the bedroom door behind me. Dabawo looked at Sandile. Dubs: "Wenzeni?" Sands: "Nothing Dubs." Dubs: "Ndikubonile! Yinton le ubuyithetha before Sphe aphakame? Kutheni khona ezoveske abenjeya ehleli nawe?" Sands: "Dabawo ndithandaze amagama amathathu qha!" Dubs: "Ndiyilazi olalwimi..." She walked to her bedroom and came back carrying a sjambok. Sands: "Haibo Dabawo!!" Dubs: "Sandile uze nama demon apha kulendu?!" Sands: "Dabawo andinama demon mna!" Dubs: "Yinton le buyithetha?" Sands: "heee udaba-" She whipped his leg and he jumped. Dubs: "Andihlali nama demon ke mna!! Uzayikhupha inyani! Hey you!! Zikhuphe!! Nge Gama lika Yesu Krestu! Ndiku tshiza ngegazi lemvana!! Fire!!" Sands: "What the fuck... Dabawo!! SPHE!!!" She whipped his back and he ran out to the car. He got in

and sped all the way to Siyanda; arriving in 5 minutes flat. Sands: "Siya!!" He knocked on the door. Siya: "Break it like your brother did. Break it twice more." He opened. Sands: "Get the fuck out my way!" He stormed in and took off his shirt staring at the mirror. Siya: "And then?" Sands: "Bruh. Dabawo just whooped my arse!" Siya held his mouth. Siya: "Why?" Sands: "She's saying I have demons and she's whipping them out of me with a sjambok." Niny rolled on the floor laughing. Sands: "Siyanda. I don't have demons man." Siya: "Then why did you run?" Sands: "What else was I supposed to do? Let her whip me for nothing? My God. I finally realized why people fake falling down when the pastor touches them. Imagine someone telling you have demons when you clearly don't." Siya: "But you ran. Runners have demons." He giggled. Sands: "I'm glad you find this funny. This lady literally attacked me." Siya: "Okay. Tell me why she thinks this." Sands: "Fine. But you can't freak out." Siya: "You definitely have demons." Sands: "Mxim." Siya: "Fine. Talk to me. Sit." Sands: "So.. remember when Komander came over?" Siya: "Yes." Sands: "He gave me something to help Spfo when she's in danger because of that baby. He made me promise not to tell." Siya: "You just broke a Komander promise. You know the consequences of that right?" Sands: "I do. But I haven't broken the promise yet because you don't know what he gave me." Siya: "He gave you the book?" Sands: "No." Siya: "Then what?" Sands: "It doesn't matter. So Spfo was....Wait, where's Graham?" Siya: "With Lakhe. Spfo begged him to go. Carry on. Spfo was what?" Sands: "Spfo was chilling in the lounge with me and Lam when she suddenly stopped breathing. One of the things Komander relayed was how to handle it. I panicked for a minute. But she was fine after. Dubs saw me say those words and she automatically assumes it's from the evil side." Siya: "What were the words?" Sands: " spiritum. Ne regno Dei." Siya: "Niny?" Niny: "To breath. Let the...God to reign." Sands: "I thought you understood this language." Siya: "My demon understood the language. So, breath, let God Reign you said. Well I understand Dubs' fury. It does sound dodgy." Sands: "Man, I need to go home." Siya: "Why didn't Spfo help you?" Sands: "She's praying in her bedroom and you know she won't stop until morning." Siya: "Then sleep here. We'll go there in the morning." Sands: "Siyanda, she whooped me." Siya closed the door laughing. Siya: "And you ran like a demon on fire." Sands: "What exactly would you have done?" Siya: "I would have apologized and prayed. Lay on the couch, let me check your wounds." Sands: "Why is Niny so amused?" Siya: "I gave him a glass of wine. He promised to behave." Sands: "This is him behaving? What does he do when he's not?" Siya: "Dances all over the house all night." Sands: "How is that a bad thing?" Siya: "He wakes me up in the middle of the night to dance Sandile." Sands: "Yeah I see the problem." Siyanda checked the marks on his body and applied soft ointment. Siya: "There. You hungry?" Sands: "I could eat." Siya

went to dish up some pizza slices and heated them up, serving Sandile.

Sands: "I miss Siby." Siy: "Is that why you're trying to replace him with me?"

Sands: "Probably." He ate. Sands: "You think I was wrong? By listening to Komander after everything he's done to us?" Siya: "No. Komander is a cruel person but he loves his kids. If he wanted you to look after Spho, he meant it."

Sands: "Yeah but what about the demons? I'm afraid they might latch on to me or something." Siya: "You pray before you sleep. You pray again when you wake. Invite God into life and don't let anything else shake you. Demons won't even come near you." Sands: "Really? Just that?" Siya: "Yes. It's really not that hard. For us ordinary people, praying to God should be about opening our hearts to Him, connecting. Placing in His hands what we need protected. Being grateful. Asking for guidance and obviously praying for those we love. It shouldn't even take more than 5 minutes of your time. Spho takes long because she has a huge responsibility. She has many lives at stake, counting on her. I actually feel really sorry for her, I just want to take the pain away."

Sands: "She's in pain?" Siya: "Those visions she has physically impact her. Unlike Graham. Hers are more vivid and real. It hurts. Which is why sometimes she shuts down." Sands: "You seem to understand her more than anyone I know." Siya: "I suppose." Sands: "Take her out. On a date. Just give her some nice time." Siya: "I don't think it's the right time." Niny: "He wants to." He nodded.

Sands: "There never will be a right time. She needs to relax now more than ever." Siya: "Lakhe is in her life again. They're going to get back together." Sands: "Spho is over him." He tossed the last bite in his mouth. Siya: "What do you mean?" Sands: "I mean. She had the option of taking care of him and staying with him tonight but she called Graham to do it instead. Plus.. she told me." Siya: "Still. Lakhe and Spho have kids, plus one on the way. I don't want to complicate things." Sands: "You're taking her out to dinner tomorrow. It's done. Goodnight." He walked to his room. Siya: "This isn't a good idea." Niny: "You say, to always have hope. Maybe this is gret idea." Siya: "What if she says no?" Niny: "At least, try." Siya: "Spho isn't interested in me." Niny: "I cut your hair in morning time. Smell nice. Wear nice. She say yes." Siya: "Okay. Fine. I'll give her a call." Niny: "No. You arrive. It's a, surprise!" Siya: "Alright Niny. Come on. It's bed time." Niny: "Aww." Siya: "Yes. Get up there. Go." He marched him to his room.

The next morning I woke up to Lam staring at me. I must have fallen asleep while praying. He touched my lips with his tiny hand. I let him be. We lay in bed staring at each other like that until he removed his hand and looked up at the ceiling. He closed his eyes after that. Me: "Lam?" No response. "He's connecting." I looked up and saw Queen Mother. Mother: "Your son is feeling

your pain." Me: "Mother I can't do anything about the way I feel. I AM in pain. Look at how swollen I'm getting and I'm just entering the second month." Mother: "It gets better. Just don't get Lam too frustrated. His anger is not to be played with either." Anger? Mother: "Lam is pure. He is you. He feels what you feel. And he can destroy same way as you." Me: "What will we do about the Unborn?" Mother: "It will all be revealed, queen. This is part of the plan." Me: "I don't want my children hurt. Will he hurt Lam?" Mother: "Lam is the only one who can kill that baby. You need to let him." Me: "No. You can't turn my baby into a Killer!" Mother: "He is not a killer. He is the restorer of peace." And with that she disappeared. Lam opened his eyes. He looked at me. Me: "Baby. You're not going to do this. You are not going to. We will find a way. God will pull through as he always does. Abraham was ordered by God to sacrifice his son. And just as he was about to, God provided a lamb in his place. At the last moment. We just need to have faith in him. Okay? Come, let's get you bathed." I picked him up. He had his mouth open, ready to breast feed. Me: "No, remember we don't do that anymore?" I took his bottle to feed him and he started screaming. Okay wow. What now? I managed to struggle it into his mouth but he spat it out. Me: "Come on Lam." He didn't budge. Someone knocked on my door. I unlocked it and Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "He doesn't want the bottle." I sat on the bed. Lakhe: "Give him his breast." Me: "He can't-" Lakhe: "Give it to him." I pulled out the boob and Lam immediately latched on with a smile on his face. Me: "Suhleka." He sucked and held his hand on my breast, his eyes fluttering. Me: "He's not supposed to be breast feeding." Lakhe: "If the unborn was to die, it would've happened weeks ago. Sharing milk with his brother won't do him any harm. How are you?" Me: "I'm fine. When did you get here?" Lakhe: "About a minute ago." Me: "Why?" Lakhe: "I missed my kids. Plus Graham needs to talk to you. And Sandile called me yesterday, he said uDubs was trying to kill him." Me: "Why would dubs try to..." I stood up. Lakhe: "Leave them and focus on the baby. You need to stop running around after everyone. Relax. I'll take care of it." Me: "Why?" Lakhe: "I'm the father of these kids. It's my job to give you a break. You can't do everything yourself. Besides, Sandile and Dabawo are supposed to be my responsibility. They need to know that stressing you is not okay. I got this." I didn't trust him. What was he up to? I burped Lam and gave him to his father then made my bed opening the windows. Dubs was yelling in the lounge and I honestly don't know why. Lakhe: "Let me go fix that." He walked out. I followed after him. Lakhe: "Dubs... Dubs!" She was carrying a shoe waving it in the air. Dubs: "Tshin Thiza Vuyi Seka!! Kuya awteka apha! Uya awta!" Lakhe: "DUBS." Sandile walked in. Dubs: "Yuuuh! Ndiyalingwa." She marched to her room. Graham was having tea in the dining table. Siya walked in with Sandile and Niny. It was a full house. Dubs came back with a

whip. Where the ..? Lakhe: "DABAWO!!!" Everyone stood still. Lakhe: "What is going on in this house!" Dabawo huffed and puffed. I was holding in a laugh actually. Lakhe: "Dubs." Dubs: "Naba ooSandile bathetha amalwimi amadimoni! OoSpho baya fainter! OoVuyiseka baya awta! Ndidinekile Masilakhe. Lendlu ayilawulekanga!" Lakhe: "Wait... woah... Spho fainted?" He looked at me. Me: "It's nothi-" Sands: "The baby. He gets agitated temporarily. I was shown how to calm and help her. Qha! Ask Siya!" Siya: "Ask me what? I wasn't there!" Sands: "You promised!" Siya: "I promised I'd bring you home. Nothing else." Lakhe: "Spho, why didn't you tell me this?" He stepped closer. Me: "When? You walked in, we talked about the baby, fed him, and then this happened." Lakhe: "We're going to talk about this. Sandile, what is this demon tongue you're talking in." Sands: "I said-" Dubs: "You don dare!!!!" Niny: "It means, Breath. Let God Reign." Lakhe: "Okay. Uyeva Dubs? And Niny doesn't lie. He actually can't. Now that's sorted, Vuyiseka. How old are you?" Vuyi: "20 bhuti." Lakhe: "Okay. This is Spho's house. You cannot come and go as you please. Unless she and your mother collectively approve it. They will discuss your curfew options. I don't want to hear you've disappeared again. A lot of things are happening out there. You are my sister. That's all I'm saying. Same as Nosi. Sandile, find me that girl. Umama noTata are too lenient on her allowance. Spho, would it be too much if she could stay here please? Dabawo will take care of her. I'll pay rent if possible. I don't want these girls running around." Look at you, Mr CEO. Me: "Because it's Nosi. She can stay. She'll share with Vuyi. And you know my account number. Thanks." Lakhe: "Sandile, you're going back to your house. End of discussion-" Sands: "But-" Lakhe: "Now." Sandile stared at Graham. Sands: "Snitch." Graham: "I didn't even say anything." Sands: "Ubumsaphi!!!" He walked to the room. Lakhe: "Where is my first born?" Dubs: "Uphandle. In his garden." Sands: "Oh and Spho? Siya has something he wants to say to you!" He yelled down the passage. Siya: "It's nothing-" Niny: "He's taking you out on a date!!!" He lifted his fist in celebration. Lakhe stared at Siyanda. Siya: "Perhaps another tim-" Me: "I'd love to go out on a date. I haven't in a very long time. Actually since Lam was born." Lakhe stared at me. Me: "You're good to baby sit right? Thank you! You're an amazing dad." I walked out to the garden for Chris. Me: "Hi sweetie." Chris: "Hi mama." Me: "How's my cupcake?" Chris: "I'm not sure. Where did you leave it?" I laughed. He smiled. Chris: "Here you go." He handed me a pink rose. Me: "It's beautiful my angel. Your dad is here." Chris: "Really?" Me: "Yeah. Go check inside the house." He ran to the house. I followed him. The tension was palpable. Lakhe stood in the middle of the living room. Graham and Dubs were sitting in the dining table. Siya and Niny sitting on the couch. Sands: "So.. is it a yes?" Me: "Of course. I just need about an hour. Do you mind Siya?" Siya: "You're worth it." Lakhe: "Heh." I went to take

a shower thinking what I would wear. After my shower, I cleansed my face and went to look for clothes. I pulled on my white high waist jeggings. I can only enjoy this slim tummy for another week or two. I wore a mustard floral crop blouse that clipped a few centimeters under my boobs. It was a V-neck shaped open all the way down, with long sleeves. My boobs were perched up and cleavage peeking out. Someone is gonna cry. I sat comfortably and did my make to perfection. Contoured and Highlighted to the gods. I fixed up my short hair and slipped on beige stilletoes. I was ready to go. When I stepped out the room. Sandile was waiting by the kitchen. Sands: "SNAAAATCHED!!!" He screamed. Sands: "Demmit!!!! Look at you!!" Me: "Stop it." I blushed. Sands: "Siya, look at your date Mans!! Dear God. I damn near fainted. Whooooooooo girl!" Lakhe was sucking his teeth, fiddling with Lam. Siya: "You look Gorgeous Spho. Wow." Me: "Thank you Siya. Up here." I lifted his chin. Siya: "Sorry." He blushed. Graham: "You two have a great time. We'll keep the house standing here." Me: "Thank you Graham." Lakhe: "And the baby?" He bellowed. Me: "He has you Tata." Lakhe: "Lam doesn't want ordinary milk. He wants his mother's breast. Must he wait till you're back from your date?" Sands: "Lam has milk ready in the fridge, I can talk to him. We have a bond. You two, go have fun. Okay? Siya, you a lucky man." Lakhe: "Mxim." Sands: "Did you say something bhuti?" Lakhe: "Ndithe mxim Sandile!" He snapped. Siya: "Lets go before he locks the house." He led me to his car...

If you've ever had a whole day date, literally laughing and smiling all day. Me: "Where are you taking me now?" Siya: "A friend of mine is having an art exhibition. Then wine tasting. There's gonna be a band and everything." Me: "But I'm not dressed for that.." it was in the afternoon nearing 4pm. Siya: "You gonn be the sexiest person there. All eyes on you." Me: "You're not that good with flattery." He parked in front of a tall glass building. Siya: "You're beautiful Spho." Me: "Thank you Siya." Siya: "Shall we?" We got out the car and walked to the venue. At the door greeted with a card and glass of wine. Me: "So what type of exhibition? Paintings?" Siya: "Photography apparently." Me: "I didn't know you were friends with photographers." Siya: "Me neither but I got an invitation so I thought, why not." Me: "Are you sure it's not because you have money?" He laughed. Siya: "Wow, do I feel stupid." We walked around taking in the art. Me: "Honestly I think I can take pictures with my phone and put them up for sale too." I whispered in his ear. Siya: "What type of pictures? There's already a buyer interested." Me: "What type is the buyer into?" He stood in front of me, pulling my waist close to his and stared down at my breasts pressed against him. Siya: "This. And everything else." He squeezed my ass. Me: "How much wine did you have?" Siya: "No more than you." He kissed

my nose then lips. I held his neck and kissed him back. Losing my mind in his mouth. I finally pulled away. From the corner of my eye I could see someone staring at us with arms crossed over chest but his cologne gave him up. Me: "Really?" I looked at him. Lakhe: "Really what? I can't watch my ex wife make out with another man in a gallery?" Me: "You're trying to make me uncomfortable and it's not working. Disappear." Lakhe: "I have a right to be here. I have an invitation. Oh Look. The digital exhibition. Did you know, the artist takes pictures right now of people here and uploads them on his laptop then they appear on that huge screen in a slide show. Do you think I'm in your shot?" I wanted to strangle him. Siya led me away. Siya: "Don't worry about him." Me: "He's trying to emasculate you. Why are you relaxed?!" Siya: "If I started to freak out, he would win. I'm with you here. He's the lonely one." He kissed my lips again. Siya: "He'll give up soon. Don't pay attention." He stood behind me, hugging me. Siya: "Which one do you like?" Me: "You don't want to do that." Siya: "Why?" Me: "It's an auction with Masilakhe." I was still fuming. Siya: "Okay. I'll make an anonymous offer privately. I want to get you something beautiful that will remind you of this day." I turned to look at him. He swayed me side by side with the slow music playing in the background. He spun me around with his arm and caught me again. Siya: "Don't get dizzy." I laughed. Me: "I only had half a glass." I wish I could have more but... Siya: "One day, you'll have the whole bottle and dance all over this place. I don't want to see the glum look on your face." Me: "Just wasn't expecting to be pregnant again so soon." Siya: "I know. But now that it's here, we have to face it. And we have to do that happily. I can't let the darkness of this kid consume you." He kissed my forehead. Siya: "Let me talk to the artist. Since you don't wanna choose, I'll surprise you." He kissed me and walked to the artist. I had a piece of the finger foods. Lakhe: "It's a nice exhibition. Beautiful photography." Me: "What are you doing here." I hissed. Lakhe: "I got an invitation." Me: "You're lying! You are stalking me." A young lady walked to him and hugged his arm. Lakhe: "Am I?" Me: "Stay away from me. Do you understand?" Lakhe: "Where did your little boyfriend go? Trying to negotiate a price for one of photographs afraid he'll lose to me in the auction? Haha. He already did. I've bought the entire collection. So no date present for you." I wanted to spit in his mouth. I shaking with anger then felt hands around me. Siya: "Lets go." Lakhe: "Failed?" He smiled. I lunged toward his neck, Siya grabbed me And pulled me back. Me: "I should've let you die." I spat. Lakhe: "You are in love with me. Cry if you want, but it's the truth." Siya led me to the other side because people were staring at us now. Siya: "I was gone for 30 seconds." Me: "u Lakhe is a selfish ugly man!!! He has a black heart!!!" Siya: "Is this about the collection? I got a perfect picture. It'll be ready in two days. One that even he can't get a hold of. Relax." Me: "Why does he have to

belittle you? Siyanda that's wrong!!" Siya: "He doesn't affect me. Lakhe's only thing is money. Integrity and discipline does not exist. Therefore he cannot belittle me. I know you want to protect me but you need to let it go." He chuckled. Siya: "Lets get some ice cream." He held my hand and we walked out the exhibition. Me: "I'm sorry about this." Siya: "You shouldn't be." He opened the passenger door for me and I climbed in. I was actually feeling really emotional. I don't know why. He got in beside and started the car. Siya: "What's wrong?" Me: "Can we just go to your place? I need some quiet time." Siya: "Alright. Let me buy something at Woolworths first then we good to go." He drove to Woolworths to buy whatever it was. I just stared out the window. When we arrived at his place he opened the door for me again. Carrying the plastic. Siya: "I bought the ice cream. I'll bring the mink blanket and put on a nice TV show-" Me: "I don't want a TV show." I went upstairs to his room, took off my shoes and climbed in bed. Me: "Don't worry, I don't want sex." Siya: "I wasn't." He stood there by the door. Me: "I just... it's overwhelming. I'm tired of being strong and taking care of everyone. I also want to be hugged and my back rubbed while I fall asleep. Then there's him who just torments me every chance he gets." He dropped the plastic and climbed in bed. Siya: "I'm always here for you Spho. Always. You don't even need to call, just come straight to me. I know it's difficult." I cuddled under his arm. Siya: "There is no one more stronger, more powerful than you God. Reveal your power and strengthen your daughter's faith. Empower her. Let your mighty word, run through the tips of her fingers with every soul she touches. May your angels surround her with every slumber or waking moment. No evil spirits, no obstacles, no depression or sadness can break into her life, may it bounce back to where it comes from. Lay Your mighty hand on your servants weakened heart God. This is the time she needs you." Me: "Amen. Thank you so much Siya. I can't remember the last time someone held me and prayed for me just out of the blue not casting out demons. I needed that." Siya: "You taught me. Actually you poured it into me. Everytime you pray Spho, a little of your spirit pours onto that person. They choose to grow it or destroy it. I've chosen to grow it to share it back with you and others. The good you've produced to the world will be reciprocated back to you." Me: "Thank you." Siya: "You're welcome. Take a short nap. Want me to rub feet or back?" Me: "I want feet but I also want to hold you." Siya: "That is a predicament and a half. Let me do them quick then you back." Me: "Just pull on socks. And hold me please." He did as I said. Spending two minutes massaging on each foot and dressed it in a sock each. He washed his hands and came to cuddle me. Siya: "What time should I wake you?" Me: "What time is it now?" Siya: "17:33pm." Me: "Wake me at 20:00. Chris will keep that entire house awake if

I'm not home." Siya: "Alright my angel." He tucked me I'm his arm and I drifted to sleep.

Lakhe walked in the house after 7pm. Dabawo was on the couch with Lam, Sandile and Vuyi. Lakhe: "Where's Spho?" Sands: "She's on a date?" Lakhe: "For 10 hours?" Sands: "Siya is a super entertaining fella. I know him." Dubs: "Ina mntanam unyanakho." She gave him Lam. Lakhe: "Where's Chris?" Sands: "Bathing." Lakhe: "Unsupervised? Njani Sandile?" He walked to the bathroom. Nosi was sitting on the toilet seat with her phone, chatting to Chris. Sands: "You're welcome." Dabawo went to her room. Vuyi: "I'll be taking out some clothes. Ndiso roomin bhuti." She disappeared to the bedroom. Lakhe: "Graham? Niny?" Sands: "At church." Lakhe: "Where is Sphosenkosi? It's late!" Sands: "Why you worried?" Lakhe: "She has kids Sandile." Sands: "She does. And their father is standing right here. Their uncle, aunts and granny too. They're not alone. Let Spho have some fun. When last was she taken out for some good food and company. Probably some dick too. She deserves it. Damn." Lakhe: "She cannot. Sandile she's carrying my child! How dare you let this happen, I know it was you!" Sands: "ME? I've been in this house all day." Lakhe: "You influenced him to take her out. You're trying to get to me." Sands: "What would I gain in trying to get to you? I don't care about you. Spho is having the time of her life. Happy. You, Babysit." Chris came running buck naked in circles. Lakhe: "Christian. Christian!! Hey!!" Chris: "Loopyyyy looooo!" Sands: "Hahaha!! My favorite. Do the dance Chris." Chris stopped and did his Loopy dance. Sandile fell down laughing. Sands: "Bloody iconic." He stood up. Sands: "And by the way, I'm taking Dabawo, Nosi and Vuyi out for a movie." Lakhe: "What do you mean?" Sands: "I mean. You're getting left here with your kids. Happy parenting." Lakhe: "You cannot do this. Look at Chris! He looks like he's on drugs!!" Sands: "Yeah, he tends to do that possibly because I let him have a sugar filled donut about an hour ago." Lakhe: "You did what!!" Sands: "Happy parenting." He walked out with the women behind him. Lakhe: "Christian!!" Chris: "Daddy Daddy Daddy Daddy Daddy Daddy Daddy." Lakhe: "All seven hells." He put down Lam in his cot and chased after Chris. Lam screamed his lungs out. Lakhe: "Christian sit still!!" Chris laughed and waved his hands. Lakhe put him down and tended to Lam. Lakhe: "Come on boy. I need your brother dressed. Help me here." He put him down. Lam started crying all over again. Lakhe: "Okay! Okay!" He picked him up and cradled him. Lakhe: "I'm sorry." The baby slept in his arms. Lakhe: "Christian, I will pay you to get dressed and sit still." Chris stared at him. Chris: "How much?" Lakhe: "R50. For getting dressed. R50 for sitting still." Chris: "R100." Lakhe: "Done." Chris got dressed. Lakhe: "Sandile paid you didn't he?" Chris:

"The truth costs money dad. Do you need help with Lam?" Lakhe: "No I don't. I'll get you some milk, sit there." He went to the kitchen to heat up some milk. Chris: "Dad." Lakhe: "Hm?" He looked behind him. Chris: "Am I gonna wake up next to you in the morning like old times? Are you coming back to live with us?" Lakhe: "I wish. Sometimes we don't get the things we wish for." Chris: "Mommy said you love each other very much. And she said she won't give up. For me and Lam. I made her promise." Lakhe: "Your mom is unhappy with me. I don't want her hurt." Chris: "How do you know it will hurt her? Did you try?" Lakhe: "It's not easy." Chris: "You do realize that Doctor Uncle Siya is gonna take your place right? I mean I like him, he's super nice sometimes a bit much but he's a cool guy. But he's not my daddy." Lakhe bent down to him. Lakhe: "You only have one. That is me. Don't worry yourself about anything else. Okay? Let us adults deal with it. Please Chris. Stay out of it. Your mom and I love you and we want you to be a child. Don't stress about us." Chris: "Okay." The door opened. Spho walked in. Chris: "Mama!" Me: "Why are you not in bed Mr?" Chris: "Waiting for you. Come. Tuck me in." Me: "Where's everyone?" Lakhe: "They went out for a movie." I took Chris to bed Coming to fetch Lam as well. Lakhe: "Did you sleep with him?" Me: "Does it matter." I took the baby. Lakhe: "It does to me." Me: "What about the hoe you brought to the exhibition!?" Lakhe: "I paid her. How stupid would I look if I went there by myself?" Me: "Okay Masilakhe." Lakhe: "What are we doing Spho? Our kids are hurting." Me: "You are not going to play that card. You're the one that left ME. I was at that hospital ready to welcome you back in my arms and you threw me out like a dirty stray dog. Get out of my house." Lakhe: "I'd just woken up in a coma with my hands burnt after being demonized. What did you expect from me? I wasn't myself!" Me: "I am done with you Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Spho, my child is begging. I promised I would never make them beg." Me: "That sounds like a personal problem. It has nothing to do with me." Lakhe: "I will do anything." Me: "No." He sighed. Lakhe: "I hope you'll have the strength to tell him then because i can't look at my son and tell him I've failed making him happy." Me: "Are you being serious right now? Failed? I must put my peace and happiness aside to accommodate you? AGAIN? I almost died for you. You just don't get it. All you do is bully people in their lives. If you really had a good heart, what were you doing in that exhibition? I know for a fact you just wanted to embarrass Siya. Was it necessary for you to buy the entire collection. No. But because Masilakh'ikhaya Killian Sobukwe is a selfish bastard, he does as he likes. I am not coming back to you sir. Chris will grow up and understand. I. Am. Done. Now if you have any ounce of respect for me, you will leave my house." He swallowed and walked out. Finally..

3 months later..

I woke up early on the Friday morning to get Chris ready for school. I was four months pregnant now. I didn't even look pregnant which was weird enough. The Unborn really knew how to hide himself well. I had more energy. My skin glowed as each day passed and I didn't know what morning sickness was. It scared me to think why this pregnant was going too smooth. Me: "Sweetie. It's time for school." Chris woke up rubbing his eyes. Me: "How did you sleep?" Chris: "I had many nightmares." Me: "I'm so sorry baby. About what?" Chris: "I was alone in the dark. Nobody could hear me." Me: "You'll never be left alone baby. I promise. Come bath." I took him to bath and prayed for him while washing his body. He sang in the meanwhile. After his bath, I got him dressed for school. Chris: "Daddy is coming to fetch me." Me: "I know honey. He told me." Chris: "We have a date after school." Me: "Really?" Chris: "Yeah." Me: "I hope you have fun with your dad." Chris: "You want to come with us?" Me: "I would love to sweetie but I've got a lot of work to get done." Chris: "Next time then." Lakhe knocked on the front door. I still had the security. Even months after the articles people are still curious. Me: "Come on in." He walked in, dressed in his suit. Me: "Enjoy your day my angel. I love you." I kissed Chris. Chris: "Love you too mama." He ran to Lakhe pouting for a kiss. Lakhe scooped him up and pecked him back. Really child? Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "Hi." Lakhe: "Put your bag in the car Chris." The boy ran out the house. Lakhe: "So about his party tomorrow? Everything set?" Me: "Yes. Although I think we should have it here." Lakhe: "I know but I don't want the negative public thing again. It was easy for those vultures to creep into your space the last time." Me: "I understand. I also want our kid safe. Thank you for helping." Lakhe: "You don't have to thank me. He's both our child. I want to run by you the present I got for him. If you're okay with it." Me: "What is it?" Lakhe: "A Benz. G63." Me: "You bought a 5 year old an SUV! Not just any SUV, a whole G63! Why couldn't you buy a toy car like a normal person? How is Chris going to drive it?!!!" Lakhe: "Do you have to be so loud?" Me: "Take it back!!" Lakhe: "Look!" He showed me a picture on his phone. Lakhe: "It IS a toy car. Just his size and yes he can drive it. It's for kids." I sighed. Me: "Sorry for freaking out because I mean a whole Benz." He laughed. Lakhe: "I understand but I'm not that extravagant...yet." Me: "It looks beautiful. He'll love it but Chris asked for a calculator. I don't think he's going to be that excited." Lakhe: "What is he going to do with a calculator?" Me: "He has this Math and Science game he plays with Julie. It's the weirdest thing." Lakhe: "Are you sure Julie is not one of

those people who don't grow over the age of 5. Perhaps she's a 32 year old woman." I chuckled. Chris: "Dad I'm not trying to be late!!!" He yelled from the car. Lakhe: "I better get going." Me: "You better." Lakhe: "Kiss Lam for me please. I'll be back for him at 5pm. I heard he crawls now." Me: "He does! It's the cutest thing." I pulled out my phone, excited as hell. Lam has been crawling for a week, and I'm honestly not getting over it. I showed him the videos. Lakhe: "This is super. I wish I was there when he started. Send these to me please." Me: "I will." Lakhe: "So you're gonna be free tonight. Any plans?" Me: "Going out with the girls." I smiled. Me: "Then Siyanda is picking me up." Lakhe: "Oh? That's still happening? Hmm.. he's treating you really well, I can see. I'm glad. I might have been a dick about it for a few weeks but I'm happy that you're happy and glowing. Look at your skin." He smiled. Lakhe: "I wish you well, Spho." Me: "Are you okay?" I felt his forehead. He laughed. Lakhe: "I'm fine. I'm just feeling better about myself. I started therapy a month ago." Me: "Oh? That's new." Lakhe: "Still not showing ? Are you sure you're pregnant?" Me: "I showed you the scan." Lakhe: "Yeah. It said four months and yet..." Me: "I'm as confused as you. Hey, you Should come with on my next appointment. I mean you're the dad. That's if you want to." Lakhe: "Yeah but I don't to step on Siya's toes. Will he be okay with it?" I touched his forehead. Me: "There's definitely something wrong with you." Lakhe: "I have no business with drama and hostility. Trust me. Just let Siya email me if he's okay with it and yeah, I'd love to come with." Me: "Alright." Chris: "TATA!!" He stood at the door. Chris: "Can we go please?? I am begging you!" Lakhe: "Okay! I'll see you later Spho." Me: "Alright. Be safe. Bye Chrissie cakes." Chris: "Bye mama. Love you!" They left. I went to look for Lam in his cot. Already up and playing by himself as he usually does. He didn't bother me with crying for attention. Well... unless he's hungry. Me: "What's that smell honey, is that you?" He smiled, kicking his chubby little legs. Me: "Wow. That's strong." I picked him up and undressed him. Me: "Did you know, it's your big brother's birthday tomorrow? Do you know what we got him?" He smiled and cooed at me. Me: "Well, as boring as it sounds, I have to buy him a calculator but you as his brother got him a remote controlled truck. He's gonna love it! And his gardening kit from Uncle Siya. He's going to be the happiest right?" I took him to the bathroom, mixed his water and bathed him then got him dressed in his knee padded onesie that Sandile bought him. I knocked on Nosi's room. Me: "Wake up Missy. Its school time." Nosi: "10 more mi-" Me: "NOW." I went to the kitchen. Dubs was back in East London but visited once a month. I asked her to move here but Vuyi would be by herself. So she insisted she waited until the completion of her internship which was only a few more weeks. I put Lam down and made breakfast while supervising his whereabouts. Now that he can crawl, he touches and pulls down everything hence destroying my

whole house then acting like he didn't. Nosi walked into the kitchen looking mighty ill. Me: "What's wrong with you?" She looked to the floor. Me: "Baby I have a lot of work to do today. I need you dressed, eaten and ready for college. I'm going to take a shower soon and someone needs to take care of Lam." Nosi: "I missed my period." I felt ice freeze my entire body. Oh God. Lakhe was going to kill someone. Me: "Huh?" Nosi: "I think....I might be..." Me: "No Nosi No!!" Nosi: "I don't want you to judge me okay! Please don't tell my parents. They'll cut me off. Please promise me!" Me: "I wouldn't dare. I don't want to be responsible for this boy's death. Speaking of boys, why is Lam quiet. Khayalam!!" Cwaka. I found him in the lounge with a remote in his mouth. Me: "Why baby?" I took it from him and picked him up. Me: "Nosi, how did this happen?" Nosi: "I don't know. I was fooling around with this boy and ...well." Me: "Who is he?" She looked at the floor. Me: "Oh my God, who?" Nosi: "One of my artists." Me: "Dear God. A hobo!!!" Nosi: "He's not a hobo!" Me: "Really? Because all your artists are hobos." Nosi: "He's not. He was homeless yes but he's not a hobo." Me: "Okay. Let me finish breakfast. You'll take a shower and dress. I go to shower while you look after this bumble bee of mine. We'll talk in the car." She did as I said. I had a huge meeting today. Nobody knew I was the new owner of Robert's company. I hadn't met with any of the directors and I don't plan to. My lawyers handle all public appearances. I wasn't planning on keeping the company anyway. I used a different venue as my office, this is where I'd be having the meeting. I want to launch our new project on Monday morning. See it through and then have a chat with Robert. After Nosi and I were dressed and ready, we went to the car. I bought a second hand Polo Vivo to transport myself around just for now. It's broken down twice. Lol. I actually thought it was super funny. Siya didn't. He hated it. Oh and Siya, we were still hanging out. Enjoying each other's company. Perhaps tonight will be the night. I don't know but it'll be the first night I spend with him. I started the car and waited for it to warm up. Lol. I really didn't afford a luxury car guys. Lakhe paid maintenance for his kids, which most of that money goes straight into their trust funds. Then I buy them their things they need. Then he pays Nosi's rent to me, which is a little too much and covers my whole rent anyway, so that money goes straight to the rent. He also delivers a grocery package every month for her share. Then hands me about a R1000 cash every week for Water and Electricity. I told him it's not necessary because I already pay those bills and I don't mind. He won't listen, as usual so I use that money for petrol. Lol. Anyway, the settlement he gave to me, I bought Robert's company with. And it was in shatters so I had to rebuild it even taking out a loan from the bank. At least my head is still above water and I'm affording. Thank God. I drove to Nosi's college. Lam was in his secured seat in the back with his small teddy on his lap. Me: "Tell me

everything." Oh and Nosi I've helped push her organization. That exhibition I went to with Siya really gave me some good ideas. I shared it with her and helped her. Lakhe is her investor though. He provided a clean building, like a hostel for the artists without homes. I was there when they started. Making their first hampers. A toiletries one and grocery one. Each artist gets toiletries for the month. Roll on, body spray, lotion, soap, and so forth. This building was only for the men, we'll be launching for the women next month. They also got haircuts every two weeks, a barber comes in and does their hair. They have a chef for the evenings. During the day make their own food. And they're given a space plus equipment to do their work. The exhibition last week was a success. All the artists made some money but of course Lakhe had to drag in a financial advisor to teach them how to spend and save. Control freak. Nosi: "Well... it was just one night we were alone in the studio. He was doing his paintings and we were talking. Then we started going for coffee, then he cooked for me. It's not really a relationship. We're just really good friends. The sex just happened. And it was so good. But we decided to stop because of our friendship. Now this." Me: "Have you spoken to him?" Nosi: "Not about this. Plus he has an offer in this art gallery in London. I don't want to ruin his future. It's a great opportunity for him." I waited at the robots half praying this car doesn't break down today because I cannot afford to deal with that. Me: "It is indeed. But what about YOUR future. Both of you were having sex Nosi. Therefore both of you must take responsibility. It can't be fair to let him scott-free whereas you're suffering. London is great for his career but both of you should've thought about that when you were fucking. And why didn't you use a condom?" She pouted and stared at me. Nosi: "Lam is only 6 and a half months. You're pregnant with his brother." Me: "I was married to their father. I have a degree and a job. Thank you. Nosi, we're close. But I'm not your age sweetheart. I've already accomplished some stuff in my life." Nosi: "I know. I'm sorry." She looked out the window. Nosi: "I don't want a baby. I'm not ready. If I am, I want an abortion." I was stunned into silence. I parked in front of her school and she got off. I drove to my workplace. Me: "Pumpkin, sizoythini ke le." He looked at me as if to ask 'Ndingenaphi?' And ke nyani.

Late in the day, after my awkward meeting with Tar, I went home. We hadn't seen each other much lately. Most of the time, I saw Dimitri. When I did meet with Tar, he'd be cold and distant. Just like today but it was even worse today. He barely said anything. The weird part was that he kept staring at me. His favorite human was Lam, they chatted alot and played all the time, so ndim lo ungafunwayo. I finally made it home. I took Lam out of his seat and into the house. Sandile was sitting on the couch eating chips. He had his

own key which he abused because he was here everyday. Me: "Hey Uncle."
Sands: "Hey girl." He held out his arms to take Lam. Me: "How's everything?"
Sands: "Stressful. I need your help." He gave Lam a fling chip to suck on. Me:
"With what?" Sands: "There's this guy I know, upcoming singer, he wants a
platform to perform. So I thought how about we make it an event? You're the
best when it comes to those things. The way you can create different
environments, from red carpet event to chilled creative spaces like the
exhibition you did with Nosi." I sighed. Me: "I'm charging you this time." Sands:
"In hugs right? No problem." Me: "No Sandile, I'm charging you money. You
are rich." Sands: "Charge Lakhe, he's always ready to throw money. Please
Spho?" Me: "What kind of event were you thinking? Come stand with me in
the kitchen, I need to make food before Chris walks in that door." He pulled a
chair and sat in the kitchen while I made dinner. Sands: "I was thinking
creative arts. Light painters, finishing off their work during the event. Poets, A
few singers, dancers and I was also thinking a time slot for published writers to
sell their books. Just an overall creative youth event. I'll nag Lakhe to bring his
rich friends so he can intimidate them into buying stuff. Our main act will be
this guy I was talking about though. He is good Spho." Me: "Okay. You know
I'm weak when it comes to helping. I got to warn you though. I am a little
busy with my own work so I won't be fully available." Sands: "I know. So why is
your job a secret ? It's been months. Are you working for the FBI or
something?" Me: "We don't have the FBI in South Africa honey. And no, I'm
not. I'll let you know when it's time." Sands: "Fine. I want to be the first to know."
Me: "You will. Hey you know what I'm thinking? I want to send special
invitations to people in different industries. Few producers, managers, event
organizers, publishers etc. How are we to make money from this?" Sands:
"Initially, I thought ticket sales. But also, how about when an artist applies for
space in the event they pay a fee, because we'll be marketing their work
kakade." Me: "That's a good idea. Do you have a specific target?" Sands:
"Mainly the participants are the youth but all those to watch there's no
specific market. Hey, can you convince Lakhe to make a donation?" I
laughed. Me: "I've used up all my veto's. He won't budge." Sands: "I was
thinking branded key chains, plastic cups and souvenirs. I guess I'll have to
pay for that." I laughed. Sands: "So...how's Siya?" Me: "He's great. I'm seeing
him later." Sands: "You two still going strong huh." Me: "We are still working on
it." Sands: "Get into a relationship already. You both want to." Me: "We're not
in a rush. Relax." Lakhe knocked on the door and walked in. Sands: "Hey you!"
Lakhe: "Hi." Chris followed behind him. Sands: "Hello Chris. And then?" Lakhe:
"He got into trouble at school." Me: "What happened?" Lakhe: "He refuses to
talk about it." Me: "Chrissie?" Chris: "I need a nap." He walked to his room. Me:
"Wow. What did Stacy say?" Lakhe: "A fight about Julie." Me: "About? Not

with?" Lakhe: "No. Apparently, Chris has competition. A kid named Jake." He whispered. I quickly held my mouth to block my outburst of laughter. Sands: "So Julie is cheating on Chris?" Lakhe: "Seems like it." I couldn't stop silently laughing. Lakhe: "He's really hurt. He fought with Jake. Imagine. Chris fighting." Me: "I need to talk to him." Lakhe: "Let him nap for now. Talk to him once he's awake. Oh and side note, he doesn't want to see her so I don't know about the birthday." It was a surprise. Chris didn't know about it. Well he knew it was his birthday, he just didn't know about the party. Me: "I'll speak to Chris. He just needs his mama." Lakhe: "Don't turn the child gay please?" Me: "Heee. What's so wrong about him being gay?" Lakhe: "Everything. He's already hurt and you want to baby him. Chris needs to hurt and know how to deal with it." Me: "And he will but he needs to know I am by his side." Lakhe: "By babying him?" Me: "How is telling him he's gonna be okay and taking care of him babying him?" Lakhe: "Haikhe Spho! Why are you yelling at me now?" Me: "How am I yelling at you? I am asking you a question. If you can't answer, say so." Lakhe: "Okay Spho." Me: "You gonna wait for him to wake up?" Lakhe: "If that's okay with you." Me: "Alright. The food is almost ready. Will you dish up? I need to get ready." Lakhe: "Ready for what?" Me: "I told you in the morning, I'm going out tonight." Lakhe: "To go drink? Spho you're pregnant." Me: "And? No, I'm not going to drink. I just want to look good and see people." Sands: "Yes girlfriend." I went to the bedroom to to shower and do my make up. Lakhe went to the stove and stirred the pot, reducing the heat. Sands: "So... How is therapy?" Lakhe: "Fine." Sands: "Really? You don't look fine." Lakhe: "So Spho is still dating Siya?" Sands: "They're good friends but tonight...I don't know perhaps something." Lakhe: "Hmm." Sands: "Who you dating?" Lakhe: "Don't have the time." He took out juice. Sands: "Why are you going to therapy?" Lakhe: "Why are you using your accusing tone?" Sands: "You're not really going to therapy are you?" Lakhe: "I have a log book with all my appointments. Join me if you want." Sands: "Oh My God. You're trying to win her back." Lakhe: "Don't be stupid." Sands: "I know you. You're beyond therapy. This is a stunt. You're Mr Nice guy all of a sudden and going to therapy, babysitting and didn't even curse out Siya knowing he might be drilling-" Lakhe: "I don't want to think about that Sandile!" Sands: "First admit that I'm right." Lakhe: "You're wrong. I enjoy therapy. I get to talk about my kids and my work. It's fun." Sands: "I'm your brother. I know you." He put Lam down on the floor. The baby crawled to Lakhe's feet. Lakhe: "You think you do." He pulled up his son. Lakhe: "How's Liz?" Sands: "She's fine. Just busy with work so naturally she thinks I'm cheating on her." Lakhe: "This is actually the longest relationship you've ever had." Sands: "No its not." Lakhe: "Well... except that one. But this is an improvement. Liz is a great gir-" Sands: "I'm dumping her tonight." Lakhe: "Why?" Sands: "Soon, she'll be expecting a ring. I

don't want to get married." Lakhe: "Why not!" Sands: "Marriage doesn't last. It drags and hurts other people in the process. Look at mom and dad. Look at you and Spho. Everything comes to an end eventually." Lakhe: "Not all marriages end in failure." Sands: "My favorite ones did." Someone knocked on the door. Sands: "Dubs? Hello." Dubs: "Yuh ha.a Sandile ndisangena emnyango." Sands: "All I said was hello. Hi Vuyi." Vuyi: "Molweni bhuti." Lakhe: "Spho is getting ready, uhamba naye?" Vuyi: "Ewe bhuti. Mandiyobulisa." She went to the bedroom. Lam crawled after her. Dubs: "Masilakhe, umgqibelenini utatakho?" (When last did you see your father?) Lakhe: "Two weeks ago. Why?" Dubs: "He called." Sands: "Uthini?" She looked at Lakhe nervously. Lakhe: "It's okay dubs." Dubs: "Uthi akonwabanga. Ufuna ndiyombona. That akanamntu umhoyileyo." Sands: "Hhake utata. I call everyday. Makatsho Dabawo ufuna uyombona qha. Uzenza lusizi kodwa simhoyile. Uthi uphi umama?" Dubs: "Uthi umamakho uhlala nenye indoda." Lakhe: "Dad is being a baby. I told him to come live with me, and he refused. Andingeni ndawo ke." He switched the stoves off. Dubs: "Ndizokhe ndiyomjonga ke." (I'll go check on him). She went to her room. Sands: "Dad want some booty." Lakhe: "Stop saying that." Sands: "What other explanation then?" Lakhe: "Just go check on him." Sands: "I have a job." Lakhe: "It's the weekend." Sands: "He's your dad too." Lakhe: "I have to babysit my kids and I have a party tomorrow." Sands: "Fine." Lakhe: "And you're not dumping Liz." Sands: "You can't tell me what to do." Lakhe: "Yeah but Spho can. I'm telling her." Sands: "You wouldn't dare." Lakhe: "Test me." Nosi walked in. Sands: "Hey you." Nosi: "Molweni bhuti." Lakhe: "You sick?" Nosi: "No just tired." Lakhe: "Hmm. I thought you of all people would be more excited to go out tonight." Nosi: "I am." She walked to her room. Lakhe: "And then?" Sands: "Beats me."

I finally was done with my make up and Vuyi's too. I could hear Fez in the lounge laughing out loud with Sandile. Me: "Nosi you're sure you want to go with us?" Nosi: "Definitely. I can't sit and sulk anymore." Me: "Can't drink neither." I muttered. Nosi: "Really?" I fixed Vuyi's lace body suit. Looking hella gorgeous with a tight mini leather skirt and silver heels. Nosi was wearing a short black jumpsuit with Rihanna shoulders, she had on black Louboutin heels on. I wasn't dressed yet because I was doing make up. I took out a dress I'd only worn once before 3 years ago. It was black short mini with strings going on my left thigh up to my pelvis. It had sleeves up to my elbow and a zip on my back to put in on. I got dressed and wore my lace strap stilleto. Nosi: "God, my brother is going to die." Me: "Your brother has moved on." I pulled on my 22" Peruvian wig, brushing it then collected my phone wallet and keys. Vuyi: "Are you sure you're pregnant?" I laughed looking at my flat

stomach. Me: "I doubt it." Nosi: "Hold on, I want to go out first." Me: "Why?" Nosi: "I need to take a video of ubhuti's reaction when he sees you. I can't miss it again. It's always funny." Me: "Heee." She left with her phone in her hand. Vuyi took Lam out. I grabbed my purse and stepped out walking to the lounge. Lakhe: "Yeah I... uh..." he stared at me, his phone still on his ear. Lakhe: "I...uhm... what were you saying?" He closed his eyes and turned to the kitchen. Me: "Is Chris still asleep?" I asked him. He hung up his phone and went to the stove. Lakhe: "Yes." He cleared his throat. Me: "Is he going to be okay? I need to be sure because I can't leave him the way he was." Lakhe: "I'll make sure he's fine." Me: "You okay?" He dropped the pot lid on the floor. Sands: "What's going o-" he looked at me then Lakhe. Me: "Is everything okay?" Lakhe: "I need to uhm... do something." he stumbled out of the kitchen. Me: "Sandile?" Sands: "Hm?" Me: "Please look after Chris. Lakhe is acting weird." He gently pushed me to the lounge mirror. Me: "Is it too much?" Sands: "It's perfect." He smiled. Me: "Okay. Hi Fez." Fez: "Hey babes. Sana ungu pelepele! Look at you! Inoba ubhuti uzivalele kula toilet uyalila because wowza mntase. Yi-nyisment le. Yuh. Sandile, ambojonga omnye angazibulali." Sands: "He'll be fine. Here Spho." He gave me his keys. Sands: "I will not allow you to go anywhere with that death trap you call a car looking like this." Me: "Thank you. Let me say goodbye to Chris and Lam. I went to the bedroom where Chris was napping. Finally he was awake. Lakhe was sitting on the bed with him and Lam. Me: "Hi sweetie. How are you feeling?" Chris: "I'm fine mama." Me: "Are you sure? Don't you want me to stay home with you?" He looked at his father. Chris: "Why are you nodding daddy?" Lakhe: "I'm not." Chris: "I'm going to daddy's house mama. You'll come see us right?" Me: "In the morning I'll be there baby. I promise. Are you sure you're okay?" Chris: "I'm sure mama. But I think there's something wrong with daddy. He's acting weird." He got out of bed and went to the bathroom. Me: "So I'm leaving. Can I hold Lam?" He stood up and handed the baby over. Lammy stared up at me with a huge smile on his face. Me: "I love you okay? Behave yourself. You gonna be good to daddy? Yeah? Mommy loves you pumpkin." I kissed his forehead, smudging him with lipstick. Lakhe held my waist pulling us closer to him. Lakhe: "I'm sorry. For everything." I looked at him. His hands still held me. Lakhe: "It's not going to make anything better. I know. I just felt you should know that I am sorry. I know I fucked up." Me: "Okay." He looked at Lam. Lakhe: "You know he stares up at you like you're God's best creation. The look in his eyes is so beautiful. So real. I wish I was there for you when he was born. To hold him. To hold you." Me: "It's okay, Lakhe." He took back his hands. Lakhe: "Enjoy your night." I gave him the baby. Chris: "Not even a kiss?" Me: "Christian!" Chris: "Just saying." He took out his bag. Me: "Goodbye then. I love you." Chris: "Love you too ma." I walked out the room. Chris: "I gave you

ONE job. You ruined it." Lakhe: "I was nervous!" Chris: "That is an excuse Tata. I told you no excuses. I gave you that tip for free, you know. It was my best tip. Look now!" He packed his bag. Lakhe: "Chris I can't just kiss your mom, she'll slap me." Chris: "Did she slap you when you were talking? Nooo. She didn't because Tata that's what she wanted to hear. Then you were supposed to take charge and make her think about you for the rest of the evening. But you just had to go and do your thing. Goodness." He zipped his bag. Lakhe: "What do you want me to do then?" Chris: "You're asking me? You're the one who decided to do your own. I am charging you double for my next tip because it involves me and I take my business very seriously. Now dad, do you have the guts to pull this through? You won't chicken out?" Lakhe: "I won't chicken out." Chris: "You're still paying. Help me carry my bag." Lam: "I'm carrying your baby brother-" Chris: "I'm hearing excuses again." He walked out... Lakhe: "Goodness.. it's like I'm raising a gangster."

We started with dinner. If there's one pregnancy thing I've followed it's the eating. Instead of the food going to my tummy and settling, it went to my thighs. I asked the doctor six times to check if the baby is okay and he's convinced that he is. Even Siya checked. Fez: "You're not drinking?" Me: "No." Fez: "Pregnant again? I don't blame Lakhe. I'm gay and I know for a fact I'd have done the same." Vuyi laughed. Fez: "Seriously. I don't know how he manages to stay calm and let you go anywhere." Me: "I broke up with Lakhe months ago." Nosi: "She's seeing uSiya. The doctor." Fez gasped. Fez: "You hoe!!" Me: "Really?" Fez: "So what is Lakhe doing in your house?" Me: "He came to fetch the kids. Never stays more than 10 minutes but Chris wasn't okay so he waited for him to wake up." Fez: "How do you get him to be so obedient?" Me: "It's not me. His new girlfriend probably has something to do with it." Nosi: "New girlfriend?" Me: "We both know Lakhe has been happy and skipping around the place all two weeks. He's definitely shagging someone." Nosi: "Are you jealous?" Me: "Not in the least." I looked at my phone. Text from Siya. "What time am I expecting you?" Not even a hi? I replied: "I'll call you when I'm coming." Siya: "I need to know now. I was thinking of going to the hospital to check on my patients." Me: "10pm." I put down the phone. Fez: "Everything okay?" Me: "I think I'm ready to officially be in a relationship with Siya. We spend so much time together. I like him a lot." Fez: "buuut." He sipped his cocktail. Me: "No but." Nosi: "Sounds like there is." Me: "There really isn't. I'm just nervous. Starting a new relationship is hard." Fez: "Urgg. Isn't that Zingisa?" Me: "Great." Nosi: "She's the one who went to the papers?" Fez: "Hmm.hm. Then had the audacity to accuse Spho for sleeping with Sandile." Nosi: "I'm sorry about that. We didn't know what to bele-" Fez: "Yeah Yeah. We

get it. Now what is that hoe doing here? Sana! Did you read the articles that she entertained judges to win Dumi's cases? If it wasn't for your good man Lakhe, he'd be filing for bankruptcy." Me: "How do you know all this?" Fez: "I read it. Look." He searched on Google and the articles piled up. Me: "That's sad." Fez: "She's coming this way. I'm not promising to not act bitchy." Zingi: "Molweni." We all kept quiet. Fez: "Spho, umxelele uLakhe sibuya what time? Andithandi kaloku mna uqumbisa utata wabantwana bethu." Me: "Akakwazi noqumba kaloku yena. Ndimxelele ke kodwa." Zingi: "Spho ndicela uthetha nawe." Me: "Ndimamele." Zingi: "Here?" Me: "What are you hiding? You can run to the media but can't talk in front of my friends." Zingi: "This is between you and me." Me: "No this is between you and yourself. Don't involve me. I have nothing to say to you. You made yourself clear when you left my house and endangered my family and children by letting in those vultures into my back yard. Should something have happened to anyone of us, what would be your excuse? Now you better get the fuck out of my sight before you piss me off." I could feel the rage bubbling inside of me but I suppressed it. Zingi: "How was I supposed to know you weren't fucking Sandile? What kind of close relationship do in laws have? It's suspicious. And if it wasn't true, it wouldn't have affected you. There was no need for you to shut down our businesses just because you wanted to hide your infidelity." I stood up and stared at her. She started choking, her eyes widening. I whispered to her ear. Me: "I will kill you without even touching you. Without any evidence. Without any witness. Your eyes will bleed if you even think about looking at me. I will set your tongue on fire if I ever hear it utter my name. You will disappear to a place where peace is unknown and I will bury you with an indescribable pain. Do not fucking test me. This is your last warning." I stepped aside and showed her the door. She held her throat and stumbled out. Fez: "Akasa act'i. U'choke'swa bubugqubusha skaaa!!!" I sat down. Fez: "Uye wathini kuye friend? Look yakhe ibingathi uyatsha." He laughed.

I managed to stay calm afterwards. Although my hands were tingling. I really wanted to hurt her. I had to figure out how without causing suspicion. We went to the club and bought drinks around 8pm. I was having water. Vuyi dancing to the loud music on the dance floor with a guy. Nosi was sitting with me nursing a glass of champagne. I really didn't know what to do with her. Me: "Did you take the test?" She shook her head. Nosi: "I'm going to Marie Stopes." Me: "Are you sure about this? Nosi I can't let you do that." Nosi: "Spho, stay out of this please. It is my body. I want to do this. Pretend you don't know." I kept my mouth quiet. I would drop hints so someone else can figure it out. I couldn't let this happen. My phone rang. Lakhe. I went outside to

answer it. Me: "Hello? Is everything okay?" Lakhe: "Unfortunately no. I just wanted to let you know that Chris is a little sick but nothing to worry about. In case he gets worse, I'll take him to hospital." Me: "Sick how?" Lakhe: "He threw up his whole supper. Been crying and complaining of a headache. I gave him Panado, I'll keep checking his temperature." Me: "Where are you?" Lakhe: "My house. You don't have to come Spho, I'm just letting you know in case something happens and I don't get the chance to call when we leave for the hospital. I doubt it'll get to that though. I'll make sure to send a message. Okay?" Me: "Okay." He hung up. Chris: "Did she buy it?" Lakhe: "She did. But she won't come all the way here if I keep saying you'll be okay." Chris: "The aim is to not look desperate Tata. I'm her sweetie pie, she's definitely coming. Now we must make it look believable." Lakhe: "How?" Chris: "I'm 'sick' remember? I threw up. Get my pajamas and sheets in the washing machine, make sure it's rolling. Have a mop soaked in soap or bleach. Wipe the floor a bit. Spray something." Lakhe: "Why?" Chris: "What evidence is there that I'm sick? The only explanation is that you cleaned it up. Duh. Now, you gonna have to give me half a teaspoon of medicine so that when she kiss my mouth she can smell it a bit. I'll be in bed and be sleepy. The rest will be up to you. This will buy you the whole night Tata. Do not mess it up. Help me take off these sheets. Be quick." They removed and replaced the bed sheets. Lakhe: "Where did you learn this?" Chris: "Does it bother you?" Lakhe: "A bit, yes. You're 5." Chris: "Just focus Tata. And good luck." Lakhe: "Thank you." Chris: "You know why I'm doing this right? You signed a contract." Lakhe: "Who wrote that anyway?" Chris: "Uncle Sandile wrote it for me. You know what I want in return right?" Lakhe: "A bank account. I know." Chris: "And?" Lakhe: "That's all you're getting, young man. Get into bed." Chris: "Good luck Tata." Lakhe: "Thank you my son."

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I drove into the mansions driveway and parked. Walking quickly to the front door. Lakhe was standing there like he did the first time I came to this house, only this time he was carrying our youngest son. Me: "Hey, where is he?" Lakhe: "I told you not to come Spho, I said I could handle it." Me: "My child is sick and you're expecting me to continue partying?" Lakhe: "Look, Chris is asleep. He's going to be better by morning." Me: "Where is he?" He led me to the bedroom. Lakhe: "You're freaking out for nothing. Honestly." I walked in the room and Chris was sleeping. Me: "My beautiful angel. He must be in so much pain." I whispered. Lakhe: "He's asleep. If you wake him up, he will be in pain." I nodded. Me: "What exactly happened?" Lakhe: "After he ate, we

cam-" Chris: "Mama." He woke up. Me: "Hey pumpkin." I sat down on the bed. Me: "What's wrong?" Chris: "My tummy." Me: "I'm so sorry my angel. How is it now?" Chris: "A bit better." Me: "Okay sweetie. I'll be here when you wake up okay?" He nodded and closed his eyes. I kissed his cheek. My heart broke at how weak his voice was. He's usually excited to see me. I looked at Lakhe, he held my hand and pulled me out the room. Lakhe: "You haven't had a good night out in forever. I'll take care of him." I looked at Lam in his arm. Lakhe: "Come on Spho. Am I gonna have to force you out the house?" Me: "Fine. But Lam is waking up. I'll leave when he falls back asleep." I took him in my arms and breastfed him. Me: "I haven't been drinking. Relax." Lakhe: "I know." I sat in the lounge feeding my baby. Lakhe sat on the table in front of me. Lakhe: "Your feet are swollen." Me: "I'm wearing heels. I'm pregnant." He took my foot and placed it on his lap taking off my heels. Me: "What are you doing?" Lakhe: "You're an amazing mother to my children. The least I could do is massage your feet." I stopped resisting him for once and let him work. I know he was aiming for something. Lakhe is sneaky. Even when he's nice. There's always something. I burped the baby and watched him fall asleep again. I just wanted to crawl into bed with him and Chris now. Me: "Two hours. You better wake me." Lakhe: "I'm not doing that. Why don't you wanna go?" Me: "I don't know. I just want to be with my babies." Lakhe: "The babies are asleep and with their father." Me: "1 hour." Lakhe: "Fine." I walked to the bedroom and crawled in to bed. Lam clutched onto me while asleep. I kissed his chubby cheeks staring at his beautiful angelic face. Me: "Bring Chris." Lakhe: "You want to wake him again?" I shook my head. Lakhe: "So I just stand here and watch you?" Me: "Go check on Chris please. I don't want him alone there!" Lakhe: "Fine." He walked out. I finally fell asleep. In two hours, Lakhe walked back in the room. A phone was vibrating on the dresser. It was Spho's phone. Lakhe took it and answered. Lakhe: "Spho's phone hello?" Silence. Lakhe: "Hello???" Siya: "Where is Spho." Lakhe: "Oh.. hi Siya. She's asleep. I'm about to wake her. Can you hold on?" Siya: "No I can't Masilakhe." He hung up. Lakhe put down the phone and climbed into bed. Lakhe: "Spho? Babe.." I woke up from my sleep. Me: "What? Is it Chris? Is he okay?" Lakhe: "Chris is fine. Siya just called. I asked him to hold on but he said no and hung up. You might want to call him back." I took my phone and dialed Siya. It rang to voice-mail. Me: "What did you say to him?" Lakhe: "I told him you were sleeping." Me: "Why isn't he answering then?" Lakhe: "Perhaps he's on a call. Send him a text." Me: "What is your game Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "What have I done wrong now?" Me: "This whole nice guy act! I don't buy it." Lakhe: "Okay. Sure. I might have conspired with Chris to get you here because I wanted to spend some time with you alone. I only realized it was wrong of me to do so when you parked in the driveway. It reminded of the time you parked the red

little car you had when you came here for the first time. It reminded me how much I loved you. How much I hated to see you cry. I remember that entire day. How you cried in my arms because of what Simphiwe did To you. I vowed I would never do the same and I broke that vow. So when you walked in the door, I needed you to leave. I needed you to go have some fun for once and be happy not thinking about responsibilities and taking care of kids, of us. I just wanted you to be free. I failed you as a husband Spho. But Siya won't fail you as a man. It hurts to admit but he really makes me look weak and I hate it. If it's him that makes the mother of my kids smile then so be it. I'll swallow my pride. This time for real. I'm done playing with your feelings." I stared at him. He looked back at me. Lakhe: "I'll tell Chris that we're divorced and it's not changing again. He will get over it sooner or later." Me: "Thank you." Lakhe: "Go to Siya. We'll see you in the morning." I got up from bed. He had glassy eyes but occupied himself with a sleeping Lam. For the first time in months, my heart broke. Yes he was annoying and I didn't love him but seeing Lakhe cry was my weakness. I had to get out of there. I grabbed my things and went to the car driving to Siya's house. I arrived a little before midnight. After knocking on the door a few minutes he finally opened and stared at me. Me: "Hey." He kept quiet and just stared. Me: "You weren't taking my calls so I thought I'd come straight over." He let go of the door. I stepped in and closed it. Me: "Why are you so angry at me?" Siya: "I'll never be as good enough for you as Masilakhe. Right?" Me: "You are good enough. Even better. What are you talking about-" Siya: "I'm talking about you sleeping with him Sphosenkosi. Why?" Me: "I'm not sleeping with him." Siya: "Then what, he's sleeping with you?" Me: "No!! I was there because Chris was sick and I needed to nap after checking on him-" Siya: "You needed to nap? In your ex's house?" Me: "I'm not sleeping with Lakhe. I don't even want him. He knows that." Siya: "Does he? He answers your calls but he doesn't want you?" Me: "What are you accusing me of?" Siya: "I'm not accusing you of anything. You don't know what you want. We had plans tonight yet you chose to rush over to your ex before even letting me know and taking a nap with him. Who's house do I nap in? I work over 100 hour weeks yet I always make it home to sleep, so that you won't ever have to hear I slept near anyone but YOU." I was shocked honestly. Me: "I was supposed to drive from Kragga kamma to Summerstrand, pregnant, tired and with swollen feet?" Siya: "You should've called me! That's all it takes. One simple phone call." Me: "Siya I couldn't think about that, my only concern was my kids. I couldn't think of anything else." Siya: "I know. And I also know that Masilakhe is the father of your three kids, despite the situation you were faced with you'll always love him. What I cannot accept is sleep over parties with him. Look at how you're dressed. You look Gorgeous. Now I'm supposed to believe you fell asleep in

another man's bed with that on?" He could've punched my throat and it wouldn't have hurt more than what he said. He basically didn't trust me. I opened the door to walk out. Siya: "I can't let you drive home this late." He held my arm. Siya: "I'll fix the spare room." Me: "Let go of my arm." I warned. He let go. I walked to the car, started and drove off.

I'd gone to fetch the girls from the club and brought them home. Both sloshed. I climbed into my bed after a cold shower and just lay there. I don't even know what I was thinking about but I was thinking. So Siya dumped me for taking a nap. Wow. I couldn't even sleep further. Before I knew it the sun was rising. I got out of bed and cleaned my house spotless. I changed my bed sheets and bathed a long slow bath. I haven't had one like that in a while. I got out of the bath and went to get dressed. I wore a slim fitting olive green mini dress and white Adidas Superstars. The only make up I put on was foundation, eyeliner and some eyebrows. I pulled on my wig and packed my bag with charged camera, and other essentials. Nosi and Vuyi were up drinking coffee already dressed in shorts and vests. Dabawo was making breakfast. After greeting them all, I called Sandile. Me: "Hey.. where you at?" Sands: "In the bedroom. Where else?" I walked down the passage and opened his door. Me: "Thought you'd be at your apartment." Sands: "Liz is acting up again." Me: "Why?" I sat on the chair. Sands: "She's mad because I'm taking her to the doctor's appointment every 3 months for her injection. Says I'm treating her like I don't trust. I don't. Is there anything wrong with that?" Me: "Jeez Sandile. You take her everytime?" Sands: "Of course. I know she won't go because she's psychotic and obsessed with Lam. She wants me to get her pregnant." Me: "OR she wants to be an adult and take herself there." Sands: "OR she'll swap contraceptive with fertility drugs. Sphe I've been with this woman this entire relationship, you don't know how sneaky she is. I do." Me: "You know sooner or later... it's gonna happen right?" Sands: "I'd be long gone by then. I'm breaking up with her." Me: "You'll do no such thing. Give me your house keys. I'm going there later and talking to her. You are gonna act like a man and she is going to be your woman. You will communicate and you will understand what each of you want from this relationship. I'm not gonna live with a man whore. Get dressed." Sands: "Fine." I stood up walking out. Sands: "So what's wrong?" Me: "Nothing." Sands: "I know you and it's not nothing." I turned to look at him. Me: "My God." I covered my eyes. Sands: "What?" Me: "GET DRESSED!" I walked out. Sands: "I'm wearing briefs." Me: "I can see it!" Sands: "You're dramatic." I went out to the garden just to think and breath in fresh air. I tried to call Lakhe but he wasn't picking up. I called him again. Still no luck. I started to panic. Me: "I'm leaving

Dabawo. Sandile will drive you to the house." I dropped his car keys and took mine, dashing out. I drove my bucket car to Kragga Kamma and for the first time, didn't give me problems at all. I arrived without heart palpitations and sweating. I walked in the house. Lakhe was watching cartoons with Lam on his lap and Chris on the couch. Me: "Why aren't you answering your phone?" They all got a fright and stared at me at the same time. Three pairs of eyes with the same exact look. Lakhe: "It's in the bedroom, hi." I walked over to Chris. Me: "Sweetie. How are you?" I pulled him up and placed him on my hip. Chris: "I'm fine mama. How are you?" Me: "I'm okay. You look sad." Chris: "Dad told me." Me: "Oh." I hugged him. Me: "I'm sorry okay?" Chris: "So you're gonna marry Dr Uncle Siya?" Me: "You don't have to worry about any of that right now. It's your birthday. I'm gonna make you some breakfast-" Chris: "Dad made me pancakes already." Me: "Okay. Uhm.. Would you like to take a bath?" Chris: "I'd rather take a swim." He wiggles down to the floor and down the passage. He could swim but only on the small side indoor pool. Lakhe: "Tamsin will keep an eye on him." Me: "Who's Tamsin?" Lakhe: "Nanny." Tamsin appeared from the kitchen shaking a bottle. Tam: "Hi." She looked 18 with long brown hair and a fake smile. Lakhe: "Please look after Chris, he's taking a swim. Bath him afterwards. Here." He gave her my baby and she walked away. My heart was torn. I was not even needed. Me: "What else needs to be done For the party." Lakhe: "Nothing much. I've hired for everything. They'll be here at 11am." Me: "And cooking? I can cook something." Lakhe: "I have chefs busy in the kitchen." I looked at the floor. Me: "I'll just go to the mall then. I'll be back for the party." I walked away. He held my arm. Lakhe: "What's wrong?" Me: "Nothing." Lakhe: "Tell me. You walked in here looking frantic. What happened?" Me: "I just wanted to do something for my kids." Lakhe: "You're here for them." Me: "Chris is mad at me." Lakhe: "He'll get over it. What's wrong?" He looked at my stomach. Lakhe: "What's going on?" His voice a little more intimidating. Me: "Nothing." Lakhe: "Your stomach. You've had a flat tummy for months, now all of a sudden the day you get here, upset, it's grown a little. Look." I looked down. Me: "Just a bit, yeah. I need to go pick up a few things at the mall." Lakhe: "Please talk to me. Is it about Siya?" Me: "No." Lakhe: "Fine. Take my car." Me: "I have my own. Thanks." I walked out to my car and drove out. I went to the mall to pick up Chris' calculator and truck. I walked around then just passing time. Paid a few bills and sat down to breath. It was almost 10 am now and I thought I should probably get back to the house. Everyone will start arriving soon. I got in my little car and drove to KK. The road was a little quiet. My car started to rumbling on the road and slow down. Me: "No! No.. please." I pulled to the side quickly and tried starting it, it kept dying down. Great. I took my phone and dialed for Sandile. No response. Siya was not even an option right now. I

needed help. Lakhe would be rolling in "I told you" and I can't listen to that. I called Fez. Voice-mail. This was not happening. I tried Sandile again. Rings to voice-mail. Where's everyone? I swallowed my pride and dialed for Lakhe. Lakhe: "Yeah?" He answered. I hung up. I don't want to depend on him. My phone blinked. The battery was low. I had to make a decision quick. Tar. Well... would he even answer my calls? My phone rang again. Lakhe. I didn't have much of a choice now. Me: "Yes?" I answered. Lakhe: "You cut off. What's up?" Me: "Can you not yell?" Lakhe: "I'm not even yelling." Me: "I'm stuck. The car won't start-" Lakhe: "YOU'RE JOKING-" Me: "I asked you not to yell?" Lakhe: "Where are you?" Me: "I don't know. Probably about 20 minutes away. On the road to the house." Lakhe: "Which road?" I told him. Lakhe: "What are you doing on that road, it's not even- I'm coming. Stay in the car." He hung up. The phone switched off. Amazing. I stayed in the car, unmoving. I was so hungry. A white Polo with dark windows passed me. Don't I have a phone charger? I opened the dashboard and searched in there. Nope. Probably in the boot. I got out the car and went to the boot, searching in there. Where could it be? OHHH yeah. I left it in Sandile's car. Wow. I heard a car door close. My heart almost jumped. I looked up and saw two guys approaching me each carrying a gun. I froze. "Sapha imali." Me: "I don't hav-" Guy: Hey futsek!! Ndithe khupha imali njakazi!" Me: "You can take the phone and everything inside andiphethanga m-" He smashed the weapon on my head. I went dizzy for the floor. Guy: "Khame ndimthathe pha kwela hlathi khangela klo moto kho nton." I forced myself up but I got dizzy by the second. My wig snatched off and he dragged me by my arm. I heard another car revving in the distance. "Yeka lomntana, mas'fokofe! Nantsi phone ne-laptop fondin-" Car tyres screeching. By now my left eye is throbbing painfully and everything is a blur. I was finally let go. Hearing a bang on a car which I hope wasn't a human. I stood up finally, wiping my nose. Me: "Lakhe." He was beating one to a pulp dragging him on the road finally tossing him under his car. Me: "Masilakhe!" He looked at me. His body vibrating with rage. Me: "Stop." I leaned on my car. There was a dent on it where he'd clearly banged the other ones head on. He was lying on the floor bleeding. Lakhe came straight to me. Lakhe: "Are you okay?" Me: "I'm fine. I just need to sit down." He held my Face looking at the wound. Lakhe: "I'm going to kill them!" I held his shirt. Me: "You're not killing anyone." Lakhe: "Look what they've done to you!" Me: "Get him out of there. Now." He stared at me. Me: "Please." He went back and grabbed the man's leg pulled him away to the side. He started and brought his car in front of mine. Me: "What are you doing?" Lakhe: "We have to tow it." Me: "An Audi is not designed to tow other cars!" Lakhe: "Well it's getting the hell out of here some way or the other." He scooped me up in his arms and carried me to the passenger seat. Me: "Let me be in my car. I

need to brake and everything." Lakhe: "You're not doing anything for the rest of the day. Sit here." He disappeared to the back again, talking on his phone. My brain was throbbing. In so much pain. Blood was dripping down my face. Not to mention my wig was laying on the ground somewhere and I probably looked like someone's gay uncle right now. Lakhe got in the car and started about 20 minutes later. Me: "Who just arrived?" Lakhe: "A friend of mine. We're taking your car to his workshop then you to the hospital to check on this head injury and the baby. Okay?" I just nodded. He drove slowly. All I could do was listen to the pounding of my head. After dropping my car off at this place with this guy, we went to Greenacres hospital. Lakhe: "Need help?" Me: "Just a little dizzy." After parking the car, he carried me inside again. I got admitted in. My wounds got cleaned and the baby was checked. Everything was okay, I just had a concussion. Again. Me: "This time I was supposed to die." He held my hand. Me: "I can feel it." Lakhe: "Important thing is you're alive." Me: "Is it?" I sunk into bed holding on to his hand. Me: "Thank you. If you hadn't dropped everything and come immediately..." Lakhe: "Stop thinking that. You're alive and I'm gonna keep you alive." Can he though? An unfamiliar voice said. I shivered, sitting up. Me: "Did you hear that?" Lakhe: "Hear what?" Me: "I heard a voice." Lakhe: "Nobody else is here." Me: "I heard something." Lakhe: "Maybe we should take you home." I got out of bed immediately. Looking around as if searching for a ghost. Or was the voice in my head?

Back in the house the party hadn't started. Chris was taking his mid-morning nap. Spoho in bed with him. Sandile and Lakhe were in the lounge. Sands: "What the hell happened!" Lakhe: "Spoho went to the mall to fetch some stuff and on her way back, she took the wrong road. Her car broke down and she called me, I told her to stay put ndiyeza. I went straight over and found stupid fools trying to rob her." Sands: "Where are they?" Lakhe: "Serge is keeping them in the warehouse. I had to get Spoho to hospital. She had a concussion again. Sandile.. I'd do the best I can but you know Spoho doesn't want to depend on me. I'm trying to keep her alive, you need to play your part and be around when she needs you. What happened last night?" Sands: "She came home and slept." Lakhe: "She was supposed to go to Siyanda." Sands: "I heard the car parking around 1 in the morning." Lakhe: "If he did something to her..." Sands: "Siyanda wouldn't hurt Spoho. And you need to stay out of it. Control yourself. Look at you pacing the floor clean. Stop it." Lakhe: "What if I got there two minutes later Sandile? What if I didn't call her back?" Sands: "We're not going to go through those thoughts. You will focus on this party, and your kids. I'll sort everything out." Lakhe: "You're not leaving this house. This is the first time the family gets together again. The parents are coming too. I

want the whole family together. We'll sort everything out tonight. Where's everyone?" Sands: "Dabawo, Nosi and Vuyi are sorting the decorations in the back. I'm going to pick up his class in about 30 minutes." Lakhe: "You went to hire a bus? Really?" Sands: "Of course I did. Well, Stacy asked if that would be a problem because most of the kids' parents wouldn't be able to find the house or drive this far." Nosi walked in the house and sat on the couch. Lakhe: "Is everything done outside?" Nosi: "Yes bhuti." Lakhe: "The pool is covered?" Nosi: "Everything is kid-friendly outside. Even Lam can crawl there." The gate buzzed. Lakhe: "That's mom's car." Sands: "Yes it is." Lakhe: "Dabawo is here." Sands: "So?" Lakhe: "Dabawo. The woman dad cheated with and gave birth to a daughter." Sands: "Oooohhh. Shit. You think she's still on that-" Lakhe: "Of course she is! Talk to her Sandile. She can't ruin my child's party." Sands: "ME? Why don't you?" Nosi: "Fine! I'll do it then." Lakhe: "Thank you. I'll go check on Spho." He walked to the bedroom, knocking a bit before he opened the door. Lakhe: "You're awake." Me: "Yeah." I sat up. Me: "Where's Lam?" Lakhe: "With the nanny." Me: "Can you bring him?" Lakhe: "If Lam sees you he'll want to breastfeed." Me: "It's okay." Lakhe: "You're taking on too much Spho. I need you to be okay. The baby is well taken care of, you need to rest. How is your head?" Me: "It's okay." Lakhe: "Can we talk?" Me: "I know, I know. I was being stupid and I'll sell the car then buy a Ford Figo or something." Lakhe: "You weren't being stupid. You couldn't have anticipated that attack especially at that time of day. It was not your fault." Me: "What did you do to them?" Lakhe: "I left them there. Look, I know you don't wanna depend on me. But please do me a small favor, whatever you need, call me immediately or Sandile. Don't hesitate. You're part of our family, we can't lose you Spho." I nodded. Lakhe: "Lets get you some food. Come." He held my hand walking me out the room. Me: "I lost my wig." Lakhe: "Yeah, you look like a boy now." I smacked his shoulder. Lakhe: "I'm kidding." He laughed. Lakhe: "We'll be starting soon. Sandile went to fetch Chris' class." Me: "Okay." In the lounge, Nosi and Stella was there. I don't know but I didn't like seeing her here. I had to understand she was Lakhe's mom though and Chris' grandma. I greeted and passed. Stella: "Lakhe is everything okay?" He nodded and took me to the kitchen. Lakhe: "You don't want her here?" Me: "Can you relax? You've been running around me and fussing for hours. Calm down." Lakhe: "I'm sorry." Me: "And stop apologizing." I sat on the bar stool. The chefs were still here, three of them standing In the Kitchen. Lakhe: "They'll be serving the kids and us." I nodded. He made me a sandwich and some juice, I ate then got off the stool once I was done to wash the plate. One of the chefs insisted and took it. I hated being treated like a baby. Lakhe: "Sandile just pulled up. We need to position the kids, Chris could wake up any minute." I hugged him. Lakhe: "Everything fine?" He enveloped me in his arms. Me: "Thank you." Lakhe:

"Anytime." Me: "I'm sorry I was an ass last night." Lakhe: "You weren't." Me: "I was. You're trying. The least I could do is meet you half way for the kids." Lakhe: "Does that mean you'll let them sleep over more often?" Me: "Yes." Lakhe: "And you'll sleep here with them?" Me: "No." Lakhe: "Aww." I let go of him. Lakhe: "You gonna be fine." I nodded and walked out. Sandile brought the class in marching like soldiers. What did he do to the kids nkosiyam. Sands: "Here they are." I lined them up nicely in the lounge. Me: "Okay guys... shhhhh. When Chris walks in, I want everyone to yell, Happy Birthday!" Julie: "This is a gigantic house, are you sure he's gonna hear us?" Kanene ukhona. Help me Lord. Me: "He's gonna stand right here. Shhhhh." Lakhe went to fetch Chris, carrying him to the lounge. Kids: "HAPPY BIRTHDAY!" They screamed. Chris smiled and wiggled down to the floor. He took two steps and stared at one kid then Julie. Chris: "What are you doing here?" Julie: "Happy birthday Chris-" Chris: "I asked a question. Mama what is she doing here?" Me: "I, uhm...your dad invited her." Jake: "What's the matter Chrissie? Can't handle losing Mr businessman?" Where the hell do they get these kids? It's like they all had PhD's. Chris stared coldly at him for an awkwardly long time then broke into a smile. Chris: "Welcome to my daddy's house Jake. I honestly hope you don't get lost during the day. It's very big." He walked off to the back yard. I stared at Sandile dissolving to the floor silently laughing. Me: "Keep an eye on Jake." I whispered to Lakhe. Lakhe: "You really think Chris would-" Me: "Keep an eye on Jake. Qha. Your son is up to something. I don't want a lost child in my supervision." I followed the kids to the back yard. A whole theme park was decorated, the pool secured and everything looking beautiful. For the first time I felt everything was going to be fine.

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The party was going well. Stella wasn't talking to anyone and Dabawo in the back helping the kids. I was sitting on the couch watching everything quietly because I was ordered to sit still. Fez arrived in no time to "help". Lol. We all know he just came to drink and laugh with Sandile. Me and him settled in the lounge. Fez: "Haiké mfazi, in the how? Isusu? Sivelaphi? Spho stop strangling the baby!" Me: "What are you talking about?" Fez: "The dress you were wearing yesterday hid this stomach! Now all of a sudden it's out. Ha.a sisi. I don't support." Me: "Uxolo my friend. It won't happen again." I couldn't really tell her it literally grew while I slept. Lakhe: "Hey." He came in carrying a box. Lakhe: "Got you some cake." He gave it to me and sat down. I ate the delicious cake. Me: "What?" He was staring at me smiling. Lakhe: "Nothing. I'm just glad you like it. You know I baked that?" Me: "You? Bake? A cake?"

Lakhe: "Well, the chefs guided me. They helped. Okay fine I was there." I laughed. Lakhe: "How is the baby? Is he kicking?" He touched my stomach. Me: "It's early. And it's a she." I felt a bit of movement in my tummy. Lakhe: "Did you feel that? He's saying hi." He moved closer. Me: "She." Lakhe: "I doubt it. I'm full of the Y chromosome." Me: "You mean all that ego is gonna make me give birth to more boys?" He gleamed. Me: "I mean A boy." Lakhe: "You want to have more of my kids." Me: "I don't. I'm done having babies." Lakhe: "I want twins. Both Girls." Me: "I'm not having any more babies. Least of all with you." Lakhe: "You got to admit I'm a great dad." Me: "You want to fill all these bedrooms with kids?" Lakhe: "Definitely." Me: "Ask your girlfriend then." Lakhe: "I am asking right now." I laughed out loud. Me: "khasuke Masilakhe man." Lakhe: "I'm here to chat with my kid." Me: "Your kid can't chat he's 4 months in." Lakhe: "So he can listen. When did Lam start kicking?" Me: "Five months I think." Lakhe: "You know this baby and Lam are gonna be like twins? If you give birth at the end of this year." Me: "My due date is early next year." Lakhe: "But they'll have to go to school together." Me: "You think?" Lakhe: "And they're going to look alike. Almost identical. I love that." Me: "How are you so sure." Lakhe: "I have strong genes. Look at Chris." I looked over. He was having the time of his life. Lakhe: "He just gelled in with me. He's a mini me now. So will these two." He kissed my stomach and walked away. Fez was beaming on the other couch. Fez: "The candle was scorching me alive. You two are back together? Oooh yessss!!! Let me call Zintle, she's gonn be sooo excited!" Me: "We're not back together! We're coparenting." Fez: "With that electricity? Spho you gonna burn the kids." Me: "There's no electricity. Lakhe is a dedicated dad. I'm a dedicated mom. That's all. Nothing to it." Fez: "Spho, that man is in love with you. Did you see how he lit up when you spoke about more kids." Me: "It was a mistake. I'm not having more kids. Chris on his own is alot of work. Then there's Lam who wants to glaze into my eyes, which I love. It's gonn be hard for him once this new baby arrives." Fez: "You're an amazing mom friend. Nam khandizalele a baby girl. I want to be a mom." I laughed. Me: "Hayi man Fez." I saw Boogie in the back yard. Me: "There's your child." Fez: "You know I once tried to put a diaper on him? Sandile thought it was cute and he took a picture." Me: "How can he think it's cute on a puppy but he doesn't want babies?" Fez: "Oh yeah he told me about that." Me: "What else did he tell you?" Fez: "Nothing." Me: "Fezile." Fez: "Okay fine. Don't strangle me!" He came to sit next to me. Fez: "Sandile is in love with someone he can't have." Me: "I'm confused." He moved closer. Fez: "Don't ever tell anyone." Me: "Okay." Fez: "He's in love with-" Sands: "What you two gossiping about?" Shit! Me: "Nothing. Aren't you suppose to be watching the kids?" Sands: "I'm tired. Move." He sat between me and Fez then put his head on my lap and his feet on Fez. Sands: "So.. what are you two snickering about?" Me: "Fez was just

Tellin-" Fez: "Her what a great couple she is with Lakhe. I want them back together. He's so sweet." Sands: "Sweet? Lakhe? Psst." Fez: "What does that mean?" Sands: "He's happy. Spho is dating Siya, naye he's seeing someone. The family is getting along well." Me: "He's what?" Sands: "I thought you knew?" Me: "Is it Tamsin?" Sands: "Hell no. Isn't she like 12. It's this other lady... I'm sorry I thought you knew." Fez: "Wait.. does it bother you? Cuz I mean you just said you don't want him." Me: "I don't. I'm happy for him." Sandile stared at me. Sands: "Are you?" Me: "Of course. Lakhe deserves a fresh start. If this lady makes him happy. Good for him. I'm going to check up on Lam." I got out of the sandwich and went to the nursery. Lam was playing with his toys, Tamsin sitting in the corner reading a book. Me: "Hi." Tam: "Hello Mrs Sobukwe." Me: "Call me Spho." She nodded. Me: "How old are you?" Tam: "22." Me: "Aren't you supposed to be in school?" Tam: "I graduated last year." I nodded. Me: "How long have you been here?" Tam: "I started yesterday ma'am." Me: "Spho." Tam: "Sorry. Spho." Me: "You sleep here?" Tam: "No. I commute." I nodded. Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "I've been looking all over for you." He said to me. Me: "I'm here to fetch Lam. He wants to spend time with his brother." Lakhe: "I was thinking. How about after everyone has gone, you, me, him and Chris spend some family time? We could take a trip to Cape Town. I'll book it for tonight." Me: "I'm not going to Cape Town with you." I picked up Lam and walked out. Chris was in the back yard playing. Me: "Honey. Come say hi to Lammy?" Chris: "Moom!" He hissed, marching to me. Chris: "There's kids. You have to call me honey when there's nobody here." Me: "Okay. Chris. You want to say hi to your little brother?" He held out his arms and took him. They walked off to the play pit. I trusted Chris with Lam, I know he switches off everything and watches him like a hawk when they're together." Julie and Jake was sitting on the other side with a board game. What is wrong with these kids? They're supposed to be running around in the sun but they chose a shaded spot to play a board game? It's Chess! Me: "Hey guys." Julie: "Pregnant? Again?" Okay. Wow. This little bitch. Me: "Why aren't you playing with the other kids?" Julie: "You mean running in the sun like a lunatic until I'm sunburnt and coughing at night due to fever? Not to mention ruining my new dress, I picked it myself you know, so No thanks." Me: "How about you?" Jake: "What she said." LOL. Me: "You can't think for yourself?" He looked up at me then at Julie. Jake: "I can." Me: "Then go play." Jake: "I prefer being in the shade." Me: "What a sissy." I walked off. I don't even feel bad about insulting a 5 year old. They're trash the both of them. Me: "Oh and Julie, that is a hideous dress. You can do better." I went to the other kids taking turns riding a pony. Yes, Lakhe hired a pony. He's just so extra. Lakhe: "Spho?" Me: "I think we should feed them before they start eating grass." Lakhe: "Why are you being mean to the kids? Julie told me what you said." Me: "The same

Julie who said Pregnant Again? As a greeting? She's rude." Lakhe: "She's FIVE."
Me: "So?" Lakhe: "Okay. I feel like you're mad at me for something." Me: "Me being mad at you implies that I care about you and I don't, which means being mad would be futile." Lakhe: "Can we talk?" Me: "I want to go paint my face." I walked to the painting table. Lakhe: "Spho!" Rob: "Lakhe!" Lakhe: "Dad! You made it. Come this way." Rob: "I know this is a kids party but do you have whiskey?" Lakhe: "I had to hide it. Why do you want whiskey?" Rob: "I'm miserable. Why else." Lakhe: "A house full of kids? You're miserable." Rob: "Well... your mom's boyfriend is here. Your aunt isn't talking to me." Lakhe: "Okay, I can only deal with one problem at a time. Why is aunty not talking to you?" Rob: "I don't think that's im-" Lakhe: "You tried to hit on her. God, Tata. She's your sister!!" Rob: "Is she? She's the mother of my last born." Lakhe: "I'm not having this Conversation with you. Find Spho. Stay away from Dubs. I don't want a scene." He walked inside. Lakhe: "Perfect. Sit there two little love birds and let me take care of everything." Sands: "Hey.. What's that for?" Lakhe: "Spho is mad at me. She's not talking to me. She's insulting 5 year Olds too." Sands: "Insulting 5 year olds?" Lakhe: "Yeah. She told Jake he's a sissy and mocked Julie's dress." Sandile laughed. Lakhe: "Of course you'd find it funny. You know sometimes-" Sands: "Don't say it-" Lakhe: "I feel like you two are born by the same person. Honestly." Fez: "Sandile told her you're seeing someone." Lakhe: "Why would you do that!!!" He growled. Sands: "Damn... What's that for? Aren't you seeing someone?" Lakhe: "Where!!! Where am I fucking seeing someone Sandile Sobukwe!!!" He marched to the second living room. Stella: "Uh oh. What now." Lakhe: "Get out of my fucking house." He said to the man sitting next to her. Stella: "Masilakhe!" Lakhe: "I'm giving you two minutes. To get the fuck out of my house." Stella: "He's not going anywhere! He's here as my date-" Lakhe: "This is MY son's birthday party. You don't need a date!! I want him out in two minutes or I'll drag him with my garden rake." He walked out. Stella followed him to the kitchen. Stella: "That was uncalled for! Jeffrey is a nice man!" Lakhe: "He's in MY house. Drinking MY alcohol. On MY son's birthday. This is a family event mama. This is disrespectful of you. I don't care what's going on between you and dad, but you're not doing it here. Neither of you." Stella: "So he can bring his whore and I can't bring my boyfriend!" Lakhe: "Dabawo is not his whore! She is his sister!" Stella: "Yet they have a child!" Lakhe: "Mama. I am going to say this to you for the last time. This is my son's birthday. The first one I've ever planned. If you ruin it, don't bother coming back." Lakhe: "Dubs. Get the kids ready and hands washed up its time to eat." Sands: "What's up with you." Lakhe: "Leave me alone." Sands: "Okay. I'm sorry. I should've kept-" Lakhe: "Yes Sandile. You should've. Why would go and tell Spho I'm seeing someone?" Sands: "Aren't you?" Lakhe: "Who? I don't have the time. I'm always working and the little

time I get I'm with the kids!" Sands: "Your therapist?" Lakhe: "An old woman? That's what you've reduced me to?" He shook his head. All the kids were seated on the long table neatly after their hands were washed. Sands: "There's 16." Lakhe: "Huh?" Sands: "There's 16 kids on this table. I brought 17, one is missing." Lakhe looked around. Lakhe: "Jake." He looked at Chris, who had Lam on his lap. He wouldn't. He's too occupied. Is he? Lakhe: "Christian." Chris: "Daddy?" Lakhe: "Where is he?" Chris: "Whom?" Lakhe: "Don't you dare. Tell me where he is." Chris: "I don't know who you're talking about." Sandile went in the house searching. Lakhe: "Spho.." he walked to me. I had my face painted as a lady bug. Me: "What?" I stood up. He stared at me. Lakhe: "Uhm. Jake is missing." Me: "What! I told you to watch Chris!" Lakhe: "Chris has Lam. He wouldn't do that!" Me: "We're talking about Christian Sobukwe." I walked to him. Me: "Christian?" He looked up. Me: "Where is he?" Chris: "Mama I've been in the play pit since you gave me Lam. I don't know who you're talking about." Me: "Who here has seen Jake?" Silence. Oh no. Me: "Julie?" Julie: "Lady bug Spho." Usually I'd be offended but right now mommy was talking and I needed to find the child. Me: "Where is Jake?" Julie: "After you called him a sissy, he ran off to play. Last I saw him he was building a Fort with the boys." I looked at the boys for explanation. One of them, Gregor. Greg: "He pushed me and ran to the play pit." I looked at Chris. He looked back at me. Me: "Christian." His eyes darted behind me and back to me. He paid someone and unfortunately they won't talk until I raise the price. I can't believe I'm dealing with 5 year old terrorists. Me: "Whoever has information regarding Jake, should come forward. A reward will be given." Julie: "What is the reward?" There's only one thing kids respond to. Me: "Anything you want." Everyone lifted their hands mumbling and excited. Julie: "Enough!!" She stood up. Julie: "We don't know where Jake is. He disappeared." They all quieted down and looked at the table. Me: "He disappeared?" Julie: "You have a big house. It's possible." Me: "It is." I refuse to believe this. I can't. Me: "Okay. I hope you stick to your word. This is my house and I know where everything is and hides. I will find Jake. When I do, he will tell me what happened then....consequences." Gregor had his green eyes almost popping out of his head sweating bullets. Julie: "So you're done talking, can we eat now?" Me: "Nobody is eating until he's found." Julie: "Guess we'll starve to death then." She sat down. Fucking psychopath. I took Lam from Chris and went into the house. Sands: "I can't find him anywhere." Me: "Julie hid him and Gregor knows where." Rob: "Gone are the days where you could just whip the truth out these kids. Gone." He slurred. So Sir Rob was drunk. Lakhe: "Then let's pressure Gregor into confession." Sands: "He won't. He's loyal to nobody but Julie." Fez: "Why are we negotiating with 5 year olds?" He took off his shoe. Me: "Nobody is hitting anyone. Do you think Chris and Julie played Jake?"

Sands: "That's not possible. Chris is mad at Julie remember?" Lakhe: "or is he faking it?" Fez: "Why would he be faking it?" Lakhe: "Chris and Julie are inseparable. Jake just started that school and he saw Chris' business, he started something called the Boomer, a game he invented which he plays with a selected few. It got popular and everyone started playing. Leaving Chris out." Me: "Okay. So we have 5 year old gamblers." Sands: "So Julie, conspired with Chris to get Jake to like her so that they fight? And then what? Chris wins his friends back?" Julie: "Wrong. So that he gets expelled and never comes back." She stood at the door. Julie: "He ruined everything with his stupid Boomer game. Besides the fact that he's actually super dumb. Can we eat now?" Shock is an understatement. I was in awe of her. Protecting her mans integrity at 5. Wow. I need to take notes. Lakhe: "Julie. That is illegal." Julie: "You really want to talk to me about what's illegal?" I shook. Lakhe: "Okay. That's it. I'm calling your dad." Julie: "They don't have their phones." She held two iPhones. I needed to sit the fuck down. Lakhe: "What is it that you want." Julie: "A MacBook." Lakhe: "I'm not buying you a MacBook." Julie: "Really?" She smiled. Julie: "I think you have to now." Lakhe: "I don't." Julie: "You sure? I might have discovered...never mind. You don't want to buy me a MacBook." She walked out. Lakhe: "She's no longer friends with our son." Me: "I don't think you can make that decision." I pointed outside. Julie sat on the floor next to Chris. They were talking not even looking at each other but mouths moving. Sands: "Five year old Bonnie and Clyde. I need a drink." Lakhe: "Spho. You're the only one that can stop this." Me: "How?" Lakhe: "I don't know. Something!" Me: "Bring Gregor." Sandile went to fetch him. Greg came in and looked at me. He had a full head of red hair and powerful green eyes. He'd make a phenomenal lawyer. Me: "What do you want to be when you grow up Gregor." Greg: "A fighter pilot." Obviously. Me: "You want to be in the airforce?" He nodded. Me: "Why?" Greg: "It looks fun. I play it on my video game." Me: "Really.. what happens when you're trapped in one of the compartments in your plane and it's dropping out the sky heading for a fiery crash on the ground." Greg: "That never happens." Me: "Say it does." Greg: "I ask one of my co pilots to help." Me: "There is none." He swallowed saliva. Me: "You're in your favorite thing in the world but trapped, you're about to crash into the ground and die. Your family will never see you again. Your mom would cry herself to sleep." His bottom lip quivered. Me: "Your dad will stay up all night unable to sleep because he misses his boy. Then your little sister.... she's a baby now... she won't remember you. And just like that. You're Gone." Tears were streaming down his face. Me: "Where is Jake." Greg: "I can't tell you." He sobbed. Me: "Do you want me to put you on a plane Gregor?" Greg: "No!!!" He fell to his knees crying. Lakhe: "Spho!!!" Me: "He's about to break-" Lakhe: "He's a child! You're traumatizing him!" Me: "He'll be

fine." Lakhe: "No! Gregor. Nothing is happening to you okay? You're gonna live a long full life, nobody will forget you. Ever. Alright?" Greg nodded and ran out. Lakhe: "Stop doing that. These are kids." Me: "He was about to break and tell us." Sands: "I agree. You should've let him." Lakhe: "No! That's not happening." Julie: "Can we eat now?" She stood by the door again. Julie: "Chris is hungry." Me: "Chris will eat when we've found Jake!" I snapped. Julie: "You think that's helping?" Me: "Listen here Julie-" Lakhe: "Bring me Chris." He ordered. She turned and walked out. Lakhe: "Pull yourself together." Me: "How can I?" Chris: "Yes papa." Lakhe: "See all those presents. You're not getting them. You're not allowed to play outside anymore. You're grounded. Yes on your birthday. No dessert. No computer time. And no games." Chris: "Okay." Sands: "No!!! Not okay!!!" He stood up. He was actually really angry now. Sands: "You will stop this madness right now and fetch Jake! You will tell Julie to stop being disrespectful and apologize to your father. You are FIVE. No matter how old you get, this man will be above you and you and yours will obey his word. Get that kid back here. Do you fucking understand me." He hissed. Chris: "Yes Uncle Sandile." He scurried out. Within 5 minutes Chris walked back in the house with a red eyed Jake. He'd been crying shame. Sands: "Go to your room. We're having your party without you." Chris walked to the room holding back tears. Lakhe: "That was harsh Sandile." Sands: "Leave him. Let him cry it out and get angry at me. I'm not his father. You can only be his hero when he understands what he has done is wrong." Me: "But it's his birthday." Sands: "It's because it's his birthday. He obviously thinks he can get away with everything. No. Where were they hiding you Jake?" Jake: "In the tool house outside." I hugged him. Me: "I'm sorry. Okay? You didn't deserve that. Chris is punished. So will Julie when her dad's are here. You want some water?" Jake: "But it's his birthday." Me: "He hurt you. What if you weren't found-" Lakhe: "Okaay. That's enough. Jake, go to the table. You, lady need to talk to someone. This scary option is not right." Me: "How is it scary?" Rob: "Do we carry on without the birrday booyyy?" He's officially drunk. Lakhe: "Get him out of here before I lose my mind." Sandile took his father to the bedroom. Lakhe: "What do we do?" Me: "I don't want to embarrass him in front of his friends on his birthday." Lakhe: "I know but will he learn his lesson?" Me: "We could punish him after they've left." Lakhe: "I agree. No scary stories. Just general grounding." Me: "Sure. On what exactly? Chris is barely busy outside." Lakhe: "Except for his garden. No gardening for 3 weeks." Me: "Now who's trying to traumatize him?" Lakhe: "No electronics. Including his new calculator." Me: "You're delivering these news?" Lakhe: "I think we should send Sandile." Me: "That's the first time I've seen him that furious. You think he's okay?" Lakhe: "He's just hungry and frustrated. I'll talk to Chris. The party will go on. I'm only grounding him afterwards." Me: "Okay."

Please give him a little kiss to remind him he's still loved." Lakhe: "Just get the food ready." He walked to the bedroom.

After eating and having the whole magic show, the kids had some cake and gave Chris his presents. Then they were off outside going to play again but this time with Uncle Sandile in the Go-Karts race track. All of the boys were visibly excited. I took the girls inside to the indoor pool wearing their little swimming costumes and their hair tied up. The area was heated. I had Cucumber water served as well as sparkling apple juice which to them looked like champagne and they were happy as ever "drinking" like real women at a spa. Julie: "Are you joining us?" Me: "No. Tamsin will be here with you." Julie: "We don't know Tamsin. Where are you going?" Now I was confused. Julie: "Come. Get on your bikini and join us." Okay. I went to my room and washed my lady bug face off then got dressed in my Versace bikini. I took the matching towel and walked to the indoor pool. Julie: "Lovely! I asked Tamsin to get us some truffles." She offered me and everyone else one. Me: "Thank you Julie." Why was she being so nice? Julie: "I realize I was wrong earlier and for getting Chris in trouble and for talking back to you. I'm sorry." Me: "I forgive you. But it was also wrong taking your dads' phones." Julie: "True. But they know where I am and they're together so it's not really a problem." Another girl spoke up. "I want to ask a big girl question." Me: "Shoot Hannah" She sipped her juice dramatically. Han: "So those grow until that size?" I looked at my breasts and giggled. Me: "Yes. They do." "WOW!" They all said together and giggled. Han: "I want mine like that too. Mom has earrings on hers." I held back a laugh. Julie: "You mean a piercing?" Han: "A what?" Me: "So tell us about what your mom does." Han: "Oh she works at the bank." Me: "Really? Which one?" Han: "The Candy bank." I blinked. The Candy bank? Me: "Wow. That must be exciting for you." Han: "True. Plus she has different costumes that she wears underneath." . Me: "That's great Hannah. How about you Ashley?" Ash: "She works at the court. She's a judge." Me: "Amazing stuff. You want to be like her?" Ash: "Oh no. Her job is boring. I kind of like Hannah's moms job. I want to work at the Candy bank." They all agreed. Oh No. Julie: "What do you do? Chris mentioned you worked for your husband but now you're divorced he says. That you have your own company?" Me: "I do. An investment company." Tanya: "Is it exciting?" Me: "Yes. Very much. I've had to resource the program already implemented and start it from scratch. It was hard." Tanya: "I want to be a house wife and shop like my mom all day." Han: "That sounds good. I would love that." Me: "Your mom is not just a house wife. Who do you think cooks your breakfast, makes your lunch and your supper? Your bed always has clean sheets, the house is always clean, she takes you

to school and goes out to make sure you have what you need. House wife is the hardest job actually, you always have to be at work. Your house is your office." Julie: "That's true." She agreed? Oh my God. Why am I excited? Me: "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Julie: "I'm not sure. Between a scientist and a neurosurgeon. Chris and I haven't discussed it yet." Han: "Oooohhh. Chris again." Julie: "He's my best friend." Ash: "Is he? Do all your best friends give you flowers in the morning?" Julie: "He's naturally like that. Mom tell them." She called me mom? Me: "That's true. I also get flowers every morning." Tanya: "I think they like each other." Me: "Do you Julie?" Julie: "He's my best friend. Nothing else." Me: "I also had a best friend. But I was way older. He had nice blond hair and blue eyes. We always played together." Julie: "Mr Lakhe?" Me: "No." Ash: "Where is your best friend now?" Me: "He's in Cape Town. He's a cardiothoracic surgeon." Tanya: "What is that!" Julie: "Heart surgeon. He's really smart." Me: "He really is." Julie: "Smart doesn't buy this big house though. I'm gonna marry a business man. Like Mr Lakhe." She blushed. Ash: "Right? The first time I saw a Porsche, he was driving it and it looked, sooo good." Me: "When did you see him driving a Porsche?" Ash: "Yesterday. My dad's dream car. He's always talking about it. He would have a heart attack if he saw it." Lakhe doesn't have a Porsche. Where would he? Speak of the devil. He walked in the glass door. Lakhe: "Ladies." Them: "Heeeyyyy." These little hoes. Lakhe: "You seem to be enjoying yourselves." He looked at me. Me: "We are." Julie: "Would you like some juice?" Ash: "Yes. Come on in." Lakhe: "Isn't it for girls only?" Han: "We won't tell if you don't." I was so amused. Lakhe: "Okay. But only for a minute." He sat next to me. Julie: "So.. how are you? Really." Lakhe: "I'm okay thank you Julie." I sipped my juice. Ash: "And business?" He looked at me. I looked at my glass. Lakhe: "Business is great." Han: "I heard you're divorced now." He looked at me. Me: "Chris told them." Lakhe: "I am. Yes." Han: "Are you looking for a partner?" His eyes widened. Lakhe: "No. You're a child." Han: "Not for me. My mom. She's single." I almost spat my juice out laughing hysterically." Lakhe: "I...uhm..." Julie: "Her mom is a stripper. Not your type." Ash: "What is a stripper?" Julie: "That's self-explanatory Ashley. I'm disappointed in you." Han: "My mom is not a stripper. She works at the Candy bank!" Julie: "What do you think the Candy bank is? Candy, name of the establishment. Bank, raking money in. Costumes. How are you not getting this?" Lakhe: "Say something." He whispered to me. Han: "At least I don't have two dad's. I mean really." I couldn't breath. Julie: "Rather two dedicated dad's than none.. plus a stripper as a mom." That's it. I'm out. Hannah threw her juice at Julie's face. She stood and I held her back. Lakhe held Hannah. Han: "You are MEAN!!!" Julie: "I'm just telling you the truth! It's your mom who lied to you!!" Han: "You're the liar!!!" Me: "HEY!!! Stop it!" I yelled. Me: "Your mom works very hard to give you a good life and to get you

to a good school! Being a mom is hard!! Especially if you don't have a man like this to take care of your kids! Trust me when I say this. Your mother did everything she could to make sure you don't suffer! She would rather work at anything to give you something she never had and all of you are going to respect that. It doesn't matter what she does, or where. As long as she's a hardworking woman, who shows you love and appreciation, you respect it! Nobody is going to look down anyone for anything. Julie's dad's make her happy. They love her very much and they love each other. That's IT. Nothing else matters!! As long as they're there! I don't ever want to hear any of you make fun of each other's parents. We work hard enough as it is. Okay?"

Them: "Yes ma'am." I put Julie down. Julie: "I'm sorry Hannah. I like your mom anyway, she's nice. When I came to sleep over at your house, and you were already sleeping, she stayed up with me. She's the one who told me what she does. I still like her." Ash: "What is a str-" Me: "It doesn't matter now." Han: "I'm sorry for talking about your dads. Uncle Kev is really fun. I remember one time he dressed up as a clown and chased us around the house." They giggled.

Finally. Lakhe: "Now everyone is okay? We back to talking about crayons and Princess outfits right?" Julie: "I was promised a manicure." Lakhe: "True. They'll be here any minute. Sip your champagne." He looked at me. Lakhe: "Can we talk?" Me: "About what?" He pulled my hand out the room. Me: "Since when did you get a Porsche?" Lakhe: "Where did you hear that?" Me: "The Gossip Room." Lakhe: "Spho, I'm not seeing anyone. At all. Sandile lied." Me: "So? Why are you explaining yourself?" Lakhe: "I don't know. I just don't want us in a bad space. I thought that's why you're mad?" Me: "I'm not mad at you. You're allowed to live your life. I'm living mine. After the party, I'm patching things up with Siya. You should move on too Lakhe." Lakhe: "Okay. Well... I hope this isn't too extravagant." Me: "What did you do." He walked me to the garage. In my bikini. Luckily I still had the towel, I draped it around my waist. Lakhe: "I did buy a Porsche." I stared at the Beast in the garage. Porsche Panamera in blood red with black rims. Me: "It's gorgeous." Lakhe: "Do you like it?" Me: "It's a little extravagant considering you still have the RS5 and the ML. But I like it. It's good you've spoiled yourself with this." Lakhe: "It's not mine." Me: "Sandile?" Lakhe: "No. I bought it for you. Please don't freak out." Me: "I'm not freaking out." Lakhe: "Please. I cannot for the life of me see you get in that death trap you called a car again. I need something reliable especially if most of the time you're driving with my kids. Plus I wouldn't want anything to happen to you. Take this morning for example." Me: "I can't Lakhe." Lakhe: "This is not depending on me. This is a push present. For giving birth to my son." Me: "6 months ago. When did you buy this?" Lakhe: "I ordered it three months ago. Had special features added on it too." Me: "I can't Lakhe. I'm sorry. I'm not accepting this from you. It's too much." Lakhe: "How is it too much? I just want

you to be safe. Sphe please. I am begging you." Me: "I will buy myself a car. Don't worry. Not a second hand. It will be functional and brand new." Lakhe: "This is not even about getting you back. It's about our children. Their safety. Please get in the driver seat, I wanna show you something." Me: "No. You need to respect that Lakhe. And you need to respect me. I'm not accepting it." I walked back to the house.

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Finally the party was over. The girls had their manicures done and looked cleaned. The boys were scruffy and full of dirt. I had to dip them all in the swimming pool then dry them up. Sandile and Fez took them all home. The only people left were the family. I was sitting by the outside pool chair sipping juice watching the sunset. Lakhe sat next to me. Lakhe: "So it was a success." Me: "It really was. Where's Chris?" Lakhe: "Taking a nap with Lam." I nodded. Me: "I should get going." Lakhe: "You not staying for the family dinner?" Me: "I didn't know there was a family dinner." Lakhe: "I got the chefs here to cook for us and just be together one last time. Like the old times." Me: "Your parents hate me." Lakhe: "They can hate you from the other side of the road. You're the mother of my kids. The mother of this house." Me: "Thank you. I don't want to cause drama." Lakhe: "Having a lovely gourmet dinner is not causing drama. I love this bikini." Me: "You bought it for me when we were in Joburg before we got married." Lakhe: "I remember. It almost broke my bank balance." I laughed. Me: "As if anything can break that balance. It remains unshakeable." Lakhe: "True. Was actually thinking of buying a ship." Me: "Why?" Lakhe: "I want to venture into new business. A shipping company sounds good." Me: "Does it? Why not start with trucks? Something that will be on the road then branch out with ships. Most of the time ships go overseas. For months on end. Why do you want to take your business outside before it's even known in your country?" Lakhe: "So trucks it is." Me: "That's if you want to. I'm just saying." Lakhe: "I trust you. Your business input is important to me. You saved me millions just a few months ago." Me: "Well... if you lose your millions who's going to pay maintenance for my kids." He laughed. Lakhe: "Come work with me. Not as MD. CO-CEO. Now this has nothing to do with us or the kids. I'm just overwhelmed at work. I can't do it on my own and I don't see anyone fitting more than you." I smiled. Me: "I've got my own company now. Thank you." Lakhe: "You still haven't told me about it." Me: "Why do you want to know?" Lakhe: "Why is it such a secret?" Me: "Someone might try to sabotage me. How is your dad?" Lakhe: "A drunkard nowadays. He's always drinking." He looked a bit irritated. Me: "Don't be hard on him. He lost his

company. Something he built from scratch. He doesn't have a wife anymore. Cut him some slack." Lakhe: "If I lost my company would I be cut some slack?" Me: "Well.. I don't think you'd let it get that far. Your father is old, Lakhe." Lakhe: "Everything in business, I learnt from him. How is he the one to make the mistakes?" Me: "You went to school. He didn't." He stared in space. Lakhe: "It's just hard seeing your hero fall like that. He was my role model. Became a billionaire in record time. Something I'm striving for. Now..." Me: "Now he has you." My phone rang. Tar. Wow. Lakhe: "Everything okay?" Me: "Yeah." Lakhe: "I'll be in the house." He walked to the house. I answered. Me: "Hello?" Tar: "Hey. You busy?" Me: Kind of. I'm with family. What's up?" Tar: "So I just got off the phone with Thomas Dewardo. He wants to meet up with you." Me: "Thee Thomas?" Tar: "There's only one Dewardo. Yes. After your launch Monday. You keen?" Me: "Yes!!" Tar: "Great. We'll talk then." He hung up. Lakhe walked back to me carrying more juice. Lakhe: "As I was saying.. who do I look up to now? Who is going to give me sound business advice, well you of course but I don't want to bore you all the time." Me: "And I do get bored." I laughed. "Mr Lakhe, dinner is ready." One of the chefs announced. Lakhe: "Coming." The glass in his hand shaking. Me: "What's wrong?" Lakhe: "Nothing. Just a small tremor." I held his shivering hand. Me: "Can you feel anything?" Lakhe: "I'm fine Spho. Promise." Me: "How long has this been going on?" Lakhe: "About a month now." Sands: "TODAY, ladies!!" Oh kanene, Sandile and food.

I changed into a dress and went back to the lounge. The family was being seated at the table. I was a little nervous because I haven't been with them in a while. Lakhe: "Juice or water?" He pulled out a chair for me. Me: "Thank you. Just water." I sat down. He sent the chef/waiter for some water. Everybody knows Lakhe has money but to create a whole restaurant inside his house just for one night? Mxim. Me: "You need to get that hand checked out." I whispered. Lakhe: "My hand is fine. Please stop talking about it." He hissed. Me: "It could be a stroke." Lakhe: "It isn't!" Sands: "What's going on?" Lakhe: "Nothing." The gate buzzed. Lakhe: "Please don't be angry at me." Me: "I am not angry. What is going on?" Lakhe: "I invited someone over for dinner." Me: "Really Lakhe? Why would you force me to stay here? To watch you play house? Honestly, that's so childish!" Lakhe: "Why are you yelling!" I got up and went to the bedroom. Sands: "Really? We were so close to having a normal family dinner and you had to fuck it up!!" Stella: "Sandile! Language." Sands: "Everyone here is thinking it!!" He stood up. Lakhe: "Sit." Sands: "I'm not doing that!" The front door opened. Khaya walked in. Sands: "A hooker from Central would've landed you in hot waters, but this? You're trying to die. And I want to watch." He sat down. Lakhe: "This is her father, Sandile she only listens to

you-" Sands: "I am not going to get involved in this shit." Khaya: "He's right. I should leave." Lakhe: "No." Spho walked out the passage and stopped. Lakhe: "Give him a minute. Please?" Me: "He is a demon." Lakhe: "He is your fath-" Me: "Really Lakhe? We're going through this again? This is what you did the first time!! You brought Komander here and told me to forgive him. Then when he's active in our lives, ruining us, it's my fucking fault! NO!! I REFUSE TO BE YOUR BLAME GOAT! This time, this is all on you!! I am not going to be anywhere near this madness!!" Lakhe: "Khaya is not Komander-" Me: "What part of he's a demon do you not understand!!" Sarah(home assistant) appeared. Sarah: "Mr Lakhe?" Lakhe: "It's okay Sarah. The chefs signed confidentiality forms right?" Sarah: "Yes sir." Me: "Really? All you care about is not making it to the news?" Lakhe: "I'm protecting YOU!! This is YOUR family!" Me: "No. It is YOURS. I am not getting consumed by this again. He is all yours." Before I turned around, I fell to my knees, screaming. My chest was burning and so were my eyes. Literal fire. Lakhe: "Spho!!!" He gave me a bit of shake. Sands: "Shhhh... Drocores." I held his hand. Finally, my vision returning. Lakhe: "What the hell is going on!" Khaya: "It's the baby. He fights Spho everytime she rejects us... I really should leave-" Sands: "GO." He warned. Lakhe: "I am sorry. I didn't..." Sands: "Did you learn your lesson now? Are we going to have to go through this process and tear this family apart again?" Lakhe: "Her eyes caught fire." He whispered. Lakhe: "Red Orange flames Sandile." Sands: "Get her to bed. I'll fetch some water." Lakhe picked Spho up and took her to the bedroom. Stella: "What. The. Hell. Did I just see?" Nosi: "Bhuti I thought the demons were gone!! You promised!" She cried. Sands: "Everybody just calm down! Lakhe will address the family. I need to speak to the employees. Sarah, follow me." They went to the kitchen with the chefs. Sands: "So everyone of you here, has signed a confidentiality contract. You are legally obligated to keep quiet about anything you hear or see in here. Not even your pet can know. Your boss is a multimillionaire, he won't only sue you and your entire families, he will destroy your lives-" "Excuse me, if I may ask." Sands: "Your name?" "Oliver. Sir, this isn't any of our business I understand but I just saw fire, flames pouring out of that woman's eyes. I don't need to explain how scary that shit looks. I need to know and understand, am I safe? I don't want to die!!" They all nodded in agreement. One held up her hand. "I'm sure I just saw the devil. I don't feel comfortable with that. At all. I know Mr Lakhe is paying us doubling the usual fee but I'm not ready to go to hell." Sands: "Nobody is going to hell. Nobody is the devil here." The third one was sobbing into her wrist. Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "I know you're all a bit shaken but rest assured you're all safe. Nothing is coming near you. My wife is not the devil. I'm not going to lie about it but there's no need for you to be alarmed. Your safety here is paramount. I'll make sure you're adequately compensated for

the trauma. My wife is currently resting right now and she'll be okay. Any more questions?" Oliver: "What happened to her?" Lakhe: "She was in contact with a powerful demon a few months back." Oliver stared at him bewildered. Sarah: "So it just keeps coming back?" Lakhe: "No. She's carrying it's baby." Sarah: "But I thought you-" Lakhe: "I am the demon." Oliver: "You mean ... figuratively, right?" Lakhe: "No. Literally. You want to see-" "NO!!!" They screamed. Lakhe: "Good. Now I don't need to remind you the policy of privacy. Or you might never wake up to this life." Oliver: "I give you my word." Lakhe: "Is she gonna be okay?" The third chef was still crying into her hands. Sands: "I got it." He walked to her. Lakhe took the bottle of water and went back to his bedroom.

Lakhe walked in the bedroom with the water. Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "Hey." Lakhe: "How you feeling?" Me: "Okayish. Perhaps we should go back to dinner." Lakhe: "I... don't think that'll be a good idea." Me: "Oh God.. they saw it?" Lakhe: "Yes." Me: "Was it bad?" Lakhe: "It was horrible." Me: "Lakhe!" Lakhe: "What? You want me to lie?" Me: "You're supposed to make me feel better." Lakhe: "I'm not going to lie though. It was terrifying Spho. Everyone saw it but they'll get over it. I have addressed the staff, they're fine." Me: "They probably think I'm a monster. I just started screaming and couldn't see." Lakhe: "Actually... flames, real fire was burning out of your eyes." Me: "NO.." Lakhe: "I'm sorry Spho." I hugged my knees. This was bad. Lakhe: "I'll make sure Khaya is never near you agai-" Me: "Stop it! Stop talking about it. Don't say another word." Lakhe: "You can feel it starting?" I nodded. He took out his phone. Me: "Who you calling?" Lakhe: "The only person that can help you." He placed the phone on his ear. Lakhe: "Graham. Can you come over please? Spho needs your help... at my house of course. Sure." He hung up. Lakhe: "He's at church, he'll join us once he's done." Me: "I don't think that's a good idea. This baby is aggressive." Lakhe: "You're Queen of the pure. This baby can't survive without you so he better listen when mommy says no!" He yelled at my tummy. Lakhe: "Can you hear me boy? I said LISTEN!" I chuckled. Lakhe: "I'm sorry. For bringing him." Me: "It's fine. You couldn't have known." Lakhe: "No but I could. I never listen." Me: "How is the family?" Lakhe: "They'll be fine." Me: "Lakhe.. talk to them. They're confused and probably scared." Lakhe: "Very scared. I'm glad dad is still sleeping, he probably would have had another heart attack and died." Me: "Don't say that!" Lakhe: "Sorry. You hungry?" I nodded. He went to the kitchen. I sat there in the bedroom and closed my eyes. Flashing images played through my mind. Every memory from this bedroom since the day I first came here I suppose. Then I saw a small room, I've never been in there before but I saw a little boy and a woman. Lakhe came in with a tray.

Lakhe: "This is lamb. Do you eat it?" Me: "Yeah." Lakhe: "What's wrong?" Me: "What happened to your mom?" Lakhe: "She's sitting in the dining table. Why?" He set down the tray. Me: "Your biological mom." Lakhe: "She died." Me: "How?" Lakhe: "I told you. She was sick." Me: "She wasn't sick. She was drunk." He swallowed. Lakhe: "Are you gonna have juice or-" Me: "You strangled her." He looked at me. Me: "Why were you so angry at her?" Lakhe: "Did my dad tell you this?" Me: "Nobody told me. I just saw it in my head a minute ago." His eyes fell to the floor. Me: "You don't have to be afraid of me. I'm not judging you. Your mother was horrible." He sat down on the bed. Lakhe: "You know.. no one has ever known me as you do. I feel so naked when I'm around you. It's scary. Even before this whole bloodline thing. I don't want to expose you to my burdens Spho." Me: "That's why you're so angry at everything all the time. I don't think you smile more than two times a day and they're always for Lam." Lakhe: "I smile for you alot!" Me: "I'm talking about a genuine smile." Lakhe: "Okay. Fine. Eat your food." Me: "Thank you." I ate some veges and the meat a bit. Lakhe went to the bathroom for a shower. After eating I took my plate to the kitchen. Everyone at the dining table stared at me wide eyed. I was so embarrassed. I walked to the kitchen and instantly the three chefs froze. Sandile walked in behind me taking the tray. Sands: "Lam is awake." I backed out the kitchen and went to the nursery. The kids were awake. Chris had Lam on his lap hugging him and feeding him a bottle. Me: "Hey honey." Chris: "Hello mama." Me: "You want to give me your brother?" Chris: "No." Huh? Me: "I need to burp him sweetie." Chris: "I can burp him also. Lam is my baby today." I almost laughed. Me: "Really?" Chris: "Yeah. Did you know Uncle Kev said to Julie she might get a little brother? She hates the idea. I had to calm her down and Tell her it's okay. The baby won't take her place. I have the facts. You and daddy still give me time and kisses." Me: "You think so?" Chris: "I know so. Sometimes I go to my garden because you're always staring at me like a toy." Okay, wow. Me: "But I love you njena." Chris: "I love you too mama but I need space." Me: "Well.. you know me and your daddy are having another baby?" Chris: "Excuse me?" Me: "We're having another baby." Chris: "Another one? Not Lam?" Me: "Yes honey." Chris: "Yoh. Lam is not gonna like that at all." Me: "Really? Why not?" Chris: "You see him fight for your boobie mama. Imagine if he has to compete with another baby for it. Yuh. I'm going to boarding school." I laughed. Me: "Where did you learn about boarding school?" Chris: "Julie wants to go to a boarding school. She says she's gonna live there." Me: "Well.. you don't have to go. Lam will love his sibling." Chris: "I hope it's a girl. I want a little sister." Me: "Me too." Lakhe: "How about twins?" He walked in and sat down with us. Chris: "Hayi Tata. Sudlala kakbi." I laughed. Lakhe: "What did I do?" Chris: "Twins are gonna be heavy for mama. Lam looked heavy as a whale." We burst out laughing. Lakhe:

"How do you know that!" Chris: "You told me Tata that mommy has a baby in her tummy before Lam came." Me: "You told him that?" Lakhe: "I was half asleep. He was asking too many questions about why your tummy was big. I was tired." Me: "What if he asks how." I whispered. Chris: "Dad said he bought a pumpkin seed from Grandpa, not the one who likes wearing a jersey, other Grandpa, he says you swallowed the pumpkin seeds with water when you married him." I stared at Lakhe. Lakhe: "What was I supposed to say!" Me: "Anything that isn't relating to the actual truth?" Lakhe: "He'll only figure it out when he's in high school. Can I have Lam Chrissie?" Chris: "Nope." Me: "It's his baby today." Lakhe: "Oh? So.. when are you gonna play with your presents?" Chris: "No rush. They'll be here tomorrow." Me: "When will you eat?" Chris: "Not hungry." I looked at Lakhe. Lakhe: "I got it." He went to the kitchen. Chris: "So what are we gonna name the new baby?" Me: "Maybe Lelethu." Chris: "Lelethu.. Lelam." Me: "That's nice." Chris: "I think you should name him Christopher. Christopher Lelethu." I laughed. Chris: "Hayi ke mama. You don't want another Chrissie cakes?" Me: "I do my angel. But you're my only Chrissie cakes." Lakhe came into the room and closed the door. Lakhe: "You will eat." Chris: "I'm not giving you Lelam." Lakhe: "Why would you rename my son?" Chris: "He's mine now." Lakhe: "Okay. Khamisa ke." He fed him. Me: "So we're talking about names and Chris suggested, Christopher, I thought Lelethu." Lakhe: "Christopher? Hehake. I was thinking revisiting our original name. Silakhile?" Chris: "Baby Kiki." Lakhe: "It's a boy. So He will be Lakhi." Me: "How nice for you that all your son's are named after you." Lakhe: "It is." Me: "And if it's a girl?" Lakhe: "Sphosam?" An image flashed in my head. [Me as a toddler cuddled in big arms. "I will destroy life itself for you, Sphosam. I love you mntanam." He said.] Me: "No." Lakhe: "Is it because of ..." Me: "Partly. My daughter should have her own name, a unique one. I want her to build her own identity." Lakhe: "She's gonna be spoilt." Me: "She will not." Lakhe: "She'll have older brothers, Me as a father and Sandile as an uncle. Her sanity isn't safe. I'll follow her around like a puppy." I laughed. Me: "You're not doing that to my daughter." Lakhe: "OUR daughter. And I am. Nobody is coming near her until she's 45." Me: "Strict parents make naughty manipulative kids." Lakhe: "I'll manipulate her into being a nun." Chris: "There we go. He's sleeping again." Lam was snoring lightly in his arms. I cannot believe it. I took him to his little bed. Chris went to his corner to play. Lakhe: "So I wanted your opinion on something." Me: "Why are you whispering?" Lakhe: "I want to add on to Chris' name." Me: "add what? We already changed his surname to yours months ago." Lakhe: "I know but I want him to have a second name. Something that links to me. Khayalam has part of my name, the coming baby will be Silakhile, which has a similar ring to my name. Perhaps the Masi part. Masimthande, Masonwabe, or Masibuyelane? What do you think?" I laughed and fell on the

floor. I didn't see that one coming. Lakhe: "What?" Me: "You are something else yazi." He sat next to me. Lakhe: "I'm serious." Me: "No Lakhe. We're better as parents. Let's not complicate things." A knock on the door disturbed us. Lakhe: "I told them not to disturb us." Me: "Maybe it's important. Come in!" The door opened. Sands: "Graham is here. He's waiting in the library." Me: "I'm coming." I got up from the floor. Lakhe: "Should I come with you?" Me: "No. Look after the kids." Lakhe: "Oh?" Me: "Don't do that. Stop looking at me like I'm some hoe everytime I have to meet with a guy." Lakhe: "I don't do that!" Sands: "It might not be a hoe look, it's more like a 'I dare you to walk out that door' look. I'm unsure." Lakhe: "You two are crazy." I went to the study where Graham was waiting. He stood up when he saw me. Graham: "My queen." Me: "Stop that. I told you to call me Spho." Graham: "I can't help it. I kind of see your halo every time I look at you." Me: "Now I know you're lying." He laughed. I hugged him and froze. My eyes closed, time stood still. Everything was dark all around and I saw her. Hanging from a high ceiling, her skin turning purple. The lifeless body swaying in a slow circle until I looked at the hollow spaces that were supposed to be her eyes. I pushed him away from me so hard he fell against the large desk knocking everything off it and breaking lamps on the floor. I couldn't breath. Me: "Who was she?" ...

#189

Sandile barged into the room. He was probably eavesdropping. Sands: "What's going on here?" Graham got up from the floor brushing himself off. Graham: "I fell." He glimpsed at me. Sands: "You fell?" He looked at him then at me. Sands: "Okay." He folded his arms. Me: "I'll be fine." Sandile walked out. Me: "Away from the door." I heard his footsteps disappearing. Graham: "That hurt." Me: "Who is she?" Graham: "I don't know who you're talking about Spho." Me: "I saw her Graham. Her eyes gouged out, her body hanging on a very high ceiling. She had purple skin. Did you kill someone?" He looked me in the eye. Graham: "I didn't kill anyone." Me: "Then what was that?" Graham: "I don't know Spho." Me: "You're lying to me." Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "What the hell is going on here." Me: "Geez. I told you to stay with the kids." Lakhe: "The kids are fine. My office isn't. Look at this." He picked up his broken lamp. Lakhe: "What happened." Me: "Leave it. I'll clean it up." I bent down to pick up the pieces. Lakhe: "Careful. You'll hurt yourself. Let me do this." Me: "Your hand." Lakhe: "Will be fine. Carry on with Graham." Graham: "I actually think I'll come back lat-" Me: "You're not going anywhere! Who is she Graham?" Graham: "Spho. I don't know who you are talking about. I swear. I've never killed anyone in my life!" Me: "Then why do I see her hanging on the ceiling

everytime I touch you? I've only been seeing the past and present. Not the future." Graham: "You've been having visions?" Me: "Yes. Ugly ones." Graham: "Because of the baby. I need to speak to Sandile." He walked out. Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "I know what you're gonna say." Lakhe: "Hear me out. This baby is really scaring me. I don't want you alone. Why don't you stay here with the kids?" Me: "No." I walked to the door. He held my arm looking at the floor. Me: "What?" He pulled me closer to him. Lakhe: "I just want you to be safe Spho." Me: "I will be." His hands were holding my tummy. Lakhe: "Promise me." Me: "I promise." He kissed my forehead. I gently pushed him away. Me: "No." Lakhe: "I'm sorry." He walked out.

Graham stared at Sandile rolling a blunt by his jacuzzi tub. Sands: "Wanna join me? No clothes allowed in my jacuzzi tho." Graham: "No thank you. Sandile, we need more information on the Komander bloodline." Sands: "That name is not allowed in my room." Graham: "Okay. But I know you have the clues to help. We don't have much time. What did Koma- He give you that day?" Sands: "Nothing." He lit up the blunt. Graham: "Sandile!" Sands: "You do know the consequences of breaking a Komander promise right? I'm not trying to be a demon surrogate." Graham: "I thought you loved Spho." Sands: "I do. I love her with all my heart. If there was a different way to help her, I would do it but this is the only way. You have to believe me." Graham: "It doesn't look good, Sandile. What if He gave you the wrong information to help you breed the baby for him." Sands: "Then why doesn't Queen Mother appear and give us the proper formula if there is one?" Graham kept quiet. Sandile undressed. Sands: "thought as much." Graham: "What are you doing?" Sands: "Isn't it obvious? I told you no clothes in my hot tub." Graham looked away. Sands: "You gay or something?" Graham: "No." Sands: "Then why you looking away?" Graham: "Perhaps because I don't wanna see a grown mans dick." Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "Jesus Sandile! Get dressed!" Sands: "This is MY bedroom. And MY hot tub." He got inside and sat down, smoking. Lakhe: "Is that Marijuana? In my house!" Sands: "It's medicinal Marijuana." Lakhe: "Sandile there's kids in this house!" Sands: "What do you want grandpa?" Lakhe: "I need your help." Graham: "I'll be waiting in the lounge." He walked out. Sands: "How can I help?" Lakhe: "Spho." Sands: "What about her?" Lakhe: "I fucked up Sandile. I got so frustrated and out of my element that I forgot how I felt about her. Those demons took a huge toll on me and my emotions. Not to mention I was already a piece of shit before them." Sands: "I'm glad I didn't have to say it. You really are an ass. I do not know what she sees in you. I mean, 3 kids? What the hell." Lakhe: "She doesn't.. love me anymore. She's over me." Sands: "I thought you'd moved on." Lakhe: "I thought I'd moved on.

Then, today happened. When those stupid fools tried to hurt her.. my heart almost leaped out of my chest." Sands: "But you bought her a car 3 months ago." Lakhe: "Yes. I bought the car 3 months ago as a push present for giving birth to Lam and now pregnant with Lelethu. As the mother of my kids, I thought she deserved something nice. She rejected it." Sands: "So where do I fit in?" Lakhe: "I want her back Sandile. Clean. No dirty tricks. No sabotage. I just need a clean way to get her to fall in love with me again." Sands: "You got her to marry you and have your kids. I don't think it'd be that hard." Lakhe: "Oh but it is. The problem is that i don't know how I landed her in the first place. I don't know how I got her to love me. It is so scary." Sands: "Oh my God. You're actually serious. That is why you brought Khaya here? His approval of you meant the world to her so you were trying to relive it." Lakhe: "Can you sound a little less unhelpful?" Sands: "The mighty Lakhe. You know how powerful your name is? And you're having trouble landing a woman. It's actually funny." He laughed. Lakhe: "Not just any woman. The woman of my dreams. Are you gonna help me or not?" Sands: "Why don't you ask Chris?" Lakhe: "He's a child. I don't want him involved." Sands: "What makes you think I can help?" Lakhe: "Sandile. Please." Sandile looked up at him and back down at the water. Sands: "Fine." Lakhe: "You're the best brother." He walked out. Sands: "I know."

It was already getting dark outside and I was getting ready to leave. Lam and Chris were staying one more night with their dad. He would bring them home tomorrow. I had to go to Siya's house to talk to him. Me: "My Uber is outside." Lakhe: "There's more than enough cars in the driveway. Why don't you take one." Me: "No. But thank you." Lakhe: "Why can't I just drive you home then." Me: "I'm not going home. I'm going to Siya." He shifted uncomfortably. Lakhe: "I thought you broke up." Me: "Nope. Just a small argument. I'm going over to talk it through and make up." Lakhe: "As in sex?" I looked at him. He looked like a scared little boy. His eyes wide as golf balls. Me: "You don't need to know that. Thank you for dinner and the party. It was amazing." Lakhe: "Please don't go." Me: "Lakhe. You promised. We said coparenting." He nodded and took a deep breath. Me: "I'm going to say goodbye to the kids." I walked to the play room. Sandile was sitting there with Lam on his lap and Chris next to him. Lakhe followed behind me like a puppy. Lakhe: "Did I not leave you in your hot tub 20 minutes ago?" Sands: "20 minutes ago." Lakhe: "You smell like weed and you're carrying my children." Chris: "Daddy what's weed?" Sands: "Plants. I don't smell like weed. I was in the tub." Me: "Chrissie. Mommy is leaving honey." Chris: "Why." Me: "I don't live here baby. I'll see you in the morning. Your daddy will bring you to me okay?"

Chris: "Okay mama." I kissed him. Me: "I love you sweetie. Behave and take care of your brother okay?" Chris: "I love you too mummy." My heart hung. Me: "Lammy?" I brushed his head. He looked at me and smiled. Me: "I love you my sweet potato." I kissed him too. Sands: "I love you too mummy." I pinched his cheek. Sands: "So I don't get a kiss?" Me: "No." I got up. He looked at Lakhe behind me. Sands: "You okay?" Me: "He'll be fine. He's as strong as an ox. I'll see you guys tomorrow. My Uber is outside." I walked out with my bag. Sands: "Can you look a little less depressed?" Lakhe: "She's going to fuck him." He muttered under his breath. Sands: "Chris go get me a glass of water boy. Don't run." Chris got up and walked out. Sands: "She won't." Lakhe: "Sandile, what would stop her. I fucked up my chances. She won't even look at me long enough to breath twice. I disgust her. Look at Siyanda with his perfect smile and sickening sweet personality and shocking body. When does he fucking work out, he's always working!! He is so irritatingly perfect. Why is he even on earth? Sies." Sands: "So you're jeal-" Lakhe: "And you know the crazy thing is even with those demons he was like this! Spho wasn't phased byoh...." Sands: "Oh God... you promised you'll do this clean." Lakhe: "She can't sleep with him Sandile. I can't take it." Sands: "You need to tough your way through it like a man!" Lakhe: "I can't. I'm sorry. I'm going to call Khaya." He walked out. Sands: "Hey!! Masila-" He stood up. Sands: "Lam, cry real quick. I need to disturb your dad. Cry out loud. Do I have to pinch you?" He walked out the passage. Sands: "Bhuti you can't do this. What would Spho think of you if she finds out you put demons back in her boyfriend to break them up? What happens if they don't break up? Because let's calculate this real quick, she is carrying King of the Dark. That baby will attach to another demon quicker than you can say Fire. Don't be stupid." Lakhe: "You're right." Sands: "Tell you what. Put your son to sleep. Get ready. We have a problem to fix tonight." He gave him Lam. Sands: "Spho loved you. She always will. You just need to be a little less needy and desperate for attention." He walked to the kitchen.

I arrived at Siya's house and knocked on his door. It was a Saturday night. I knew he would be home with Niny to relax and unwind. Niny opened the door. Niny: "My queen." He bowed. Me: "Hi Niny. How are you?" Niny: "I am fine. And my queen?" Me: "Stand up. I'm okay." I walked in to the lounge. Siya was sitting on the couch with a glass of wine and a lady. Siya: "Spho." Me: "Siya." I looked at this girl. Siya: "Uhm. I wasn't expecting you. This is Sima. One of our new residents at the hospital. She's from Cape Town." He rambled. Siya: "What are you doing here?" Me: "Really Siyanda? It's a crime visiting my mans house?" Siya: "Spho. We spoke about this. You and I aren't working out." Me:

"Oh.." there was an awkward silence. Sima: "Perhaps I should leave-" Me: "Do that." Siya: "Spho. Don't do this." Me: "Don't do what? You want her to stay here and suck your dick?" Siya: "You're being rude! Sima is my colleague!" Me: "Really? And this is cosy colleague chills? With wine and dim lights?" Siya: "Spho what do you want? Me? Or the father of your kids?" Me: "How could you ask me that?" Siya: "There's your answer. You won't ever admit it. Would it kill you to choose me for once?" Me: "You both have... Siyanda you're..." Siya: "Yeah. We both have different roles in your life. He's your dream and I'm your reality." Me: "It's actually the other way around. You're the dream Siyanda." I walked out into the cold air. I forgot I didn't have a car so I had to walk to the bus stop. At least this was Summerstrand and safe. Getting home was easy and not stressful. My house empty and dark. Dabawo and Nosi were probably still at Lakhe's house so I could enjoy a sad few hours by myself. In about an hour I heard a knock on my door. I wonder who this be. I opened. Sibú: "Baby sis." I screamed and hugged him tight. Me: "When did you get here!" Sibú: "I just landed about an hour ago. I missed you." Me: "I missed you too Sibú." I hugged him again. Sibú: "You okay?" He held my face. Me: "Siya dumped me. Twice." Sibú: "He did WHAT." Me: "Yeah. Let it go. I'm just glad you're here. The kids are with their dad." Sibú: "Let me take you out for dinner. Wear something fancy." I smiled and giggled. Me: "Really?" Sibú: "Anything for my baby sister." He kissed my forehead. Sibú: "Go." I raced to my room to get dressed.

Lam was finally asleep. Lakhe got dressed and grabbed his keys. Sands: "Let me drive. You look like murder and today is not a good day for me to die." Lakhe: "Considering you came back to life twice already, I don't think you should be worried." Sands: "Don't talk about that, man. It still traumatizes me." Lakhe: "Everything traumatizes you." They got in the car and drove to the warehouse. The car was quiet. Sandile looked in the mirror and next to him. Sands: "Do you feel a vibe?" Lakhe: "No." Sands: "Really? Because my heart is thumping." Lakhe: "Just drive." Sands: "Do you think something is following us?" Lakhe: "I hear you misplaced the word 'someone' with 'something'. What is going on? What do you see?" Sands: "Nothing." Lakhe: "If one of your demon friends are tracing us Sandile!" Sands: "I don't have demon friends. I'm just feeling weird. Why didn't you bring your tools?" Lakhe: "I want to kill them with my bare hands." Sands: "I thought we would just scare them and let them go." Lakhe: "If I'd gotten there one minute later they would've raped and killed my wife. Scaring them is the last thing on my mind. And shut up." Sands: "There's the vibe I'm feeling. It's Your energy. Promise me you're not gonna turn into a demon?" Lakhe: "I will tape your mouth shut Sandile." Sands: "Okay." He

parked the car underground. Lakhe got out and walked inside the building. Sergio was waiting inside with the two robbers tied up. Serge: "Sir." Lakhe nodded. Serge: "My sandcastles." He smiled. Sands: "Hey you. What you eating?" Serge: "Just trail mix. Want some?" Sands: "Looks like dead cricket parts." Serge: "It's not." Lakhe: "You two done flirting?" Sands: "We're not flirting." Lakhe: "Yeah whatever. Get me the pliers." Sergio handed the over. Lakhe walked to one of the captives. Lakhe: "Open your mouth." The guy looked at him with wide open eyes. Lakhe: "I don't repeat myself." Man: "Look man, I'm so sorry-" Lakhe kicked his boot right into his balls and the man screamed out loud. He grabbed the tongue with the pliers. Lakhe: "You think you can just rock up out of nowhere and insult the mother of my kids?" He pulled out a knife. Sands: "Bhuti." Lakhe sliced off the tongue and threw it on the floor. Lakhe: "I've been settled for too long. Letting people walk all over me. People think they can rob me and hurt my family now. Not today." He walked over to the second. Lakhe: "Open your eyes." Man: "Please man. Please!!" Lakhe: "You'll either take off your pants. Or open your eyes." Sands: "Bhuti-" Lakhe: "WHAT!" He snapped. His eyes alight with fire. Sands: "Put it down." Lakhe: "You don't get to tell me nothing!" He spat. Sergio stepped back shivering to his core. Lakhe looked back at his victim. Lakhe: "I gave you an instruction." He hissed. The man swallowed and opened his eyes. The knife gouged into his eye and ripped it off its socket bouncing out on the floor. Sergio vomited in the corner violently. Lakhe: "Pants. Off." The victims screamed in pain. Lakhe: "PANTS OFF!!!" He roared. Sands: "Bhuti please-" Lakhe: "You want to join them? And tell your boyfriend over there if he can't hold himself in he will be kneeling here too." He grabbed the hammer and the one eyed man's leg. Lakhe: "So you're the rapist huh?" The man shook his head quickly. Lakhe: "Oh? So I'm a liar? What were you trying to do then?" He ripped the pants off picking up the hammer. Lakhe: "I need something a little more violent." Sandile lit a match and threw it on the man on the floor catching fire immediately. He pulled out his gun and pulled the trigger. The bullet penetrating his skull instantly. He aimed at the second man and shot him twice. Lakhe stared at him. Lakhe: "Why did you do that?" He breathed. Sands: "The demons are growing back in you. I cannot let that happen. Evil brews them. Your anger!! You know this. I can't let you go through it Masilakhe." Lakhe: "They deserve to die painfully!!!" He screamed. Sands: "Not through you." Lakhe walked out. Sands: "You okay?" He turned around. Sands: "Sergio?" His face was turning purple sliding down the wall. Sandile hit his back multiple times and he coughed out hard. Sands: "What the hell man?" Serge: "I... he.." Sands: "Shit.. what did you see..." He shook his head. Serge: "The devil."

#190

I had such a great time with Sibü. He took me to dinner and a movie afterwards. We strolled in the mall for a while then took it to the nearest restaurant. Sibü: "Did I tell you how much I've missed you? And your cooking? The middle east isn't very friendly with my meals." I laughed. Me: "I missed you too. You're welcome to stay at my house for as long as you want." Sibü: "No. You need your space. Plus, Sandile would kill me if I don't give him some attention. Is he still needy?" Me: "Now more than ever. How long are you staying?" He smiled. Sibü: "Permanently. I've realized something when I was gone. I left because I wanted to be far away from Komander and his demons and that shady life. What I forgot to take into account was how I felt when I first met you. When I learned that you're my blood sister. One I've been searching for all my life. I chose to sacrifice seeing you because of that man. The man that separated us to begin with. I couldn't let him win Spho. I can't leave you here with him either I can't imagine what you had to go through because of him. He already took our mother. I can't let him take you. I'm sorry my angel." I hugged him. Me: "Thank you Sibü." Sibü: "So.. I've decided to buy this." Me: "What?" He looked around. Me: "This restaurant?" He nodded. Me: "Oh my! That's amazing! I'm so happy for you." Sibü: "And.. I made an adjustment to the dessert menu. I named one after you." Me: "You're wonderful. You know that?" Sibü: "I'll never leave you again Spho. No matter what. We will fight it together." Me: "Yeah.. well. There's something I need to tell you." Sibü: "What is it?" Me: "I'm pregnant. Four months now. It's not looking good." Sibü: "What do you mean? Is it that thing with the spot in the heart like Lam had when you were pregnant?" Me: "No.. not medical. The baby is.. full dark. He was conceived by Kadir the second." Sibü: "Lakhe's full dark demon." He sighed. Sibü: "I should've known. I shouldn't have left you here with him!" Me: "I chose to stay Sibü. I was the one who told you, you could leave me. You couldn't have known." Sibü: "I could have. I was just so consumed with leaving it all behind." He stared at the floor. Sibü: "Did it hurt?" I held his hand. Me: "No." Sibü: "You don't have to lie to me Spho." Me: "I know. I'm gonna need you to do me a favor." Sibü: "Anything." Me: "Lakhe and Kadir are not the same person. Kadir was a demon-" Sibü: "Is. He still exists somewhere." Me: "Is. But he's no longer in Lakhe's body. You can't hate Lakhe for what Kadir did." Sibü: "Don't you?" I sighed. Sibü: "Exactly. You haven't healed. You hate him just as I do. Problem with you is that you always see the good in people Spho. Even when they hurt you." Me: "Can we stop talking about this?" Sibü: "No. I want to know. Tell me." Me: "It's hard Sibü. I love Lakhe but I hate him for what he's done. When he comes near me sometimes I cringe. I hate how his

skin feels when he touches me. Something that I used to love, now turned into hate. I can't connect to this baby at all. It's just there. Destroying everything in its growth." Sibü: "I know I won't be able to fix this. But I'm gonna be here for you. Whenever you need me." I nodded. Our dessert arrived. The 'Queen Spho' was its name. How sweet. It had all my favorites. Me: "This is amazing." Sibü: "I had the chefs whip something up. So tell me, work wise." Me: "Oh there's so much. You remember my media features?" Sibü: "Shit I remember that." Me: "Well, I got lawyers to help me clean up the mess. It was revealed that the sources were Zingisa, Stella and Onika." Sibü: "Who's Onika?" Me: "Dez's sister who crept into Lakhe's bed after." Sibü: "Wow. And Stella?" Me: "Wasn't surprised there. She never liked me. Faked everything." Sibü: "Zingi was your best friend." Me: "She got mad at me because she thought I was sleeping with Sandile just because I told her to stop doing it and we were close with Sandile." Sibü: "Is she crazy? Sandile is like your twin brother." Me: "Right? Anyway.. Rob decided to cut me off my program. Since it was under his company. Tar, My lawyer, helped me dig some dirt and they blasted Rob's company." Sibü: "Oh. My. God. You didn't." Me: "Didn't what?" Sibü: "Buy the empire?" He whispered. The corner of my eye caught someone walk in the door. Sibü: "Spho?" I looked at her and my heart stopped beating. Sibü looked as well. Sibü: "It can't be..." Me: "She died.. she's supposed to be.. I mourned her.." Sibü: "Spho.." he held my arm. I followed him out the restaurant.

Sunday morning I was biting my tongue wondering if I should go to church. All her friends will be there still comforting me but they thought she's dead. They won't believe me if I told them she isn't. How could my mother deceive me like this? I needed to speak to Graham. I went to the kitchen and started on breakfast for Sibü. He spent the night here in Sandile's room. The weird thing was Sandile not coming home because he was here most of the time. Look at me sounding clingy like a mama bear as if Sandile was a toddler who needed to be taken care of. Sometimes he felt like my baby. Sibü: "I missed this." He sat on the bar stool. Me: "The Arabs don't make eggs like I do." He laughed. Me: "How did you sleep." Sibü: "Weird. Did we really see her?" Me: "I kept tossing and turning thinking I was imagining it but...bhuti that was her." Sibü: "Why would she not inform you that she is alive then? Why not stay wherever she was hiding? Do you think Komander doesn't really kill his victims? Just recycles them into... more of his servants? Me: "I thought of that.. she does look a bit younger and more radiant. Clear signs of the K demon." Sibü: "Spho. There's something I have to tell you.." a knock on the door disturbed him. Me: "Hold on." I opened the door. It was Nosi, Vuyi and Dubs.

They all greeted Sibü and chatted with him. I finished his breakfast and gave him his food then started for the whole family. Sandile walked in and followed behind me in the kitchen like a baby. Sands: "Nobody cooked breakfast. Dubs just upped and left." Nosi: "You drove us here!" Sands: "Because nobody cares about me." Me: "Sit. You're making me dizzy. Your food will be ready in 10 minutes. Did you see your friend?" Sands: "What friend." I laughed. Sibü: "Mans." Sands: "Spho. Is there something talking to me?" Sibü: "Come on man." Sands: "Seriously. All I'm hearing is a voice and a human form of germs floating about in front of me. Dabawo come pray!" Sibü: "I got you a gift." Sands: "Seriously mummy this is freaking me out." Sibü: " Cohiba Behike cigars? Limited edition." Sandile looked at him, up and down. Sibü: "Redbreast Dream Cask, 32 year old whisk-" Sands: "You don't have to take me all the way to bed Senior, I am YOURS! Come here!" He hugged him. Sands: "Why did nobody tell me my Mans was home!" Me: "You didn't bother coming home last night. Who could tell you?" Sands: "I didn't know my presence would be missed, you even had to call Sibü. The big guns. Look at you all gained in the right places." Sibü: "Unlike you with your fat cheeks." Sands: "Spho." Me: "Leave him alone Sibü. Those are Lam's cheeks. Here. Eat and go get dressed." Sands: "Ohh.. I've got a thing." Me: "We're not going to church. We're gonna praise here. Call Fez." Sands: "Okay." They ate and I went to shower and dress up. I made the bed and cleaned then went out to the kitchen. Me: "Oh hey." Lakhe was here now. With the kids. I took Lam and kissed Chris. Sibü wasn't even trying to look pleased to see him. He walked to the room and closed the door behind him. Lakhe: "So he hates me I suppose." Sands: "Yeah.. but you'll get over it. Spho says we're gonna have a praise and worship right here." Lakhe: "I've got a thing to atten-" Me: "You're not going anywhere. Did you eat?" Lakhe: "Nobody cooked." Me: "So in that house if nobody cooks, you don't eat." Lakhe: "I usually eat at the office for breakfast then come here for supper." Now that he's saying it, it makes sense why he's always here in the evening. Smart. I made his breakfast and gave it to him. Graham arrived, Fez followed after him. Fez: "Yuh peto awuse Faboulous sana. How are you?" Me: "I'm great. Why are you dressed in bum shorts?" Fez: "It's a Sunday chill mfazi." Me: "We're having a praise and worship Fez!" Fez: "Like God cares what I'm wearing. What's important is my heart and my soul. This body will be left in the soil when I die therefore it should be seen whilst I'm alive." Me: "Sandile give Fez a pair of pants." They went to the room. Me: "Lakhe." Lakhe: "I'm not dressed in shorts." Me: "We're about to start." Lakhe: "I'm eating." Me: "Quicker." Tar knocked on the door and stepped in. Oh dear Lord. Does he ever dress average? His body was to die for. Everything sculpted to perfection. He was wearing tight black jeans holding his meaty thighs. A black shirt tucked in neatly, three buttons down. A pure gold chain around his

neck. With Gucci gentleman loafers on his feet. Yeses. I swallowed hard. Tar: "Uhm.. good morning. I didn't realize the whole family was here." Lakhe stared at him with contempt. Tar: "I wanted to talk to you about our meeting tomorrow." Lakhe: "As you can see. This is family time. So if you don't mind." Me: "Lakhe.." Tar: "I understand. Call me when you're free. Preferably before 8am tomorrow. Thomas Dewardo has a few things he wants to discuss and I want you to be as prepared as possible. I have faith in you." Me: "Why don't you stay for prai-" Lakhe: "No." Tar: "We'll talk later." Sands: "Hey!! Tarmenator!" Tar: "Hi Sandile." Sands: "You here for the prayer?" Tar: "No. Good day." He walked out. Oh his booty.. Lakhe cleared his throat. Lakhe: "Seriously?" Me: "What? Everybody gather around. It's time we begin." Sibü, Fez, dubs and the girls came out the rooms. Me: "I'd like for us all to close our eyes and take in time to think about our blessings. The things you have, your family, your health, our jobs, our education, the house we are living in and the people in this room. I want you to give thanks to God for making it possible and bringing you to this point in your life. Praise him. Tell him Lord, I appreciate your blessings in my life, tell Him Lord I am grateful for all you have bestowed upon me. Open your mouth and worship your creator!" ...

After two hours of praise and worship we closed. My gang was hungry again. I knew they wouldn't focused no longer. I started on the lamb shank I had taken out earlier. Sandile went to buy me a few bottles of wine. Well I only needed two cups for this meal but the rest they would drink. In a pot I added a bit of oil, bay leaves, rosemary, butter and crushed garlic on medium heat. I didn't know the exact measurements, the ancestors whisper in my ear when it's enough. I fried for about two minutes and I kid you not Sandile walked in the kitchen. Sands: "Are you done?" Me: "I just begun. Have a sandwich." Sands: "My hand hurts." Lakhe: "Hayi man Sandile!!" Sibü: "I'll do it. He's such a baby." Lakhe: "Spho is the one that baby's him." Sands: "Unomona!" Me: "Nobody is being babied." I added the lamb shank and fried it until the sides were brown. I added half of one cup of wine to deglaze the pot and I let it boil for 2 minutes. With a closed lid. I gave Sibü the ingredients for Sandile's sandwich and thorough instructions. Me: "He won't eat it if the tomato touches the bread, it needs to be in between the patty and egg." Sibü: "You're serious?" Me: "He says it'll stick to the top of his mouth and will complain all day. Trust me. Where is my actual toddler?" Lakhe: "in his garden. He asked for some space Spho. Leave the child." I went back to my cooking. Fez: "Mntase, ndincedise phi?" (where can I help). Me: "Friend please make me mash potatoes. Like a lot. I'm gonna do vegetables and mini corn. Chris loves corn." Lakhe: "A true Sobukwe." I chuckled. Lakhe: "How long till you

finish?" Me: "About two hours." Lakhe: "Okay. I'm going somewhere quick."
Me: "Please change Lam to his play gear and give him to his brother." Lakhe:
"Will do. Sandile, finish up." Sands: "Just started eating." Lakhe went to
change Lam. Sands: "You coming?" Sibü: "No. I've got work and such." Sands:
"You're avoiding him." Sibü: "I don't have to avoid him." Sands: "You just need
to talk." Sibü: "About what Sandile? How he abused my sister-" Me: "Bhuti!" Fez:
"Wait.. what?" His voice changed to a more manly one I didn't think he had.
Me: "Everybody just calm dow-" Fez: "Is that why you were in hospital Spho?
You almost died!" Me: "The potatoes are waiting Fezile! Bhuti, can I talk to you
for a second?" I pulled him to the lounge. Me: "Not everyone knows what
happened. I'd like for it to be kept in the past. Lakhe did wrong but he
apologized. He paid for it. I know it hurts you. Can we just try to be calm
about it. When you're ready, you can talk to him. I just don't want hostility
around the kids." Sibü: "Fine. But I will not forgive him." Me: "I don't expect you
to." He walked to his room. Lakhe came back with a dressed up Lam. Lakhe:
"Here he is. I heard a bit of a yell. What's going on?" Me: "Nothing. Take him to
Chrissie cakes." He took his son to his first and let him play. Lakhe: "I'll be back
soon." He and Sandile walked out to the car. Lakhe: "No eating in my car
Sandile." Sands: "You'll cry about it and be fine." He slipped into the passenger
seat. Sands: "So where am I being taken to daddy?" Lakhe: "Day care."
Sands: "Funny." Lakhe: "What's up with you anyway? You've gotten 10 times
more clingy than usual. Is this about mum and dad?" Sandile looked out the
window. Lakhe: "Okay. You're upset." Sands: "I never thought my dad would a
be a drunkard and my mum a cougar. They don't even care we exist. We're
their children." Lakhe: "I know. But Sandile you can't replace them with me
and Spho." Sands: "Why not? No matter what you two go through, you
always take care of us. I've never felt out of place when I'm around you. And
as far as I remember, you've been more of a dad for a while now." Lakhe:
"Okay. I'll talk to them. Okay?" Sands: "Where we going?" Lakhe: "Do you think
I dress old?" Sands: "Not really. You dress cool." Lakhe: "Yeah but.. stylish?"
Sands: "This is about Tar isn't it?" Lakhe: "She stared at him like he's melted
cheese!" Sandile laughed. Lakhe: "I proposed to her dressed in an old
tracksuit by the side of the road. I've never really Thought about looking
dapper. I wear suits that fit me perfectly and all but that boy and his trendy
Tom Ford shit drives me crazy!!!" Sandile dissolved in his seat, laughing silently.
Lakhe: "Sandile!" Sands: "Fine!" He sat up and wiped his tears. Sands: "Okay.
But you know most of his clothes are custom made for him right? And besides
that, he buys the rest online in expensive boutiques. Yes you can afford that
and all but the time." Lakhe: "How much is a boutique?" Sands: "No." Lakhe:
"No, think about it. Vuyi could run it. Nosi will headhunt three upcoming
designers to make custom clothes for me and our family." Sands: "And now

that you've made it to the media everyone will run for it." Lakhe: "Great. I'll get my assistant to draw it up. For now, my immediate problem." Sands: "Fine. Let's start at Fabiani, dapperman." Lakhe: "I don't want those sketchy jeans with labels like I'm some hobo." Sands: "This will go much quicker if you just keep quiet and let me help you. Drive to Bay west." ..

#191

Sibu was at his restaurant making orders for stock. It was closed on Sundays to give the workers a day off. "You should have two shifts to not over work your staff. And a new menu to introduce you as a new owner." Sibu turned around and stared at his father. Sibu: "What the hell are you doing here? I made it clear that I never wanted to see you again." Kom: "Yeah.. but I wanted to see you." Sibu: "What do you want?" Kom: "To see the success you're becoming. You make me so proud my son. I am glad you aren't depending on Masilakhe or some stupid civil job. You're a Komander. You deserve to be a millionaire-" Sibu: "I am NOT a Komander! I am Sibulele and nothing else!" Kom: "You keep fighting the name but you accepted the money." Sibu: "I'd lost everything because of you. You expected me to starve?" Kom: "Of course not. That wouldn't be a good look for our bloodline. None of us are allowed to starve. Does Spho know you're richer than her ex?" Sibu: "I gave the money away. Well, some of it." Kom: "Now why would you do that?" Sibu: "It's too much! What would I do with half a billion!" Kom: "Live comfortably for the rest of your life. Live in a hotel, own a hotel, buy a boat, several. You could do alot." Sibu: "I don't want your money father. I only accepted it to build myself up. When I start making money, I am paying you back every single cent." Kom: "I can't accept that. You're my first born. My heir. You don't pay back nothing. This is your birth right." Sibu: "I want nothing that ties me to you. You hurt Spho. Look at her now, she's carrying that demon baby!" Kom: "I know. I'm sorry." Sibu: "You think that's gonna fix it?" Kom: "She doesn't want me near her." Sibu: "And neither do I!" Kom: "Sibulele. I am the only parent alive you've got." Sibu: "We can survive." Kom: "Okay. But know that I love you both. Ask Spho to help you with the revamp of this place. She'll turn it into magic." He walked to the door. Sibu: "Wait." Kom: "Yes." Sibu: "Why did you let Spho go through grief, when you knew she was alive." Kom: "You saw her." Sibu: "Tata why do you do this? We've suffered in our lives and you just sit back and let it happen, why don't you ever put us out of our misery because I know as well as you do, you are able. You have the power. Why do you make us suffer?" Kom: "It's never my intention to make you suffer, Sibulele." He walked out. Sibu held on the counter and sighed. Nosi: "Hey you." He got a

fright. Sibü: "How the..how did you get in?" Nosi: "The door was unlocked."
Sibü: "Just unlocked? You didn't see anyone?" Nosi: "Nope. You work here now?" Sibü: "Something like that. How did you find me?" Nosi: "I'm a psychic."
Sibü laughed. Sibü: "Seriously. How?" Nosi: "I followed you but then I got distracted by this crazy sale so I came back once I was done." She put down her shopping bags. Sibü: "Okay." He looked around. Sibü: "So..why are you here?" She moved closer to him. Sibü: "Nosi.." She held his waist. Sibü: "No! You're my friends sister. Stop it." She kissed his lips holding his face. He held her waist pulling her closer then let go shaking his head. Sibü: "No." Nosi: "Why." She rubbed his crotch area. Sibü: "Nosi, you're a kid. You can't do this." Nosi: "Then why are you so hard?" Sibü: "I.." he pushed her away. Sibü: "I'm not doing this with you." He walked away. Nosi: "Then what about that other night?" Sibü: "That was six months ago. Nothing happened Nosi." Nosi: "Your tongue happened. You wanted me. What stopped you?" Sibü: "Doesn't it bother you that we're kinda related?" Nosi: "No we're not." Sibü: "My sister is married to your brother." Nosi: "Sibulele.. You enjoyed having me in your mouth." Sibü: "I did." Nosi: "Then what's the problem?" Sibü: "Nosi I can't. I love our family. This will cause tension. A lot has happened already. I cannot be the black sheep again. I'm sorry." Nosi: "You won't be the black sheep-" Sibü: "I said No. You're young." He closed his books. Sibü: "I'm taking you home. Let's go." She stared at him. Sibü: "Don't even." He walked to the door. Sibü: "Come."...

After the shopping spree, back in Lakhe's house. Lakhe: "Do these pants even fit me?" Sands: "Perfectly. Look at your butt." Lakhe: "That's what I'm worried about. Isn't it too... out there?" Sands: "You did gain a bit of weight but you're still good." Lakhe: "What does Spho see in that guy?" Sands: "His personality matches his clothes. He dresses up like that to hide his insecurities and the other thing." Lakhe: "What other thing?" Sands: "You don't see it?" Lakhe: "No." Sands: "Face value. Mans not pretty. Duh." Lakhe: "Yeah well. Spho still drools over him. Maybe I should join the gym. Give me your details." Sands: "I don't have money." Lakhe: "Really Sandile? Since when? I want your personal details. We're joining the gym." Sands: "but I didn't do anything wrong." Lakhe: "Look at your cheeks." Sands: "Spho says they cute!" Lakhe: "She's lying and feeding you to look like a teddy bear. Give me your info." Sands: "Yuh. Hayi suka." Lakhe: "Should I tuck this in?" Sands: "Yes. Why are you worried about the gym, you have a flat...flattish... Okay not too bad, stomach." Lakhe: "Yes but it will look better if it's abs." Sands: "I think you doing it wrong. Spho is pregnant. Her tummy is about to balloon out. Then you gonna be rocking abs, she will hate you. I say get a bit of belly and support her." Lakhe: "You

think?" Sands: "I know." Lakhe: "Well.. it does make sense." He tucked in the white shirt. Sands: "One more thing." He unbuttoned his brother's shirt three buttons. Sands: "There. Perfect. Let's go." Lakhe: "Think she'll like it?" Sands: "Of course. Put on your Versace cologne. Not too much though. Okay let's go." Lakhe looked at himself in the mirror. Lakhe: "I don't know Sandile. I look 25." Sands: "Hayi ke I don't know what you want from me. You could change back into your smelly tracksuit and never find out if she likes you trendy or you could march out that door like the confident man you raised me to be. Come on now!" He walked out. Lakhe: "My tracksuits don't smell. They're always clean!" Sands: "That's what you're worried about?" They got into the car. Sands: "Just trust me." Lakhe: "They're tight." Sands: "Fit over function. You won't need to do anything." He drove. Lakhe: "I have kids that like to play. Lam who wants me to run after him when he crawls. Chris who always has experiments to try out." Sands: "You will be fine. Stop being so nervous." Lakhe: "Fine. So what's up with Sibulele?" Sands: "He hates you. Severely. For abusing his sister." Lakhe: "I don't blame him. I hate myself more than anything. I could've fought more with the demon. I could've prevented this whole thing." Sands: "It was inside you. Controlling you. It wouldn't have been possible." Lakhe: "Yeah but Kadir and Komodus can. Babalo I mean." Sands: "Kadir and Komodus are blood born. They can learn how to switch out of and into their demon forms within a few days. You don't have Komander blood-" Lakhe: "I do now." He looked out the window. Sands: "The fucks that supposed to mean!" Lakhe: "For me to go Full dark, Kadir had to fuse our blood together. Unfortunately that's all I can say about the procedure. The picture is still vivid in my mind. Like I'm in hell." Sands: "I'm sorry. So what does this mean? That you're a Komander?" Lakhe: "That's why I wanted to talk to him. I don't know what I am now." Sands: "I think I can confirm for him... you might be. Last night, Sergio swore he saw Satan himself. He's shaken to the core. You know his girlfriend called me this morning asking what I did to him apparently he wet the bed. Me! As if I'm the problem." Lakhe: "Thanks." Sands: "I don't mean it like that." Lakhe: "Wait.. Sergio has a girlfriend?" Sands: "Yep. I was surprised as you are." He parked the car outside Spho's house. Lakhe: "So you admit he has gay tendencies." Sands: "Well.. no. He's a normal heterosexual man. Just because he gave me a nickname doesn't mean he's gay." Lakhe: "It's not about the nickname. It's about the "My" in front of it. It's about the glitter in his eyes when he stares at you. Oh and he does that alot. He is in love with you. Why you always attract men?" Sands: "Siya asked me the same question. I must be really hot." Lakhe: "Mxim. How do I look?" Sands: "What did I tell you about confidence?" Lakhe: "Okay." They walked to the door.

I was setting the table because nobody else was gonna do it. They were all in the lounge watching TV. Chris: "Mummy." Me: "Yes pumpkin?" Chris: "I'm really hungry. Where's daddy?" Me: "He should be on his way now. We're gonna eat soon okay? Wash your hands my love." Fez opened the door. Sandile and Lakhe walked in. Me: "Finally. We were waiting for you." I went to fetch the remaining caserole dish from the kitchen. Sandile cleared his throat. Me: "I know Sandile but it's a buffet. Make do. There's enough for two servings." Nosi: "Woowooow Bhuti? You look.... uhm. Wow!" Lakhe: "Is that sarcastic or...." Nosi laughed. Me: "Can we all take our seats?" Sandile cleared his throat extra long. Me: "What is it Sandile!" I turned to look at him. He smiled. I looked at Lakhe. Me: "Oh my God." I was more stunned than anything. When last did I see him dressed this casually sexy? His thighs. Oh my. When did I become this overly horny little hoe. I needed to control myself. Well.. probably because I haven't had sex in over 4 months. Me: "Uhm.. you look great Lakhe. Got a date?" Sands: "Yes! Nothing serious though. More like a get to know each other. You think he looks good?" Me: "Well.. yeah. She'll be impressed." Sands: "Doesn't he look snazzy?" Me: "He does." I turned to the table. Lakhe: "Spho I-" Sandile grabbed his arm. Sands: "Stay strong. Do not be desperate." Everyone sat down on their chairs. Dabawo said a prayer of thanks and we started eating. I couldn't get anything in. Sands: "Not hungry Spho?" Me: "Not really." Sands: "You want me to whip you up a smoothie?" Lakhe: "I can do it for-" Sands: "No. You don't have the time for that. You got to get going for your date." He stood up and walked to the kitchen. Nosi: "Tell us about your date bhuti?" Lakhe stared at his plate. Sands: "Don't be shy. You told me she's a business lawyer." Vuyi: "Wow. That's impressive. I wanted to be a lawyer." Nosi: "Why?" Me: "It's the most tedious job on the planet." Lakhe: "I ag-" Sands: "She also has businesses. Tell them bhuti." Nosi: "When do we meet her?" Lakhe: "Soon." He looked at Sandile. Sandile smiled at him pushing the blender button. Me: "I'm gonna go check on my son." I got up and went to the room. Lakhe got up. Sands: "Don't even piss me off." Lakhe: "She's gonna get mad and hate me!" He hissed. Sands: "She doesn't hate you. She's jealous. Keep it together!" Nosi: "What's going on?" Sibuyi: "Mystery girlfriend doesn't exist, it's a plot to get Spho jealous." Sands: "How did you know?" Sibuyi: "You just said it." Sands: "Yeah but mystery woman does exist!" Sibuyi: "I know you well enough to understand when you're concocting a stupid plan. Spho is not that gullible. She'll be over this plot the minute she's occupied by something else and she'll forget all about it. Mind you she has a meeting tomorrow with a billionaire. I smell a project brewing. One that will put every single one of you, at the back of her mind." He got up and went to his room. Sands: "Jesus, I hate it when he's right." Lakhe: "A meeting with a billionaire? Who?" Vuyi: "Thomas Deward or something that's what the lawyer said-" Lakhe: "NO!! Sandile what have

you done!" Sands: "What did I do now?" Lakhe: "If Spho meets with that guy. All bets are off." Sands: "It's just business." Lakhe: "HAVE YOU SEEN HIM?" Sands: "Who? You mean tommy_d? The one with the blond hair like a surfer and blue eyes? I looove that guy! Him and his brother Trevor! I have them on Instagram. They are soo cool... Oh shit." Lakhe: "l.." Sands: "You look like you're about to faint... sir?" Nosi: "Bhuti why don't you just ask Spho out if you don't want her dating anyone else?" Lakhe: "I tried. She doesn't want me." Vuyi: "Are you sure? Because Siya was on the back burner for months. They didn't even get to.... dance." Lakhe: "At all?" Vuyi: "Nope." Lakhe: "But then Tar." Nosi: "Women have crushes all the time. Spho is single, she is allowed to drool and stare at hot guys. There's nothing wrong with that." Lakhe: "Graham?" Grey looked up at him. Graham: "You're asking for my opinion?" Sands: "You've been Grave quiet this entire time. What's your take on it?" Graham: "I'm not that experienced when it comes to women in general so I wouldn't know." Lakhe: "Dubs?" Dubs: "Ngaklinge undifake." (Don't include me.) Lakhe: "The only person who could help me actually hates me." Nosi: "Sibu doesn't hate you." Vuyi: "He does. I see the look in his eyes." Sands: "So any ideas? The man is suffering here." Lakhe: "And why would Thomas want to meet Spho? He's a property billionaire." Nosi: "He has a publishing company called Poison. Not doing so well even with his large profile. The content is explicit and a little under value. The quality even worse. He doesn't know what he's doing." She scrolled through her phone. Lakhe: "How did you know that?" Nosi: "I'm googling him right now. He does look gorgeous though." Lakhe: "I'm going to confess." Sands: "And look like a wimp? No sir. You soldier through this. Don't worry about Thomas. He's not Spho's type." Nosi: "He likes black women too. He's dated about three. Here's pictures." Sands: "That's why I like him. He's so chill." Lakhe: "You like just about every man that is my potential threat. The thought that I might be scared to lose the love of my life is a joke to you. For once, I just wanted someone to have my back." He grabbed his keys and walked out. Sands: "Damn." Dubs: "Myeke. Mnike ixesha ehle umoya." Sands: "I feel guilty Dabawo. It's just that I like people. I never think how he would feel. Spho wouldn't date Thomas. He is actually repulsive." Sibu: "Spho wouldn't date anyone. Have you ever stopped to think about how she is coping? How she is feeling? The baby inside her could be tearing her apart and all you can think of is dates." He washed his plate. Sands: "Sibu, what's going on?" Sibu: "What's going on is, I want my sister to be enjoy her life a little more. Without being suffocated. She needs to breath, to relax, to rest. Spho has to wake up every day take care of all of us, AND her own children then still go to work. It's about time we pulled up our socks here. From now on, I don't want no slacking. I'm going to do the dishes, Mondays to Wednesdays. Sandile you do them Thursday and Friday. Nosi and Vuyi, Saturday and

Sunday. At least four times a week, someone else can do the cooking." Dubs: "So ndim u-someone else." Sibu: "No Dabawo. Anyone amongst us here. We can grab a broom and sweep once in a while, mop or do the laundry. Just help!" He rinsed his dish and walked out. Sands: "Wow." Dubs: "He's right. Spho umithi, akanohleli nje uyasebenza. Nosi, bhala phantsi schedule."

Lakhe sat in his garden drinking a whiskey. "That doesn't help." A voice said behind him. He looked back and saw Khaya. Khaya: "Your dad let me in." Lakhe: "Hi." Khaya: "What's going on." Lakhe: "Nothing." Khaya: "You drank half a bottle of whiskey for nothing?" Lakhe: "What's the point. Nobody cares if I live or die." Khaya: "That's incorrect. Everyone cares about you." Lakhe: "And Spho? She doesn't." Khaya: "So you're back to your senses." Lakhe poured another double shot. Khaya took it from his hand. Khaya: "Tell me what you need." Lakhe: "I just want her back. I want my life back. I can't.. I can't do anything. I feel like such a fool. If I hear she's seeing or even looking at another guy I get so jealous and I can't control it. I've never minded her dude friends but now.." Khaya: "Everything will be enhanced Lakhe. You were a demon. You might still have the strength because you were full dark." Lakhe: "Does it mean I'm a Komander too?" Khaya: "I think he himself will have to clarify. I've never had the procedure done. But it's not a bad thing to be. Spho is a Komander but the pure kind. So is Lam. The good side. You choose which path to follow and to be honest, your best choice is hers. You can't let evil consume you." Lakhe: "How can I make her notice me Tata?" Khaya: "Start by being yourself. Spho fell in love with Lakhe not anyone else. Be kind and patient. Learn to help and appreciate her." Lakhe: "I do help and appreciate her. I bought her a car." Khaya: "That's arrogant Lakhe trying to control. By helping and appreciating, you could give her a break and do things for her. No, not hire other people to do it. Do it yourself." Lakhe: "I get it. I just don't think it will work." Khaya: "Tell me what you want." Lakhe: "I want my wife. I want her to be happy, stress-free. I want her in my arms. To comfort her, care for her. I want to raise my children in one house, happily." Khaya: "Give it to the universe. Every chance you get. Let it know what you want and you will have it. Spho loves you. You just need to give her some time." Lakhe: "She did love me. But the day she found out she was pregnant again. I could see it in her eyes. They were full of regret. Hate. Pain. She didn't feel anything for me. Because of what I did to her." He wiped his tear. Lakhe: "That was the day I lost her." He stood up and walked to his room. Khaya: "So you're giving up?" He asked behind him? Lakhe: "I've already lost." ...

I got ready for my meeting on really early Monday morning, feeling super groggy. We'd stayed up late with Tar discussing my launch and meeting afterwards with Thomas. For once he wasn't acting weird. He made jokes and laughed then left around 11 at night. After my shower, I got dressed. A soft pink bandage dress with off the shoulder long sleeves. I did my make up quick and thorough enough then wore my shoes. Today Dubs would take care of the kids when they wake. I couldn't get a hold of Lakhe and didn't want to rely on his showing up. Nosi and Vuyi were young. I didn't want them to have my responsibility yet. Speaking of Nosi, I knocked on her bedroom door. Nosi: "Enter." She's awake? That's a first. I walked in and she was sitting on the bed. Me: "Hey baby." She looked at me. Her eyes swollen red. I closed the door and sat next to her. Me: "I was thinking today I'd take you to the doctor with me. Why are you crying?" Nosi: "I just did the test." Me: "And..?" Nosi: "Positive. I'm pregnant." I hugged her. Me: "I'm sorry angel." Nosi: "How could I have been so stupid." Me: "No Nosi. You weren't stupid. You made a mistake like everyone else does. Later today I have an appointment. We're going okay? I love you. Try not think about it too much. Where's your sister?" Nosi: "With her mom. She's leaving today." Me: "Okay. I'll try and be quick with my day. Aren't you going to school? Sibú is going to drop you. Get dressed." Nosi: "Okay." I went to Sibú in the kitchen. Tar was here to pick me up. He stood by the door uncomfortably. Me: "Hi. Sleep well?" He nodded. So we're back to being cold? Great. Me: "Hello Sibú." Sibú: "Hey." He was eating cereal. Making me feel guilty for not making them breakfast. I must leave before Sandile wakes up God. Please. Me: "I have two favors to ask you." Sibú: "If one of them is making Sandile breakfast, I'm not doing it." Me: "Please bhuti? You know he'll whine all day. I beg you." Sibú: "Fine. What else?" Me: "Please drop Nosi off at school?" Sibú: "I can't do that." Me: "Bhuti I don't have another choice. I need someone I can trust to see her into school. No, not Sandile because I need someone sensitive to handle her emotions today. She's not okay. I trust you with this." Sibú: "I'm sensitive?" Me: "in a good way. You're the best brother ever." I hugged him. Sibú: "I'm doing this for him." He held his hand on my tummy. Me: "She appreciates it. Love you." I took my bag. Sibú: "love you too." Me: "Lets go Tar." Tar and I walked to his car and he drove us off. Tar: "So Lakhe has two brothers?" Me: "No. Only Sandile." Tar: "So.. Who's that?" Me: "Sibú is my brother." Tar: "blood brother?" Me: "Yeah." Tar: "Oh. I didn't know that." Me: "He was in the middle east for a while." Tar: "He looks like Lakhe so I thought.." Me: "You thought his whole family came to live with me." He looked at me then back at the road. Tar: "His whole family did. His aunt, sisters and brother. If his parents weren't so vile they probably would

be there too. You attract goodness. Everyone wants to be around you." Me: "Thank you Tar. That's a very nice thing to say." We arrived at me temporary building and went inside. My approach was still discreet. I was launching the project in two different places. Tar would be at the actual company building with the board and I'd be watching. I wrote the speech he would say on my behalf. I wasn't ready to let the world I was the new owner yet, I needed to make this project a success without negative publicity. After checking the security, Tar was about to leave. Tar: "Dimitri is on his way. To wish you well and of course look out for you. I won't be more than 3 hours." Me: "Thank you Tar." He walked out.

Lakhe woke up at 11am. Something was ringing inside his head painfully. Then a knock on the door. Lakhe: "What the fuck do you want!!!!" Sarah: "Sir. It's me. Your doctor is here." Lakhe: "I don't need a doctor!" Sarah: "Of course not. But he's here. Your lawyer has been trying to call you for hours. He's on his way. Please get dressed and ready." The door opened and the doctor walked in. Lakhe: "You're not my doctor." Doc: "No. I'm not. Doctor Ngudla sent me. Can I begin?" Lakhe: "I don't need-" She grabbed his arm strapping a belt on it. Lakhe: "Hey!" Doc: "I'm just doing my job. I'm checking your blood pressure right now. Please sit still." She set up her equipment. Lakhe: "Is that an IV drip? I don't need a drip." Doc: "You need the alcohol out of your system. Sit still." She held his arm inserting the needle. Doc: "You always drink yourself into a coma or its just a special occasion today?" Lakhe: "Mxim." Sandile walked in. Sands: "So no breakfast here too?" Lakhe: "Didn't your mummy make you breakfast?" Sands: "She left early and let SibU do it. SIBU. Obviously trying to kill me. Who's this?" Doc: "Miya." Sands: "What's going on? Are you sick?" Lakhe: "Only now you notice?" Miya: "He's just hung over." Sands: "Heee hayi bhuti. Why the drama? You need a whole doctor for a hangover? Anyway, make me breakfast." Lakhe: "I am strapped with a drip to the bed Sandile!! Make your own breakfast!!" Sands: "Why are you yelling?" Lakhe: "Get out of my room and leave me alone." Sands: "Wow. I'm sorry about yesterday. That's what I came to tell you. I do have you back. Always. You know that." He walked out. Miya: "What was that about?" Lakhe: "He's just so stressful. Sandile is a child." Miya: "Did you have to scream at him like that?" Lakhe: "You don't know anything." Miya: "I know you're being unfair." Lakhe: "Look, I got divorced. Okay? And he took her side. She's the world to him. Looks out for her and would die for her. Which is nice. I just ... sometimes I wish he'd act the same for me. I know he loves me and all but he doesn't show it. Is that a bad thing? To want to be appreciated?" Miya: "Maybe because you never gave him the platform to do it before? When you were growing up. Did

you let him show you his love?" Lakhe: "Not really. We're men. We don't do that." Miya: "Exactly. Your ex wife is female. She became his sister and by the looks of things, took care of him-" Lakhe: "Took care of him? No. She adopted him! He lives with her!" Miya: "You don't give a lot of room to feel. You're really closed off." Lakhe: "You've only been here for less than 10 minutes." Miya: "And you've tried to chase me out twice. Your brother won't just know what you need when you don't tell him. Let him know that you also like being appreciated." Lakhe: "And asked nicely. You know when he asks her for breakfast, he even says please with a smile on his face. Look at how he bulldozed here. My health means nothing to him." Miya: "Your health means nothing to you either. Look at you. What's bothering you?" Lakhe: "I knew when we divorced everyone would leave with her. She's naturally a good person. I don't even have friends to talk to." Miya: "Have you tried making friends?" Lakhe: "Yeah. The one I tried turned into a demon." She laughed. Miya: "You're funny. So you don't have people in your corner that you share a beer with and watch soccer with?" Lakhe: "Well.. Dumi betrayed me. So no. No friends whatsoever." Miya: "Do you even go out?" Lakhe: "To where?" Miya: "Out to bars and stuff." Lakhe: "The things I find fun aren't things other people find fun." Miya: "Okay. What do you like?" Lakhe: "Shooting. Fast Driving. Extreme sports. I haven't done those in years. I once went skydiving. The most thrilling time of my life." Miya: "Shooting range. Advanced driving courses. Extreme sports social networks. These things exist because a lot of other people like you do them too. Tell you what. Search for an extreme sports Facebook group and join it. You'll find a lot of people there ready to join you for a good time. Visit a shooting range even by yourself. Ask them at that centre if you could help out with anything. Be social. That's how you make friends. Not by roaring and intimidating people." Lakhe: "Imagine going to a shooting range all by myself like a psychopath." She laughed. Lakhe: "Why don't you come with me?" Miya: "Oh no. I'm afraid of guns." Lakhe: "Come on. It will be fun. I can't go there by myself. Afterwards I'll let you do anything you want." Miya: "Anything?" Lakhe: "I don't like the smile on your face right now. Can I just pay you instead?" Miya: "You don't get away that easily. If I go to a shooting range, you're taking me to a lifestyle expo." Lakhe: "See? I knew you were angling for something wild. I can't do lifestyle expos." Miya: "Yes you can. It's just a festival. Eating great food, tasting local wines, learning about new products. It will be amazing. I promise." Lakhe: "Fine. But two hours max." Miya: "Two hours is all I need. They even have meditation and massage therapy. So perhaps you might want to do that to get rid of stress." He smiled. Dumi knocked on the open door. Lakhe: "Come on in." Miya: "I should get going." Lakhe: "Already?" Miya: "Yeah. You're fine now. Headache? And don't lie." He smiled. Miya: "Here's my card." She left her

business card on the table then packed her things. Lakhe: "Thanks Miya. I feel great." Miya: "Don't forget to eat. And the expo starts tomorrow. It'll be going on for the whole week but I'd like to get a head start." She walked out. Dumi: "She's pretty." Lakhe: "Hm?" Dumi: "Your doctor. I said she's pretty." Lakhe: "Oh yeah. Came to cure my hangover. I need the bathroom. My God this place is a mess. I wonder what she thinks of me." He walked to the bathroom. Dumi: "I have news that might unsettle you." Lakhe: "Just a minute." He brushed his teeth and took a quick shower. Lakhe: "So what's up?" He walked to the room draped in a towel. Dumi: "Your father's company just launched the project. Investors are piling up. The share price shot through the roof. Lakhe, this person knows what they're doing. It's madness. Look." Lakhe: "Fucking bastard. Which project is this?" Dumi: "The youth thing your dad was working on." Lakhe: "Spho's project. Wow." Dumi: "So what now." Lakhe: "Buy some shares. I want to be on that board. Right now." Dumi: "Can't. The board positions are closed. This person has a collective of all 92% of the shares. All the members sold them once the company fell. Whoever this is raked them all up. They knew exactly what they were doing." Lakhe: "You'd swear they've been waiting on this moment for a long time. This was calculated. Who has the remaining 8%?" Dumi: "Two members of the board. Both of them have 4 each." Lakhe: "Don't you need at least 10 to sit on the board?" Dumi: "Whoever this guy is changed all the rules. There's only 5 board members now. The company is performing at an alarming rate." Lakhe: "Dumisani I need to know who this person is." Dumi: "I tried. Nobody knows. Not even the board. It's like they're a ghost." Lakhe: "Nobody is a ghost. This person is bound to slip." Dumi: "One more thing." Lakhe: "What." Dumi: "Tar is their lawyer." Lakhe: "TAR? How is that even possible!!" Dumi: "Tar is a slimy lawyer with his brother Dimitri. Their entire firm actually. Whoever this is, is connected. What if it's Spho?" Lakhe: "How do you know Tar is the lawyer of this person?" Dumi: "He gave the opening speech at the launch on behalf of the CEO." Lakhe: "It's impossible that it's Spho. She has a meeting with Thomas today and honestly, my ex is smart but for this? Spho loves credit for her work because she's good and honest. So it can't be her." Dumi: "She might know. She's close with Tar." Lakhe: "She is."

It was time for my meeting with Thomas Dewardo. I was interested to know what exactly he needed from me. Until Sandile walked in. How the hell did he find me. Phof we talking about Sandile here. Me: "How?" Sands: "Does it even matter? I didn't eat." Me: "I asked Sibulele to make you breakfast." Sands: "He left me a soggy egg and half cooked bacon." Me: "I'm sorry. Listen I have to go to my meeting, I'll make it up to you." Sands: "Spho." Me: "Hold on. Let me

ask Janice to get you something." Sands: "Lakhe is dating. For real this time. Last night it was a joke thing but today, it's true." Me: "Why are you telling me this?" Sands: "I don't want to keep you in the dark." Me: "Thank you Sandile. Lakhe is a grown man. He can do as he pleases." Tar: "Ready?" Me: "Yes. Look, Sandile I have to go to my meeting sweetie. After that I have a doctor appointment. Right now, I need you to find something to chew on. Then later when I'm back, I'll make you your favorite supper." Sands: "Promise me." Me: "I promise." He walked out. Me: "Lets go Tar." I grabbed my purse and locked my office. Me: "Lock up Janice." She nodded. When I left the office, my assistant had to leave too. There was no point in her staying here when I wasn't around. She started today, hired by Tar and I think they're fucking on the down low because of the eye contact but that's none of my business. The attraction I had for him has suddenly died down since last night when we were busy with work. I think it's better this way anyway. I'm glad. We got in the car and he drove to the restaurant. Tar: "You baby him too much." Me: "Who?" Tar: "Your ex husband's brother. He relies on you for eating. That's just... weird." Me: "Sandile is a special case. I'm already used to him. I don't mind. Besides, nobody ever gives him attention." Tar: "Hmm..." Me: "What?" Tar: "He thinks you're his mom." Me: "He doesn't think that. He knows who his mom is. Leave Sandile alone please. He's going through a lot already. His parents are divorced. Father turned drunkard has no time for him. His mom is chasing boys his age. He's the middle troublesome child that nobody wants around. Lakhe is always moody for some reason. Why can't I baby Sandile? Who is he supposed to rely on?" Tar: "I'm not fighting with you but you need to teach him to be independent. He needs to grow up and face life. Sooner or later you're gonna find someone to date and he can't be around as much anymore. I don't know of any man who'd let the brother of the ex of his girl live with his girl. Not on my watch." Me: "Well, lucky for him. I'm not looking to date. Can we change the subject." Tar: "Alright mama bear." He chuckled.

Thomas chose Cubana as a meeting place. Cubana. We sat on the balcony and he ordered drinks. Me: "No. Just water for me thanks." Thomas: "Come on. It's after 12." Me: "I'm pregnant." Thomas: "Oh? Wow I didn't... Okay." He downed all three shots like they were clean drinking water. Thomas: "So you're the daddy?" He looked at Tar. Me: "No. My ex is the daddy. This is my lawyer and business manager. Tar." Thomas: "Oh good. We spoke on the phone. I remember. Anyway, my brother was supposed to be joining me but there's a crisis at our company so he headed back to Johannesburg." He flipped his hair aside like a teenage heart throb. I wanted to laugh. This guy was probably 30 or something. Nosi and Vuyi would probably be melting right

now. Me: "Alright. So Thomas, what is it can I help you with." Thomas: "Poison." Me: "Uhm... I don't have access to such... things." He laughed. Thomas: "No. My publishing company. It's called Poison. Look, we all have dreams when growing up. Most of the time, dreams don't make you money. I went into property investment to make money. I don't enjoy it. I hate it. I don't even live in a house, I live on a yacht in Cape Town. Anyway, my company grew a bit started from flipping houses to developing buildings and building new ones. I merged it with my brothers construction company and it got wild. He built and I sold. Anyway, now that my money is made for me I decided to start a publishing company. My dream as a kid was to be a photographer and a content creator. So I started the company but I was hella clueless. I thought it would work out like the property saga. I thought wrong. It's dying an ugly death. I need you to save my dream." Me: "A publishing company?" Thomas: "Yes. I heard you're the best person to build a brand and develop a brand on this side of the hemisphere. I'm willing to go all out. Please help me." I scratched my head. My profile just keeps getting bigger. Me: "Okay. Give me two weeks. I've started a new project. I will appoint and head up a team to look into Poison." I don't know but that name sounded sour on my tongue. Thomas: "Absolutely wonderful! Now, for my easiest part. How much will you cost me?" Tar laughed. Time to get into business.

My meeting with Thomas went really well. He wasn't as shallow and arrogant as I thought he would be. There's not many billionaires I know, he's probably the youngest one on my list but all of them have the same arrogant behavior. I was glad he wasn't like that. If anything, being in his company makes you feel comfortable. He listens intently when another person speaks and nods occasionally to let you know he's still interested in the conversation. I liked that. A very humble guy. Nosi will be so happy. Tar drove me to the airport. I wanted to hire a car for the week. Tar: "So that Thomas huh." Me: "He's great right?" Tar: "Yeah. I like him. No hidden agenda, no attitude. Willing to learn. I think you'll enjoy working with him." Me: "I think so too. And you too. He invited you to his yacht party. Well, in his case, a house party." He laughed. Tar: "Imagine me at a yacht party. He's crazy." Me: "You know I have the smaller company I'd started way before this whole thing." Tar: "The one you started after you left Lakhe's company? Yeah." Me: "I'll sign Thomas under it as my client." Tar: "Good. Because I don't want you messing the project with building another brand. You're going to be amazing." I smiled. Tar dropped me off at the airport and I went to hire a small car then drove to fetch Nosi for our appointment. On our way to the doctor I could tell she wasn't at all happy. I stopped at McDonald's for a Mcflurry for the both of us then went to

the doctor. While waiting for our appointment and eating our ice cream. Me: "How are you feeling?" Nosi: "Weird." Me: "About the baby?" She nodded. The doctor called us in. I was scanned first. Then Nosi after me. I was already used to this and to be honest... I don't know how I felt about my unborn baby. I focused my attention on Nosi for now. She was very quiet staring at the screen. The doctor was talking to her and she just lay there. Once we were done, I got her dressed up and took our vitamins. Me: "Honey are you okay?" She nodded and smiled. Nosi: "Our kids are going to be twin-cousins." I laughed. Me: "Well." Nosi: "Spho, can you do me a favor?" Me: "What?" Nosi: "Will you tell my brother? Please. He'll get so angry at me. You're the only one that can talk to him. Please." Me: "Lakhe?" I was fucking scared! Does she know uLakhe? Yuh. Nosi: "Please." Me: "Uhm.." I sighed. Me: "Okay. I'll talk to him but Nosi you need to take responsibility. I'll tell Lakhe and calm him down but you're telling your own parents. The only reason I'm doing this is because I don't want Lakhe to go strangle this boy. So you want to keep the baby?" She smiled and nodded. Nosi: "I suppose." Me: "That's good Nosi. It's not gonna be easy but we're all here." Nosi: "I'll stop stressing when my brother calms down." We got home and I knew I had a responsibility bigger than anything. Sandile's food. I walked in the house. The kids were quietly sitting on the floor staring at the TV. Sandile on the couch watching TV. Dubs was knitting on the second couch. What was going on. Me: "Molweni." They greeted back. I changed really quick and went back to the kitchen to cook. Dubs: "Hayi Spho ndizaw'pheka mfazi." (I am going to cook). Me: "Hayi dubs. It's fine." I was going to make beef stew and dumplings. Nosi: "Need help?" Me: "Please peel the potatoes for me." She took a peeler and a potato. Nosi: "So how was Tommy?" Me: "Absolutely amazing. He is so nice Nosi. OMG." Nosi: "Really?" Me: "Yeah. Even Tar likes him." Nosi: "And Tar doesn't like just anyone. Wow. I so wanna meet him before ...this balloons out." I laughed. Me: "I will set up something. I'm sure he won't mind just a hi from his biggest fan." She squealed in excitement. Lam crawled into the kitchen. Me: "Hello pumpkin bear." He held on my pant and sobbed. His hungry sob. Sobukwe men and their food. I picked him up and gave him a boob to suck on. His dad was probably on his way now so he would have to take over for about an hour until I'm done cooking. Lam was fed and burped and back on the floor crawling around so I could continue cooking. I finished Two hours later. Lakhe was not here yet. Me: "Sandile Where's your brother?" Sands: "Status meeting." Someone was unhappy. I set the table just as Sibuhle walked in. He looked at Sandile and Nosi with a frown. Sibuhle: "Hello Spho." Me: "Hello bhuti. Just on time. I'm about to dish. Wash up quick." He went to his room. I took Lam off the floor. He was sticky with candy probably from Chris. Me: "Sweetie how was school?" Chris: "It was crazy. Gregor got into a fight with Jake again." Me: "About what?"

Chris: "I'm not sure. I was taking a nap. Teacher Stacy gave me free time because I was a good boy in the morning. I spent it the best way I knew how. A young nap." Me: "Sounds like a lot of fun." Chris: "It is. Teacher Stacy said we're not going to school tomorrow because it's a public holiday." Me: "That's true. So what do you wanna do?" Chris: "I'm going to work with you." Me: "I'm not working tomorrow my angel. Maybe you and Lam and me can go somewhere special and have fun. Wouldn't you like that?" Chris: "Can uncle Sandile come too?" Me: "Yes sure baby. He can." Sands: "I actually won't be here tomorrow. I have to attend to something. Boogie has an appointment with the vet, it's gonna get really traumatic." Me: "Oh. I see. Later then." We sat down at the table. Dubs said a short prayer and we ate after. Lakhe really wasn't going to show up? Wow. We ate our dinner as quiet as possible. My family wasn't at all excited today. I wonder what was wrong. Me: "So.. I met with Thomas Dewardo today." Sibü: "How was he?" Me: "An absolute sweetheart. He is really humble." Sands: "Told you." Me: "Even Tar likes him." Sands: "Okay. That's just alot. How is it possible to be liked by Tar?" Me: "Crazy right? Anyway, I'm signing him and will start working on the secret soon. Oh my, I just got an idea." I couldn't tell anyone but Tar but I think I should rename Thomas' company 'The Secret' instead of Poison. I went to the bedroom to write it down. I'll work on it tonight. Sibü: "What did I tell you?" Sands: "She really doesn't care anymore. You were right. Work distracts Spho from anything that hurts her. Crap. Now what." Sibü: "The other thing." Sands: "Which is?" Sibü: "What did I tell you about helping around this house?" Sands: "But my duty isn't till Thursday." Sibü: "So you're not gonna sweep a bit or even do something about the yard?" Sands: "I'm stressed Sibü. I'll get someone to do the yard. I'll sweep. Dubs has a leg problem, I told her not to do anything. She's trying to hide it." Dubs: "Ndiyakuva." Sibü: "Tomorrow I'm taking you to a doctor. Nosi, please at least sort out the laundry. Separating whites from colors and all. I'll wash it when I'm back tomorrow." I walked back to the dining room and the conversation died down. I don't know what was going on here but they were all acting weird. Me: "Sandile have yoh spoken to Lakhe at all today? Is he okay? It's unlike him to just disappear and not even ask about the kids all day." Sands: "I went to his house. He was with someone. I told you this." I nodded. The house was tense again. After eating I took my plates to the kitchen. Sibü: "I'll wash them Spho." Me: "Thank you." I went to bath Chris and Lam then dressed them up for bed. They would sleep in my room tonight. Chris always slept with Dubs or in his own room but today, he just wanted his mama. He really missed me. I let them play on the bed while I watched. Lam spotted a boob and came rushing. He threw himself on my breast. I couldn't help laughing. Why sana? He kept slipping ke phof, I had to hold him and let him suck. Me: "Your porridge is waiting on you Mr." Chris: "He

really doesn't like it." Me: "Right? But he has to eat something." Chris: "Maybe he will eat mash pumpkin like you make me for a snack." Me: "I will try that. Thank you my angel." *****

I finally got them down to sleep and I could start working. Or perhaps not. I needed the rest and to watch my babies breathing. For once let me not do anything and relax. Lakhe sent me an email that he won't be available till Wednesday. Lol, an email. Wooooow. Because Chris and Lam can read. I just responded with an "Okay." I don't want to start nothing. Chris had stopped asking for the other parent when he was with one anyway. Which was good I suppose. He was understanding now that we're no longer an item or getting together. Lam was a baby. He won't be able to tell. See this is why I enjoyed working, I didn't think about all this when working. I got up and went to my little desk. My phone beeped again. Sms. Nosi. "Pls help me." What? I went to her room and knocked slightly. I could hear her lightly sobbing. I opened the door and walked into darkness. Me: "Nosi?" She sniffed. I put on the light and walked to her bed. Me: "What's wrong?" She was sobbing laying on her side. Me: "Baby what's going on?" She pulled down her duvet covers. There was a pool of blood under her. Me: "Oh my God! Nosi!" I pulled her up and dressed her in a gown. Nosi: "She's gone Spho." She cried in my arms. My heart trembled. Me: "Lets go to the hospital my angel." I went to ask dubs to keep an eye on the kids and got Nosi into the car. Sandile and Sibulele weren't home. I was shaking uncontrollably, the car controls just making me dizzy. Nosi was still crying beside me. Oh yhini bawo. I finally got into gear and drove to hospital.

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I'd been at the hospital for four hours and couldn't get a hold of anyone. Lakhe, Sibulele or Sandile. It was just so cruel. Nosi was sedated and sleeping. Her crying was still stuck in my head. It was the most painful sobbing I've ever heard in my life. It brought tears to my eyes just thinking about it. I didn't want to drive home at this time, it was about 2am. I did think about calling Stella but I didn't have her number and I didn't really want to see her again. But Nosi almost died. Her daughter. Last born. I swallowed my pride and looked for the number. Dabawo didn't have it either. Perhaps Tar could find out but it's 2am. I dialed for Rob first. Rang to voice-mail, twice. I dialed Tar then. He picked up almost immediately. Tar: "Why are you still awake?" Me: "I'm in hospital." Tar: "Which hospital?" Me: "Greena-" He hung up. WOW. That was rude. For the 11th time I called Lakhe. No answer. Same as Sandile and Sibulele. I am officially angry at them all. Tar jogged into the hospital in 5

minutes. What the... I stood up. Tar: "I thought you're hurt. What happened?"
Me: "Lakhe's sister. I can't get hold of them, I need Stella's number." Tar:
"Okay." He made calls pacing the floor. Tar: "Someone is looking into it. You're
cold." He took off his jacket and dressed me. Me: "Thanks." Tar: "Did you eat?"
Me: "No, can you-" He walked off. Great. I sat there looking at the floor.
"Spho." I knew that voice. I looked up and saw my dad standing there.
Khaya: "Is everything okay? Why are you here?" Me: "Just hanging out." I
missed him so much. Why did he have to choose the other side. Khaya:
"Spho." Me: "Nosi is here. I can't get hold of her family." Khaya: "Do you want
me to-" Me: "No. Tar is here to help. Thank you." Khaya: "Spho, I love you. No
matter what. You'll always be my princess." He walked away. I loved him too.
But he is a demon now. Tar came back with a paper bag. Me: "Is that fresh?"
He nodded. I took a few nibbles and gave up. I was stressed out. Me: "She
almost died." Tar: "What happened?" Me: "She had a miscarriage. Bleeding
non stop and crying like she was being butchered. It was so painful." He held
my hand. We sat there in silence until morning. A little before 7am I went in to
see her. She was staring into space. Me: "Hey baby." She didn't move. Me: "I
am so sorry Nosi. I wish there was something I could've done." Nosi: "In the
beginning before I heard the heartbeat, I didn't want it. I felt different after.
So in love with the idea. I told myself I could do it. That many have done it
before. I was going to be a good mom. I texted him and we spoke about it.
He was happy." Tears started again. This time, silently. Nosi: "Then God took
him from me. He took our baby." She cried. Nosi: "He didn't think I'd be a
good mom because I didn't want him before but I did. I want him back!" I
hugged her. She cried painfully in my arms. I let her calm down a bit before I
asked. Me: "Nosi, I'm gonna have to tell your parents. You almost died. I tried
calling them all night." Nosi: "They don't care. They're too absorbed in their
own lives to care about their children. I don't care what you do." She covered
herself again.

Finally, Sandile picked up the call and I know it's only because he woke up
and realized there's no food and I'm not there. I was so waiting to scream at
him. Sands: "Spho? There's like 12 missed calls here. Where are you?" Me: "I'm
in the hospital Sandile." Sands: "WHAT! Why!" I heard a car starting. Me: "Get
your ass here." I hung up. Tar had already left for a meeting. I felt bad
keeping him up all night. He didn't mind at all. Sandile arrived with Sibu.
Sands: "What happened!" I stared into his eyes with rage. Me: "WHAT COULD
HAVE BEEN SO DAMN IMPORTANT THAT YOU COULDN'T FOR ONE TIME
ANSWER YOUR PHONES ALL NIGHT." Sands: "I'm Sorry. I was out and left my
phone in the car." Me: "So the fact that your sister could have died while

you're partying sits well with you huh?" Sands: "What the fuck!! Who!!" Me: "Give me your mother's number!" Sands: "Sphosenkosi-" Me: "She is the only person I could not call. Each and everyone of you went AWOL when we needed you most!" I took his phone and dialed for Stella. "This is Stella Sobukwe. Please leave a message, after the tone." I hung up and sat down. Sands: "What happened Spho?" The doctor came to me. Doc: "Well hello." Sands: "Where is my sister?" Doc: "Resting. We finally got the bleeding in control. She's more stable but her blood pressure keeps getting low and coming back up." Sands: "Bleeding? What ? What is this?" The doctor looked at me. Me: "She had a miscarriage." Sands: "WHAT." Me: "When will she be fully well to take home? I want the best care possible for her-" Sands: "You knew she was pregnant?" Me: "She found out yesterday Sandile." Sands: "And you didn't think to tell me?" Me: "I was going to tell you all today but last night happened and you'd vanished off the face of the earth! Sandile, I am not in the mood for you." Doc: "I'll monitor her for the rest of the day and let you know. You can go home to get some rest Spho. You're pregnant and spent an entire night in a hospital waiting room. Go home." Me: "She needs me. She cannot count on anyone else in her life right now." Sandile marched down the passage. Sibuy: "I am so sorry Spho." I sat down and fiddled with my low battery phone. My feet were sore and swollen. I did have to go home but I didn't want to leave her here. Sibuy: "Spho-" Me: "Please don't." I walked down the passage and he followed me. Sandile was in Nosi's room by her side. She still covered herself with the blanket. Me: "Sweetheart, I'm going back home okay? I'll be back later." No response. She was probably asleep. Me: "If you want to disappear again, please be kind enough to send me a text." Nosi: "Please don't go. Please don't leave me here alone." Sands: "I'm here Nosi. Spho needs to rest." Nosi: "Please?" She started crying again. Me: "Okay. I'm not going anywhere Nosi. I promise." I sighed. Sands: "Hayi Spho. You're pregnant. I can take care of this." Me: "Can you Sandile? Can you really?" Sands: " Okay. I get that you're mad but you're being unreasonable now. So what we didn't hear you calling? It was a mistake!" Me: "A mistake. Sandile, do you realize if Nosi had died, it would be YOUR family breathing down MY neck about what I should've done right? Do you realize that you would all blame me? When all I did was help!! I risked my own health to make sure she's okay and not alone. And you're telling me, I'm being unreasonable?" I was crying now. Uncontrollably. All the emotions were back, I could not even breath. Nosi was my little sister, I wouldn't be able to live with myself if she'd died and watching her, hearing her almost die damaged my soul. She was so near death, I could literally feel my blood turn cold in fear. How could this have happened? She was healthy. The doctor said so yesterday afternoon so what went wrong? My heart couldn't take it. Sibuy held me and rubbed my

back. There was a commotion in the passage. Sandile stood up and rushed to the door. A mob of journalists were pushing past the nurses. "Mr Sobukwe!! Care to give us a comment about your sister!" They yelled. Great. Who the fuck called the papers. This was all my fault. Someone must have recognized me and called them here. It was so cruel that they couldn't even give us space. Sands: "We need to get her out of here." His back shutting the door. I called Tar immediately. He would be here with an army soon. "LET ME THROUGH!!! NOSI!!!" That was Stella. Sandile opened for her. Stella: "How did those people get in here? Isn't it against the law?" She dialed on her phone. Sands: "Spho already called her lawyers." Stella: "I am going to sue this hospital!!!" She fumed. She hasn't even checked if her daughter is okay. I held Nosi's hand. She pulled me a little. I looked at her and moved closer. Nosi: "Take me with you." She whispered. Me: "I can't Nosi. Your mom is here. She will want to take you home." I whispered back. Nosi: "I don't want to go with her. Please Spho." This was so hard. Where was Masilakhe? Honestly I just don't get it. Tar arrived after about 20 minutes. It was quiet outside now. Tar: "Where is the doctor?" He had his game face on. Someone was about to get they ass sued. Me: "I'm not sure he hasnt-" and off he went out the door. Tar brought him back in less than 3 minutes. Tar: "Explain." He folded his arms on his chest. Doc: "I don't know what happened. I think one of the nurses saw the surname and put two and two together. I really can't be sure-" Tar: "So nurses go around sharing private patient information with the media?" Doc: "I have no clu-" Tar: "I am going to find out who leaked this name and when I do, this entire hospital will shut down. Do you even know who I am?" Doc: "Uhm.. no." He swallowed. Tar: "I'm giving you 30 minutes to give me a name of the person who did this. Should it fail you, I am tearing each and every one of you apart. Test me." The doctor walked out. Tar: "Are you fine?" I nodded. Tar: "Sandile discharge your sister. NOW.. Spho? I'm taking you home. Let's go." Me: "But I-" Tar: "I'm not going to argue with you. This place isn't safe for you and you're pregnant and still haven't slept. We are leaving." I couldn't even protest. He was right. Me: "Nosi?" I looked at her under the covers. Her nose was bleeding and her eyes turned white again. Me: "CALL THE DOCTOR!!!!"

Lakhe was in his lounge, clicking on his iPad after breakfast. His chef walked out the kitchen. "Sorry sir, is there anything else I can get you this morning?" Lakhe: "No thanks Hermie, you can go home now." The young man walked out. Sarah: "Mr Lakhe." Lakhe: "Yes." Sarah: "No work today?" Lakhe: "No. I'm taking the day off. I promised the doctor a lifestyle expo." Sarah: "Like a date?" Lakhe: "I think so. I haven't been on a date in a very long while. Years actually." Sarah: "What about your wife?" Lakhe: "She moved on. It's time for

me to move on too." Sarah: "I mean, you didn't go on dates with your wife?" Lakhe: "Not really. Sphe values work and family. I always had to drag her out the house or office for a day off. This is a nice change. It feels good taking someone out. I almost forgot the feeling." Sarah: "She loves you." Lakhe: "That's in the past now. She made it clear to me. I was in denial but now... I've realized, it's really over." Sarah nodded. The gate buzzed. Lakhe: "That's her. I'll be out the whole day." He took his keys and wallet walking out the door. Lakhe: "Uhm.. no." Miya: "Come on!" Lakhe: "In that death trap? Haha. Get out of that Miya. I am not risking my life for anything." She parked and got out. Lakhe: "Why are you driving an old bakkie anyway?" Miya: "It drives nice and it's affordable." Lakhe: "No. That can't be it. We're taking my car." Miya: "I don't like braggy people Masi." Lakhe: "I'm not braggy just cautious." Miya: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Fine. But I'm driving." Miya: "Absolutely not. Get in the passenger seat and put on the belt." Lakhe: "Why are you so bossy?" He hopped in the vehicle. She started and drove off. Miya: "It suits me. So.. how are you holding up?" Lakhe: "Actually a little petrified but I'm okay." Miya: "No more drinking to a coma?" Lakhe: "Nope." He laughed. Miya: "What's bothering you anyway?" Lakhe: "You don't wanna hear that." Miya: "I do. Tell me." Lakhe: "Stuff with my ex." Miya: "I'm listening." Lakhe: "I wanted her back so bad I thought changing myself would help. I feel like a fool honestly. She started dating this guy and was clearly smitten. I didn't take that as a hint. I think they broke up though but there's someone else she's spending time with." Miya: "That's all?" Lakhe: "I really loved her. I don't think she understood. I made a lot of mistakes but..." Miya: "Well... how about now?" Lakhe: "It's hard but I've decided to move on Miya. It's time." Miya: "Hmm. What is it are you looking for in a partner?" Lakhe: "A kind person, a good heart, ambitious, beautiful. That's all." Miya: "Wow." Lakhe: "Are you seeing anyone?" Miya: "Why? Do you wanna ask me out?" Lakhe: "Maybe." She laughed. Miya: "No. I broke up with my ex almost a year ago." Lakhe: "And that's it? You haven't dated anyone?" Miya: "No. I have a daughter, she's 3. I spend most of my time with her. Do you have any kids?" Lakhe: "Yes. 2 kids. Boys." Miya: "That's so cute. I wanted a boy when I was pregnant but when I gave birth to Micah, I instantly fell in love. She's my life." Lakhe: "Same goes for me. I wanted a girl but when my last born came, I just lost it. He's amazing." His phone rang. Lakhe: "urgh." He switched it off. Miya: "You not gonna answer that?" Lakhe: "It's my brother being an nag again. I really just need some time to myself for once. Just once." Miya: "Maybe he misses you." Lakhe: "No he just wants to insult me. As usual." She parked the car. Miya: "We're here. Keep an open mind." Lakhe: "When someone says that I know I'm about to be let out my comfort zone." She laughed.

It was mid afternoon almost 3pm when I decided to leave the hospital. I'd been there for 20 full hours without sleep. Nosi was finally stable and out of the ICU she slipped in when I discovered her bleeding nose this morning. She was recovering well but sleeping. Tar brought security in her room, outside of it and closed down the whole floor. It was not a nice thing but it was necessary. These parasites tried everything to sneak a picture of us in here. Tar: "Perhaps it won't be such a good idea that you walk out of here without zipping up this jacket. I don't want to give them a story about your new pregnancy." I nodded and zipped up his jacket. I hadn't seen my kids all day long and I missed them so much but I needed to rest. Dubs had to go back to East London early tomorrow. I did try calling Lakhe but he was on voice-mail. I would die for that bath of his right now. I drove home with Tar behind me. When I arrived safely, he left. I went in the house. Dubs was finished cooking. Lam was laying on his back on the carpet, with two balloons tied to his legs. He was giggling non stop. This looked like Sandile's work but he was at the hospital the whole day with me. Me: "Bhuti did you do this?" Sibú: "He loves it. Sandile said it calms him down." I picked my son up from the floor. Sibú: "How is she?" Me: "Bad. She had a seizure this morning and landed in ICU. They just took her out of it about an hour ago. The hospital is flooded with journalistso. It's a mess Sibú. Where is Chris?" Sibú: "Taking a nap. Maybe I should go there again since you're back now." Me: "You could but I need a favor." Sibú: "Anything." Me: "I'm tired I want to go to Lakhe's house. For his jacuzzi bath. Then leave the kids there with him." Sibú: "You have a bath here." Me: "It doesn't have pulsating jets and a Swedish release that massages me while I bath." Sibú: "Okay. Did you call him?" Me: "I tried but his phone is off so he's probably at work. I left him a message." Sibú: "Okay. What's really going on?" Me: "I feel... I've been a little too hard on him. That maybe, we could.... you know, spend time as a family. I'll cook something and we can just relax. Me, him and the kids. He'd love that. He's been a great dad so far and been here for me. I'm sure he'll be happy to receive a little appreciation and simultaneously work on us.." Sibú: "You want him back?" Me: "Well... I'm not entirely sure. I just want us to fix this brokenness first then take it from there." Dubs: "Yaxoka yamfuna. Wayefike apha uLakhe ezipitse nge Jean emvezel'iimpundu. Naye uSpho wathatheka." I laughed out loud. Me: "Haibo Dabawo." She shrugged. Sibú: "Get your stuff then. I'll wait in the car." Me: "You don't like this." Sibú: "I don't. But I'm not going to stand in your way of fixing things with the father of your kids. My personal issues have nothing to do with you. But if he tries to hurt you ever again, I will break him apart." He walked out.

Sibu drove us to Kragga Kamma. I was actually excited. Lam was safely in his baby seat next to Chris in the back. Sibu: "So.. Nosi. She was pregnant?" Me: "Yes." Sibu: "Wow. And you didn't say anything." Me: "I already explained. We found out the day before. She was 2 months pregnant and she didn't know." Sibu: "It must suck." Me: "Anyway, when am I going to be an aunt? Didn't you meet a lady in Abu Dhabi?" He laughed. Sibu: "I didn't actually. There is someone I like here though. I'm just not sure if it's appropriate to approach her." Me: "Who is it?" Sibu: "My new manager at my restaurant. I don't want to seem unprofessional but I really like her. Her name is Kamva." Me: "Maybe she might feel the same way about you." Sibu: "You think?" Me: "Probably." Sibu: "You have to check it out for me. Please." Me: "You want me to spy on her?" Sibu: "Not spy, just investigate." I laughed. Sibu: "I'm desperate and not in the mood to make a fool of myself." Me: "What about Zintle? She likes you." Sibu: "She likes your father in law now." He parked outside the gate. I pressed the remote and he drove in. Sibu: "His car is still in the driveway." Me: "He's probably here." I got out the car with Lam and walked to the house with Chris behind me. Me: "Lakhe?" I walked in. Me: "Sarah?" No response. Where were they? I searched the house but nobody was here. Me: "Okay. He's probably still out. I'm going to cook and take my bath." Sibu: "Call me when you need me." He left. Chris sat in the lounge to watch TV and I went to the kitchen to start cooking. I put Lam in his bassinet and just let him watch me. I didn't go over board. Just a normal beef lasagna. I grilled some chicken on the side dipped in my home made barbecue sauce. Lakhe loves meat and this sauce. Once I'd finished cooking, I could feel that I was really tired now. That bath was calling my name. Lam had woken up suddenly but he'd literally just fell asleep. Lucky for me, he starts crying. Me: "Really sweetheart? You can't let mommy bath for a few minutes?" I picked him up and switched off the stoves. A car or what sounded like a truck drove in the estate. Lakhe bought a truck?? I mean he said he would but I didn't think so soon. Congratulations for him but where the hell is he going to park it? In the driveway? My old self, his wife, would freak out and yell. I was a new self now, his ... girlfriend, I will not say a word. Lakhe: "Hey boy. What you doing here alone?" He walked in. Chris: "Waiting for you. Mommy tried calling you." Lakhe: "And she left you here by yourself? Where's Khayalam?" Chris: "Who's this?" I walked out the kitchen. Me: "Hey you. We've been waiting and calling for hours. What happened to your phone?" Lakhe: "Spho." He breathed. Me: "Yeah. We need to talk Lakhe. Nosi is in the hospital. I've been calling you since last night and today." Lakhe: "WHAT!" Me: "That's why I asked what happened to your phone." Lakhe: "What's that smell?" Me: "Beef lasagna and your favorite

grilled chicken. But you should go to the hospital first and check on her. We'll wait here for you. I need to take a bath and rest my feet. I haven't slept for literally 23 hours now." He just stood there frozen. Chris: "Dad? Who's that?" I looked at the lady standing there that I didn't really notice. Isn't she an assistant or something? Me: "How many assistants do you have? Hello, I'm Spho." I held out my hand. Miya: "I'm not his assistant. I'm his girlfriend. Miya." Chris: "Oh..Wow." My world stood still. I blinked away the sudden emerging tears. Me: "Oh? Nice to meet you. Uhm, Miya. I just came to drop off the kids. And.. Well, cook for them. I didn't want to stress Lakhe. So the food is ready. And... I should get going and go bath and rest at home. Well.. here you go, sir." I gave him Lam and took my bag, searching for my phone quickly walking out the door...

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I landed in a judgeless environment. Kevin's house. I just lay in the couch quietly with my eyes closed waiting for Sibü to arrive and pick me up. Dave: "What's going on?" He whispered. Kev: "I don't know. She hasn't said anything." Dave: "Okay. What do we say to her?" Kev: "I don't know. I don't want to upset her." Dave: "Should we cancel poker night?" Kev sighed. Kev: "I guess." I sat up. Me: "I'm going home guys. I just needed a minute." Kev: "Spho what happened?" Me: "Lakhe has a girlfriend. I mean..." I laughed. Me: "Sandile told me and I didn't take it seriously because I mean ... it's Sandile!" I laughed harder. I really couldn't stop. Once I caught my breath I continued. Me: "The crazy thing. I convinced myself to leave my house and go over to his, to cook for him and take a bath and spend time with him as a family." I giggled. Me: "But he walks in.... with his girlfriend." I held my mouth trying not to laugh. Me: "How could you not laugh at that? I cooked! I haven't even slept, but I cooked!!" I chuckled and stood up from the couch. Me: "Anyway, uhm.. I'm going to the spa for a massage then book myself into a hotel and sleep my ass off. I don't want any disruptions or human interaction. I am so tired." Kev: "You can't go anywhere. You're staying right here. You need someone to take care of you." Me: "No.. I've never needed anyone to take care of me. I'm the one who takes care. Maybe I should just go home and take a regular bath and sleep then." I laughed hysterically. Me: "Can you believe this whole thing started because of a luxury bath? Like... a whole jacuzzi led me to his house. The jacuzzi he's now going to use with his new girlfriend." Sibü knocked on the door. Me: "Hey!! My brother is here. Sibü, you remember Kev and Dave right? Anyway, thank you so much guys. I'll call you later. Yeah?" I walked out with Sibü. Dave: "What the fuck just happened? Did

you see her laugh like a crazy person throughout this story? I'm scared. Why am I scared?" Kev: "She's having a psychotic meltdown. She hasn't slept, she's pregnant, and now this? Dave... she's going to hurt that poor girl." Dave: "Spho wouldn't do that. She's like an angel." Kev: "Did you hear the laugh?" Dave: "Kevin, stay out of this. Spho is okay. She's with her brother now. I trust him." Kev: "You're right."

Sibu: "So what happened?" Me: "Nothing. I decided to come home. How was your day?" Sibu: "Uhm.. it was fine. Spho why are you...a little too happy?" Me: "Because it's a beautiful day. Yeah. And also, I've just realized how lucky I am to have you. Do I tell you how much I love you Sibz? Chris calls you Uncle Sibz." I laughed. Sibu: "Yeah.. he does. Did something happen?" Me: "Not at all." He parked in my driveway. Me: "I need a shower and a smoothie." I got out the car and went to the house. Me: "Sands!!" He jumped up. Sands: "What the fuck... you scared me. Why are you... beaming like that?" Me: "Happy to see you of course. Give me a hug." I hugged him tight. Me: "Are you hungry?" Sands: "I just ate. Thanks. Are you okay? You're unusually happy." Me: "That's the problem! I'm always so depressed! And angry and upset! It's so annoying. This is literally the best mood I've ever been in, in years. Do you wanna go out for a smoothie?" Sands: "Did you sniff one of Chris' scented crayons?" Me: "Not at all. Let me take a quick shower. Put on your good shirt, we can go out to the town for a smoothie." I went to my bathroom. Sands: "Sibulele. What the hell. Is she high?" Sibu: "Mans, I think so. Spho has never been like this. This is so weird." Sands: "When did it start?" Sibu: "I just picked her up from Kevin's house. I'd left her at Lakhe's place she was supposed to sleep there but she called me from Kevin's." Sands: "Lakhe." He pulled out his phone and dialed his brothers number. Sands: "He's rejecting my calls. All day. Give me your phone." He took it and dialed Lakhe. "Hello?" Sands: "What did you do to Spho!" Lakhe: "I should've known it was you. Sandile, stay out of this." Sands: "Stay out of th.... First you go AWOL. Second, you don't show up when we try to call you and tell you your sister almost died, thirdly Spho walks in here high as shit and I must stay out of this." Lakhe: "She's high!? What the hell! She left here fine!" Sands: "Why did she leave?" Lakhe: "That is not any of your business!!" He hung up. Sands: "He fucking hung up on me." He marched to the door. Sibu held his arm. Sibu: "He's not worth it. Spho is here. She needs to rest. She needs our support. We can't disappear on her again." Sands: "It's not just about Spho. It's about Nosi. She's our sister and he doesn't even care whether she lives or dies!" Sibu: "Perhaps he's with her right now. There's no need to get worked up for no reason." Sands: "Where is she." He went to the room. Sands: "Spho?" Sibu: "Sphosenkosi?" Sands: "The water is still running. Go

in there." Sibú opened the door. Sibú: "Shit! She fell asleep." He pulled his sister out of the bath. Sandile came in with her cotton gown covering her up. Sibú carried her to bed. Sands: "So what now." Sibú: "We just need to keep an eye on her." Sands: "I'm worried Sibú. Where are the kids?" Sibú: "With Lakhe probably. Sandile just calm down okay?" Sands: "I'm calm. I promise." He breathed. Sands: "I just need a drink." Sibú: "Sandile!" Sands: "Haiké Sibulele ndithini?" He walked out.

Miya: "So... what was that about?" Lakhe came back from putting the baby down. Lakhe: "I'm sorry. Lam gets fussy sometimes. Usually it takes an hour to calm him down." Miya: "I'm talking about your ex." Lakhe: "Oh." Miya: "She has keys to your house and just appears when she likes?" Lakhe: "Yes and no. She never comes here for no reason. This is the first time." Miya: "Are you still dating her?" Lakhe: "No!" Miya: "Look I'm not trying get to be bossy or whatever but I've been in an inconclusive situation like this before. I need you to be honest so that I know to leave you alone." Lakhe: "I promise." Miya: "Yeah but now I feel really bad because she looks pregnant. Is she? It's yours? You said you only had two kids." Lakhe: "Yes it's mine. Miya, Spho and I aren't together anymore. You heard her she was here to drop off the kids." Miya: "Okay. But I don't know if I'm comfortable with her having her own key and everything." Lakhe: "Okay. But you and me? We're good right?" Miya: "Yeah." Lakhe: "My girlfriend?" Miya: "Yes?" She kissed him. Miya: "But I have to go." Lakhe: "Already?" Miya: "I have work tomorrow. I'll call you." She walked out. Lakhe: "Christian." Chris: "Tata." He walked to him. Lakhe: "Are you mad at me?" Chris: "Nope." Lakhe: "What was your mom doing here?" Chris: "Cooking for us." Lakhe: "You mean you and Sandile?" Chris: "I mean you, me and Lammy. She said to Uncle Sibz that she wants to spend time with you and fix the brokenness." Lakhe: "How did you..." Chris: "I was supposed to be taking a nap but I listened. She wanted to cook you your favorite food and appreciate you." Lakhe sighed. Chris: "Can I go now?" Lakhe: "You're not hungry?" Chris: "Nope." Lakhe: "Chris come on. How was I supposed to know? I thought she hated me!" Chris: "Can I go?" Lakhe: "Fine. Hate me. But your mother had moved on! What was I supposed to do?" Chris: "Why are you yelling at me?" Lakhe: "I'm not yelling at you.... you can go." His phone rang. Lakhe: "Hello?" He answered. Lakhe: "Mum I've been calling you for the past hour. How is Nosi?" Stella: "She's stable. We want to move her out of this dreadful place." Lakhe: "Bring her here. I'm home. I'll get a private nurse and doctor to look after her." Stella: "Ok." She hung up.

The family arrived with Nosi. A nurse and doctor were waiting in Lakhe's house. He introduced them and moved them to Nosi's room where they checked her. Lakhe walked back out the room. Lakhe: "Unjani mama?" Stella: "Shocked. They say she had a miscarriage. How is that possible?" Rob: "She was pregnant obviously. Did Sphe know about this?" Lakhe: "I only took Nosi to her a week or two ago. She's probably just as shocked. Nosi should be the one answering for herself. She is old enough and irresponsible going around having unprotected sex. Who's her boyfriend?" Stella: "How am I supposed to know?" Lakhe: "You know everything about your daughter! Where's Sandile?" Rob: "You've been ignoring him all day and you want to ask us?" Lakhe: "This is a family issue Tata. He needs to bring that boy here." Rob: "What good would that do? Hm? Scaring him and then what? Both him and Nosi decided to do this, not just him alone-" Lakhe: "Is he the one fighting for his life? I don't think so. He's going to come here and explain himself-" a wailing from down the hall disturbed. Lakhe: "Damn it." Rob: "Is that Lam?" Lakhe: "Yes and he is not sleeping no matter what I do." He marched down the passage to fetch his son. Rob: "How could you let our child get pregnant Stella?" Stella: "How am I the problem? Must I monitor her vagina Robert? You're the one who left this family and became a drunkard!" Rob: "You cannot possibly blame me when this child was staying with YOU! You let her run wild!" Lakhe: "Can we stop this!!! Blaming each other is useless!! It has happened! No turning back now!" Stella: "What now? We just sit?" Rob: "Where's Sphe?" Lakhe: "I don't know. We'll have to find a way of helping Nosi cope." He hushed the baby. Lakhe: "What's wrong baby boy?" Chris: "Can I have him?" He held out his hands. Lakhe: "Were you not sleeping?" Chris: "How can I sleep when my brother is upset?" He took his brother to the couch. Lakhe: "They're mad at me for some reason." He whispered. Rob: "Who's they?" Lakhe: "Sphe and the kids." Rob: "What did you do?" Lakhe: "I moved on with my life Tata. Sphe did too and I'm the one crucified for it." Chris: "Nobody is mad at you Tata. Stop fibbing. You are being bamboozled by your own guilt. Do not include us. Where is Lammy's milk?" Lakhe: "I'm not sure Sphe left some. She just bolted out of here like she was on fire." Chris: "Hm. Well Lam wants milk." Lakhe: "There's porrid-" Chris: "He will scream all night if he doesn't get his milk. I don't know about you but I'm not staying here for that. Call mama." Lakhe: "Why are you then mad?" Chris: "I'm not mad Tata." Lakhe: "You got an attitude though." Chris: "What attitude?" Lakhe looked at his dad. Rob: "Definitely mad at you. I need a drink-" Lakhe: "No drinking! I threw out all the alcohol. It is time this family sat down and had a chat. Call Sandile and tell him to bring Lam's milk."

I woke up in the dark wearing my gown. How did I even? I just remember walking in here nothing else. I went to the bathroom and took a shower then came to get dressed. I wanted to go out. I wore a red boob tube mini dress and red three thin strap stilletoes. I primed my face, did my eyebrows, blended my eyeshadow perfectly, applied foundation, contoured and baked. I applied red lipstick and wore my short bobcut black wig. Fez was probably watching his boring soapies we could go out for a smoothie or late dinner. I just needed to get out the house man. I walked out with my clutch and phone looking for my keys. Sands: "No Sib, I keep telling you the rules. This is the last time. Listen, I- ...Spho?" They looked at me. Me: "Hey guys, have you seen my car keys?" Sib: "Where are you off to?" Me: "To Fez. I'm taking him out for a bite. You wanna come? It'll be fun." Sands: "You were sleeping." Me: "I was. I'm much better now. Seriously guys, my keys." Sands: "Spho are you okay?" Me: "Of course. Just in the mood to get some fresh air." Sands: "You know you don't have to right?" Me: "Oh you want me to sit in this house and be depressed all the time? Give me my car ke- You know what? Never mind." I requested an Uber. Sib: "Spho. I know you're hurting." Me: "Why would I be hurting?" Sib: "What happened with Lakhe?" Me: "Nothing. I just wanted some time alone. Why are you pressing this?" I walked out to my cab outside. Thank goodness I was away from those two grandpa's. I went straight to Fez's place. Sands: "Why didn't you stop her!" Sib: "You heard her, she needs to relax." Sands: "By going out?" Sib: "Spho is not a child. She can take care of herself. Why can't she go out every once in a while?" Sandile stood up, Sib grabbed his keys. Sib: "You're not going to stalk her. You will leave her be. She's grown." Sands: "I'm going to see my brother." Sib: "No you're not. You just came back from his house almost an hour ago. Sit. We're playing the game." ...

As I anticipated, Fez was ready for a young drink and bite. Fez: "You look stunning friend. Aren't you a little over dressed? Yoh, let me change too ke." Me: "I just felt like dressing up. It's been a while. I think I like this look. This bad girl vibe." Fez: "It looks super hot friend... but... You're more of a good girl." He changed into tight navy ankle grazers and a fitted navy shirt. Me: "Friend awuse sexy." Fez: "This is my gentleman look." He wore navy blue gentleman slippers and took his keys. Me: "Fre, you're.. dressed like a man." Fez: "Yes Fre, it's a long story. Let's go." We got in his car and he drove us to a posh place in town. It was new and quite exclusive. Fez: "I know the owner here." The place was buzzing with excitement and a long queue. How was that possible? Isn't it Tuesday? Is my date wrong? Me: "Fez!" He held my hand to the door skipping the line. The bouncer opened for us smiling at him and in we went.

The music wasn't extremely loud like the normal clubs but it was sufficient. The environment classy and really upmarket. How did I not know if this place? I was so shocked. Fez led me to the VVIP lounge and closed the door. I sat on the white leather couch, folding one leg on the other and stared at him. Me: "Explain." He laughed. Fez: "Okay. This place opened Friday. I know the co-owner." Me: "How do you know him?" Fez: "He's my new boyfriend." Me: "What! That's amazing Fez. Why didn't you say so? How long have you been dating? I so wanna meet him! Are you happy?" Fez: "One question at a time sis! Damn." The waiter brought in our drinks. Fez the champagne and me the virgin cocktail. She walked out again. Fez: "So I met this guy about a month ago. He was staying at Sandile's hotel. I went to visit Sandile that day. Anyway, I bumped into this guy. We chat a bit and exchange numbers. We started going on dates and he opened this place. I helped with the decor." Me: "It's gorgeous Fez, are you happy? You don't look excited." Fez: "Sandile hates him." Me: "What? Why?" Fez: "I don't know. I told him on Sunday and he all but freaked out telling me I'm making a mistake and this guy isn't right for me." He sipped his champagne slowly. Fez: "Fez, do you think Sandile likes me?" Me: "Babe, I don't know what to tell you. He hasn't said anything. All I know is, Sandile is a big believer in new relationships and other people's love. Perhaps he's going through something. Have you spoken to him?" Fez: "I haven't." The door opened again. A tall slender guy with blond hair walked in. Fez: "Hey babe." They kissed. Fez: "Spho, this is Giovanni." He held out his hand. Gio: "Just call me Van. Or Gio." Me: "Nice to meet you Gio." I shook his hand. Gio: "My partner is a little late tonight. So I'm busy in the office. If you guys need anything, just shout. And Spho, you're welcome here anytime. I'll sign you in as our member." Me: "Oh? Okay." He kissed Fez again and looked at his body head to toe. Gio: "You look ravishing my angel. Love you." He walked out. Me: "He's so nice. What does he mean sign me in?" Fez: "Oh, you get to skip the queue." Me: "Wow. Who knew that was a thing." I laughed. Me: "Friend you're not happy. What's going on?" Fez: "Friend I don't want to lose my friendship with Sandile. Why can't he just accept Gio?" Me: "Sandile will come around. Like I said, he's probably dealing with some issues." I took a sip of my ice juice because that's what it was now. Fez: "Oh there's Gio's business partner." He waved. Fez: "He's always so uptight. I like poking him." Me: "Fez, we're talking. Plus I'm hungry. Do they serve food?" Fez: "Of course." he buzzed a waiter. The door opened. Again, Giovanni. I like you but you're starting to annoy me now. Gio: "Yes baby?" Fez: "Spho is hungry, can we get menus?" Gio: "Definitely." He brought the menus to us. Gio: "Finally!! You're here! Come on in here and say hello to my good friend Spho." SINCE WHEN. I blinked at him several times then looked back at my menu. No wonder Sandile didn't like him. Me: "These lamb chops look so slutty and delicious. I

just want to dig my face into them." The room erupted with laughter. I kept my mouth shut and browsed quietly then. Gio: "Spho, this is my business partner. Co-owner of the club. This is my baby's friend, Spho, we just met." He said to his friend. I looked up and stared. Then froze. Me: "Uhm." He had both hands in his pockets but I could see from his rolled up sleeves and slightly unbuttoned top, his tattoos. He had a clean face and challenging eyes. Gio: "Don't be rude." He whispered to his friend, nudging him. This man stepped forward and smiled. Him: "Hi." Me: "Hey. Hello. Hi. I'm Spho." Him: "Lukhanyo. You can call me Luks." ...

#195

So I sat there frozen to my core. This man was obviously beautiful. I've seen beautiful men, Siyanda is gorgeous, Lakhe is handsome, Simphiwe is super cute but this one here? This was beautiful. His skin looked like smooth caramel mixed with chocolate. Small eyes with a little curve on the sides. His lips.. wow. I cleared my throat. Me: "Lovely to meet you." Luks: "Likewise." He turned to his business partner and then walked out. My heart returned to its normal beating rate. Me: "He's creepy." Fez: "He's just uptight. Like all the time." We ordered food and had more drinks plus some gossip. I was really enjoying myself. For once, feeling relaxed and without responsibility. Then I thought of Nosi. The pain she must be going through. Fez: "Are you even listening?" Me: "I am fre. Carry on." Fez: "Are you thinking about Lukhanyo?" Me: "Euw, No. I'm thinking about Nosi. She has a miscarriage." He gasped. Fez: "That is so sad Spho. Is she okay?" Me: "Not at all. I'll have to check on her tomorrow morning." Fez: "And you? You're fine?" Me: "I am. Yeah I'm okay." The door opened and Lukhanyo walked in again. Great. No longer okay. He was carrying plates of food. He placed one in front of me and another one for Fez. The crazy thing was that he's kneeling with one knee on the floor. Luks: "Slutty and delicious lamb chops, cream cheese spinach and finely cooked vegetables. For you." Me: "Thank you Luks. It looks delicious." He smiled. Luks: "I made it myself." Me: "You're a chef?" Luks: "Not professional chef but I'm good in the kitchen. Enjoy." He walked out. Fez was already digging in. Fez: "Oh he's goodd." I shook my head and started eating. Okay, I couldn't lie, it was amazing. When I started, I couldn't stop until the plate was clean. Me: "WOW." Fez: "Right? I wouldn't mind that every night." He laughed. Me: "Really Fez?" Fez: "A private chef, You idiot. You're the only one living the good life here with private chefs and all." Me: "Since when do I have private chefs?" Fez: "Lakhe hires private chefs for you all the time." Me: "No he doesn't and I'm not with him anymore. He has a new girlfriend." I laughed. Fez: "Are you

serious?" Me: "Yes! I met her earlier. She's cute. Anyway, I need another drink." I buzzed the waiter. Fez: "Spho are you okay?" Me: "I'm fantastic. Why do you ask?" Fez: "Uhm.. just making sure." Our drinks came and I sipped my ice beverage long and hard. It was 1am now. Perhaps I should be getting home. My sleep was returning gradually, thank goodness. Me: "Fre, I'm gonna request an Uber home okay?" Fez: "I'll drive you Spho, don't be silly." Gio came in while I was gathering my purse, standing up. Gio: "You're leaving us Spho?" Me: "Yes, I got a long day ahead. Work and all." Fez: "I'll drive you-" Gio: "No. You've been drinking. My driver will take you home." Me: "Guys, I've requested an Uber. It's outside. I'm leaving. Fre, text me the amount, I'll half you okay?" Gio: "No need. You can't pay here Spho, you're our friend." Me: "That's so sweet of you Gio. Goodbye guys." I hugged them and walked out. I could feel a strong gaze staring at me but I couldn't find the pair of eyes. I got into the car and went home.

Wednesday morning. I woke up at 7:30. Alert as hell. I think I had a meeting but I wasn't entirely sure so I quickly took a shower then came out to check my diary. Oh yes. Meeting with Tar. My original company, not the one I took from Rob, it needed business premises. A building basically. Tar had three property agents on standby for me. To be honest, I don't know what I'd do without him. I wonder when my kids would come home because I was missing them now. I had so many cute mini dresses I never wore because I was shy. Or maybe because I was a wife? This one was a very light green, off the shoulder with long sleeves. It hugged my body and cut off mid thigh. It had faux buttons attached right down the dress. By faux buttons, I mean you can't unbuttoned it, it's just for decoration. Wore white stilletoes and my bobcut wig after applying my make up. My tummy wasn't too visible or out there. Just a tiny bump. I had about a month before I go full force balloon. Made the bed, took my bags and went out. Sandile was making breakfast. Sands: "Hey yo-" He stared at me. Me: "Hey Sandile. How are you?" Sands: "I'm great. I thought I'd make you breakfast..." Me: "So thoughtful of you. This is amazing. Thank you." I took my plate and sat down. Dubs came out with her bags. Kanene she had to go to East London today. We had our breakfast and I drove her to the buses. She hates flying alone. She only flies when Vuyi is with her. I went to work after and met with Tar. Tar: "You look much better than yesterday." Me: "I am. How are you?" Tar: "I'm well. We don't have much time; The agent is waiting on us." We went to our first meeting and met with the agent. The building was small for me. I would want to expand soon and have to start looking again. The second one was a little old. I didn't even want to see the third. Me: "Tar, I think I just want to build my building from

scratch. Get me a site please." Tar: "Will do. I'm going to the first office. We'll talk later." He left for Rob's building. I went to my own. Janice was at her desk. Jan: "Spho. I have a delivery for you." How is that possible? Nobody knows this place. Maybe Sandile? She gave me the fruit basket. I looked at the note attached. 'A peachy day to you. Juice Enjoy It. -L.' Seriously Masilakhe? Unreal. Sandile must have told him and I was mad for that. But that's for later, I had a lot of work. I called him though. Me: "Hey." Lakhe: "Hey." Awkward silence. Me: "So I was wondering when will you bring the kids?" Lakhe: "Tonight. After work." Me: "At about what time?" Lakhe: "Around 6." Me: "Alright. Thanks." I hung up and carried on with my work. Before I knew it the day was finally over. It was after 5. I wanted to go to the spa for a facial and maybe a short manicure. To be honest I was avoiding Masilakhe. I drove to the salon. Yes, Zingi's salon. I just wanted someone to torment today before I got home. Me: "Good evening ladies." They all greeted back excitedly then looked at Zingi, backing away from me. Me: "Zingi." She stood up and looked at me. Me: "Is there space for a facial? And a mani." Zingi: "Yeah. Spokie is available." Me: "I want you to do it." Zingi: "I'm the owner Spho, I don't do facials. You know that." Me: "You studied the course, didn't you?" Zingi: "I did." The other customers were now alert. Me: "So are you denying me a facial?" Zingi: "No. This way." I followed her and sat back on the chair. Relaxing. She knows of course if she tries anything the whole establishment will shut down. Zingi: "Spho, I know we had some differences-" Me: "You mean you sleeping with my brother in law because you had a crush on my husband type of differences?" I heard gasps. Zingi: "This is not the time." I took out my iPhone and went Live on Instagram. Me: "Hashtag Facial." I was being a bitch but it was long overdue. Why have I been so nice to people? Me: "You missed a spot honey." My viewers multiplied. A few requested to join my live video. Me: "Ooh. Would you mind if I video chat live with my followers? It's been a while." Zingi: "I know what you're doing. And it's not you." Me: "awww. Is that what you were counting on? Old Spho? This is my insurance. If anything happens to my face honey, you're going to jail and I'm adopting your kids." I laughed. Me: "How is the baby? Yonelisa. She and Lam are a few months apart. Have you thought about a play date? It would be so cute. Her 1 year birthday is coming up right? Hashtag Party time!" Zingi: "It's in 3 months time." Me: "Of course. Do you have a theme? You're lucky you have a daughter. You can do those Sofia the Princess type of themes. I'll be busy with spiderman my whole life. At least I'm praying for a girl this time. You got lucky with two. Mommy's best friends." My phone rang. Me: "Oh look. It's your ex. Hey Sands." Sands: "Spho. What are you doing? You're trending again." Me: "I'm having a facial sweetie. Say hi to Zingi." Sands: "Spho!" Me: "What? Look, I'll be home in a little while okay?" I hung up. Me: "Where were we?" ...

After my eventful facial and manicure. The salon was filled to capacity with people booking appointments. Women AND men. It was crazy. Me: "See? I make you money." Zingi: "Why are you doing this?" Me: "Because even though you stabbed me in the back, I love your kids. I wouldn't want them to starve. Same time in two weeks okay?" I strutted out the business to my car. Journalists, again. I drove off to my house. It was just before 7. I parked my car and went in. Lakhe was still here. WOW. Me: "Chrissie cakes!" Chris: "Mummy!!" He hugged me tight. Me: "I missed you so much baby. Where's your brother?" Lam came crawling to me. I picked him up and he went straight for my left breast. Me: "Lam? Sweetheart wait." His mouth found my nipple and he sucked. Me: "Wow okay." Me: "Have you guys eaten?" Sands: "I cooked. What happened out there! Sphe you went Live on Instagram with your location! At your former friends salon. You could have gotten hurt!" Me: "By whom?" Sands: "Her, or anyone else!" He was fuming. Lakhe: "WHAT. You went to Zingi? Why!" Me: "I needed a facial and a mani." Lakhe: "There are hundreds other salons, why her!!!" Me: "First of all, calm your face. I think YOU need facial. Zingi knows what will happen to her if she tried anything. I've warned her once. It's no biggie. Besides, did you see the news? All of Dumi's sponsors pulled out of the firm. I think you're his only client, have been for months. Come to think of it, you're actually really selfish. Why not help your friend?" I burped Lam and set him on my hip. Lakhe: "You and I need to talk. Sandile please take the kids." Sands: "And miss this?" Lakhe: "Sandile." Sands: "Fine." He took Lam and Chris for a walk. Lakhe: "I'm sorry Sphe. I didn't know you'd be there in the house yesterday." Me: "If you did, you would've chosen to hide your girlfriend?" Lakhe: "No. I thought you didn't want me and it was over between us. You said so." Me: "I know Lakhe. I just didn't think I'd change my mind. It all happened at the hospital when Nosi started having a seizure and all I could think of was how I wish you'd be by my side. The way you always have been. I saw right there how life is fragile and short. I made a decision that I'd try and fix things with you and try again." Lakhe: "Why didn't you tell me this before?" Me: "Were you answering your phone?" Lakhe: "I'm sorry. I guess I'm the biggest fool of the century." Me: "You're not. You did what is best for you, and moved on. I can't expect you to pine over me forever." Lakhe: "Now you're making me feel bad." Me: "Lakhe don't feel bad. I had my time too, with Siyanda. Although you fucked it up but I enjoyed it. Now it's your turn. Juice EnjoyIt." He laughed. Lakhe: "What the hell are you saying?" Me: "You're the one who said it first." Lakhe: "Said what first?" Me: "The fruit package. You need to stop doing that. You have a girlfriend now. What does she do?" Lakhe: "Woah, woah, what do you mean a fruit package,

what do you mean?" Me: "The basket you sent me today. At work." Lakhe: "I didn't send a basket." Me: "Yes you did. It was written, a peachy day to you, Juice Enjoy It." Lakhe: "That doesn't even sound like me! I don't even know where you work!" Me: "Calm down. I know it's you. It was initialed L for Lakhe. You're so silly." Lakhe: "Spho. Look me in the eye. Did you eat it?" Me: "No. I gave it to Janice." Lakhe: "I didn't send a damn fruit basket! Call Janice. Check on her." I called Janice and she picked up. Jan: "Hi Spho." Me: "Hey Jan, remember the fruit basket? Who sent it?" Jan: "A delivery guy. Young, colored. Why?" Me: "Did you eat it?" Jan: "Yes. Oh Spho it's so amazing. There's a packet of jelly beans made from fruit, the flavors just melt in your mouth. And the fruit is so fresh." I looked at Lakhe. He was panicking. Me: "You don't feel... sick?" Jan: "Not at all. Why?" Me: "No reason. Goodnight Janice." I hung up. Me: "If she doesn't show up for work tomorrow, she's dead." Lakhe: "How could you joke like that!!" Me: "It's just fruit Lakhe. If you didn't send it, then who?" Sandile walked in. Sands: "Done?" Me: "Did you send me a fruit basket?" Sands: "Where would I find a fruit basket?" Lakhe: "Fuck." I got on my phone and Googled Juice Enjoy It. It was a range of fruits and vegetables. A farm actually. Who could this be? Why would they use the L initial. Me: "It's a company. Anyone could have ordered and sent it." Sands: "What's going on?" Lakhe: "Spho got a fruit basket delivered to her workplace by some punk initialed L probably trying to imitate me. Spho, you really should stop posting your locations now. This is dangerous." Sands: "Fruit basket?? Tell me you didn't eat it." Me: "I didn't." Sands: "Is that why you were high yesterday?" Lakhe: "High?" Me: "I wasn't high. I was just happy." I was now reading the Home page info about the farm and it's range of products. Everything organic. Health freaks. Founded by Lukhanyo Mzinyathi and Lubabalo Morrison. Oh My God. I locked my phone quickly. Me: "So dinner? Huh?" Lakhe: "Did you find out who sent it?" Me: "Nope. Just gibberish about the products." Lakhe: "You've got your guilty face on. Who is it?" Me: "I promise.. Nobody." Lakhe: "Spho, I need you to be safe. I am trusting you. Please. We have kids." Me: "I know." We had our supper and Lakhe finally went home with Sandile. Sibu was working late at the restaurant. I bathed my babies and put them to bed.

Thursday. Dramatic morning. Chris didn't want to get up for school because he says it's cold outside. Lam... well Lam was just cranky probably for the same reason. At least I could put him on my breast and he was quiet. I bathed Chris quickly and dressed him super warm. He had man leggings underneath his jeans. He calls them Man Leggings. He pulled on his long sleeve vest, a top and his warmest jacket. I put on his boots then went to

make breakfast. Lakhe would come pick him up soon. Once he was done eating and his lunch packed, his dad arrived. Lakhe: "Morning." Me: "Hey." Chris: "Hey daddy." Lam: "Dada." My heart jumped. Me: "WHAT!" Lakhe: "Did my peanut just call his Dada??!!" How was it even possible!! Me: "No he was just stringing syllables. Lam is only 6 and a half months old. It is impossible." Lakhe: "Say it again pumpkin. Say it? Dada? My God, he's made my week!!" Me: "Please don't." Lakhe: "You're jealous." He took Lam. Lakhe: "My little peanut. I love you so much." Chris: "Hmmmh." Lakhe: "Christian, your brother just said his first word." Chris: "I would've been impressed if he said Chris. But Dada is a very common baby word. It's not that wow. I'm gonna be late." I giggled. Lakhe: "Whatever. I don't care what you all think. My peanut knows me." Lam: "Dada." Lakhe: "My heart just skips a beat." He hugged his baby. Me: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Hm?" Chris: "You're gonna make me late." Lakhe gave me the baby. Me: "Spend some time with Chris alone please. He hasn't had your attention for quite some time now. Like a boys day or so. Or a weekend away." Lakhe: "You're right. I'll plan it. But make videos for me. With Lam. I want to hear him call me." Me: "Hmmmh.. bye Chris my angel. Be a good boy. I love you." Chris: "Love you too mama." He pulled me down and planted a kiss on Lam then left with his dad.

I managed to put Lam to sleep after his bath and took a super quick shower and dressed up. Tight plain denim skinny jeans. A black body suit with long sleeves and a Polo type of neck. I wore black thigh high boots. Lam's milk was ready and his bag packed. I always went to work with him because he wasn't as fussy outdoors. After a quick clean I wore my long black coat, my wig and took my baby in his car seat with his bags, and mine. I secured him in my back seat after locking the house and off we went to work. Janice was always there first to open up and I went in with Lam. Me: "Jan, please fetch our bags and his seat in my car. Jan: "Sure thing." I went to my office to settledown. Me: "We must get you into a preschool don't you think? With Chrissie cakes? You not gonna disturb your brother?" Jan came in with the bags and delivered my messages then she went back to her station. I did a bit of work, well not really because Lam was disruptive. He was a screamer now. All he did was yell at me until I eventually stopped, put him on my lap and stared into his eyes. He smiled innocently. Me: "You are so naughty." Jan: "Spho, you have a delivery." Me: "Send it this way. It better not be that fruit basket again or else I'm calling the police." "That would really hurt." I got a fright when I looked up. It was him. Me: "What.. how did you..." Luks: "A little research." I froze. Me: "This is private property." Luks: "I know. I own the building." Oh hell. What now. He put down the lunch box on my table. Luks:

"Thought I'd make you some lunch. Did you enjoy the fruit basket? I'm thinking of making it a promotional give away." Me: "Why are you doing this?" I could see his face blush. He looked to the floor. Luks: "I want to get to know you. I thought... never mind. Forget it." Me: "I didn't say no. I'm just... shocked you went to the lengths of finding my workplace and appearing. It's kinda weird." Luks: "I'm sorry. I didn't know how to ask." Me: "Well. Ask me now." Luks: "I already know now. How old is he?" Me: "Six." He smiled. Me: "Lukhanyo, you seem like a nice guy but I'm not in the state for a new relationship." Luks: "Oh." Me: "I'm just... complicated." Luks: "I like complications. I want to take you out for dinner. As friends if you wish." Me: "Okay. Friends I can do." He nodded but didn't move. Seriously? He just stared at Lam, and my baby stared back at him. Me: "So I have work to do." Luks: "I'll pick you up at 7?" Me: "Uhm. Okay." He walked out. He doesn't even know where I live. I'd have to steal his email on his website and send it.

#196

I was home by 6 and my heart hammering in my chest. Sandile was cooking supper with Chris. Sibu was home too. Me: "Hey guys." Sands: "Hey you. I made your favorite." How can I say this without alerting them. Me: "I'll have it later. I'm going out." Sibu: "Going out?" Sands: "A date?" Me: "Not a date. Just dinner with a friend. Nothing much." Sands: "Who?" Me: "Just a new friend." Sands: "Why is he or she anonymous?" Me: "Let me get ready." I gave Lam to Sibu. Chris: "It's a date." Me: "It's not." I went to my room and took a shower. I was so nervous. Why was I nervous? I'm never nervous. I got out the shower and looked through my cupboard. I wasn't sure on whether a long tight bodycon dress or jeans. I decided the dress. It was a nude longie, slim fitting on all my curves. I did my make up which I also decided on a super natural look. My nude Christian Louboutin shoes were ready and a matching long coat. It was almost 7 and I'd forgotten to email him. I wore a my long wig and combed it. Fez needed to give me the number of his wig plug because he's the one who brings me the best. I looked at myself in the mirror. I was fine as hell with the coat hanging on my shoulders. My phone lit up. I checked the message: "Are you ready? I'm on my way. - L". My heart stopped. How did he get my number and where is he coming because I'm damn sure I didn't tell him!! I paced my room and the phone rang. Me: "Hello?" Luks: "Did you get my message?" I listened to the music in the background going: "Told the waitress I ain't tipping, I like hot sauce on my chicken. I pulled the rubber off and I put hot sauce on her Titties, I'm in a Bentley truck she keep on sucking like it's tinted. All this vvs' nigga my sperm worth millions." Oh my God I'm

going to have dinner with a 21 savage supporter. What did I do to deserve this? Me: "Uhm. Yeah. I'm ready." Luks: "Give me two minutes." I heard an engine rev and he hung up. Dear Lord what have I gotten myself into? I walked to the lounge with my tote bag. Sands: "Girl, you look fabulous." Chris: "You look pretty mummy." Me: "Thank you guys so much. Lam's milk is in the fridge. I won't be gone till late okay?" Sibuh: "Take your time." Sands: "Yeah. We're good here." The sickest engine sound I've ever heard in my life roared outside. I almost wet myself. Sands: "What the HELL was that?" Me: "Probably the wind. So I'll see you guys later-" Sands: "Chris." He whispered. Chris: "Can I have a hug mummy?" Me: "Sure baby." I hugged him and he held on tight. What the? Me: "Baby.." Chris: "Hold on." A wave of love was passing. It was so sweet. A knock on the door disturbed me. Sandile opened the door. An Italian shoe stepped inside. Giuseppe Zannotti. He was wearing slim fit Chino's and a crisp white shirt. He stared at Sandile then Sibuh. His eyes finally landed on me. Luks: "Good evening." I could feel the house shake. Sandile was in a state of complete silent shock. Sibuh: "Hello." Luks: "You look like a goddess." He said to me, his gaze fell on Chris. Luks: "Hello." Lam was on the floor. Me: "Uhm. Thank you." For scaring my entire family. Even Lam was shook. Luks squatted down and held out his hand. Luks: "Hey little one." Lam crawled to his hand and he picked him up. Me: "So we should go?" Luks: "Sure." His gaze was still holding on Lam in his arms. I took the baby and gave him to Sandile and closed his mouth because yes, he was still in shock. Me: "I'll see you guys later. Love you." We walked out the house. The meanest, most beastly looking Bentley was parked out front. It had white interior and I could feel my heart take a dive. He opened the door for me and I got in. >>Back in the house<< Sands: "What the fuck just happened?" Sibuh: "He seems nice. Lam likes him." Sands: "Oh hell." Sibuh: "Never in all my years of knowing you have I ever seen you lost for words. Spho is allowed to go out Sandile. You never had a problem with Siya mos." Sandile shook his head. Sibuh: "Sandile. Why do you look scared." He panicked. Sands: "Do you know who that is?" He breathed. Sibuh: "Am I supposed to?" Sands: "You've never heard of the Mzinyathi family?" Sibuh: "Vaguely. Here and there. Why?" Sands: "Chris, please go water your plants." Chris: "No need to tell me twice." He ran out with his water bucket. Sands: "That is Lukhanyo Mzinyathi. One of the triplets. The head of the Mzinyathi empire along with his father who woke up from the dead!!!" He held the counter and breathed. Sibuh: "Okay And?" Sands: "Lukhanyo is one of the most ruthless thugs in this country." Sibuh: "So is Masilakhe." Sands: "Yeah, but Masilakhe doesn't have two other hims and an entire family trained like soldiers." Sibuh laughed. Sibuh: "You're exaggerating this guy. He looks harmless." Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "Hey." Sibuh walked to his room. Lakhe: "Sibulele come on!!!" He looked at Sandile. Lakhe: "When will he forgive me?" Sandile stared

at him. Lakhe: "What? Where's Chris? Why do you have that look?" He walked out back to the garden and came back. Lakhe: "What's going on?" Sands: "Nothing. Uhm.. you hungry?" He gave him the baby and went to the stove dishing up quietly.

First things first? Lukhanyo drives like a maniac on drugs. I had to hold on to my seat quietly and unfortunately hold my bladder too. He seemed very relaxed while he whizzed through traffic. Me: "So you listen to this music on purpose?" Luks: "No. My brother used my car earlier. This is all him." Me: "You have a brother?" Luks: "I had four. One passed 7 years ago. Almost 8 actually. I'm left with 3." I nodded. Luks: "Are those your brothers?" Me: "Yes. The one who was by the door is actually my ex's brother." He looked at me. Me: "I'm trying to get home in one piece if you don't mind." He looked back on the road and slowed down. Luks: "So... What's he doing at your place?" Me: "He baby sits for me and he's my best friend actually." He nodded and parked the car. Luks: "We're here." We got out the car and walked inside the restaurant. This place was so intimate. The lights dimmed down and warm. He pulled the chair for me and I sat down. The waiter approached us as he sat too. "Boss, what can I get you?" Luks: "I'll have mango juice for now." Me: "Same." The waiter left menus and went about his duty. Me: "So you own the place?" Luks: "My brother does. He's in Cape Town though, dropped him off an hour ago at the airport." Me: "You seem close." Luks: "It's not really my choice he just bulldozes his way in my life. I've gotten used to it." Me: "That's sweet. Sounds like Sandile." He leaned back on his chair, eyes low and a half smile dancing on his lips. Me: "What's on your mind." Luks: "Nothing.. You're just unearthly." I blushed. Me: "This is a friendship dinner." Luks: "You're right. Tell me about yourself." Me: "Well. I'm Spho. I have two kids, whom you just met, and one on the way." I waited to see his reaction. Nope, no change. Still smiling. Me: "I'm pregnant." Luks: "I know." Me: "How is it possible? You knew where I work, live and my number? Now my pregnancy too? That's suspicious. Were you stalking me?" He had the audacity to look offended. Luks: "I met you at the club and decided to do some research. I have a friend who investigates things. And I can see your tummy." Me: "What if I just have a belly?" Luks: "Now I know you don't." Me: "And you're not turned off?" Luks: "Not at all. Continue." Our juice came and we placed our food orders. Me: "So I have a company that focuses on building brand image. Before that I was MD to a larger company. I was married to the CEO." Luks: "Masilakhe Sobukwe." Me: "Yes." Luks: "How did you even survive that?" He sipped his juice. Me: "He's not that bad." Luks: "Hm.." Me: "So what do you do?" I sipped my juice. Luks: "I'm a gangster." I choked and coughed. He gave me a napkin. Me: "I beg your

pardon?" Luks: "I'm joking." He chuckled. Luks: "Well, a little bit. I was a thug, but we ventured into legitimate business. I have three farms now. One of which I own with my brother. I own properties, and a few shares." Me: "So you're a reformed gangster?" Luks: "Not entirely reformed. Just more relaxed." I nodded. If you ever see me again. Me: "Anyway, kids?" Luks: "Yes.. I've got 8 kids. Loves of my life." My heart stopped. You're definitely never seeing me again. A whole phara tsotsi with 8 baby mama's? God must be laughing. Luks: "You look uncomfortable. Are you uncomfortable?" Me: "Erh.." Luks: "I share the kids with my brothers. Four of them belong to them. I have only four of my own from my previous marriage." I was still not convinced. Me: "So you're still married?" Luks: "No." Me: "Seeing anyone?" Luks: "No. My wife and I divorced about 5 years ago, we gave it another try but kept having problems. So we broke up 2 years ago. For good. We're good friends though. You'll meet her soon." I don't think so. I was just in the stunned shock Sandile was in. This nigga just did not care, did he? Luks: "I feel like you're really uncomfortable and I understand. I didn't have an easy life Spho. Through it, I learnt honesty. I need to be honest with you so that you can trust me. I won't hurt you. I don't know what else to talk about that won't freak you out because I'm really nervous." He sighed. Luks: "Please don't judge me too harsh. I'm trying." I let out a sigh. Me: "You're right. I'm much worse anyway. We don't have to talk about anything hectic right now. Just light topics? Your farms and all. I'd like to know about that." He smiled shyly. Luks: "The first farm, Lubby calls it the Fruit Farm, is mostly vegetables and fruits. I wanted it to be a super healthy range. My son likes smoothies so he would whip up something in the kitchen and I loved it. To such an extent, their mom stopped giving them candy or junk snacks. We created the healthy snacks, the fruity bars and jelly beans. I bought a factory, produced a few and we sold them. The demand grew, so I expanded to Pick n Pay. They stock our products." Me: "That is amazing. The name is Juice Enjoy It?" He nodded proudly. Me: "The second farm?" Luks: "Vineyard." Me: "You own a wine farm?" Luks: "Yep. Bought it two years ago." Me: "Amazing. And the third?" Luks: "My animal farm. The kids love it. From the cows, to the sheep to the pigs and the chickens. It's crazy." He smiled. Me: "You really love your kids." Luks: "Alot." Me: "How old are they?" Luks: "Chumani is 13 years old now. Has a girlfriend, thinks I don't know but I do and I do not approve. He keeps hiding it and I'm still finding strength to have the whole talk with him. About sex. I don't want him making a girl pregnant. Junior is the same age, he's a little odd, that one. He's into all that white people sports and I think he's a little gay, also hiding it." I chuckled. Me: "How is he "a little" gay." Luks: "He has his moments. Anyway, Then there's my twins. Luthandoluhle. Luthando is the boy, Luhle is my baby girl. They're 8 and inseparable. I swear. Do everything together and they're in

sync too. If one of them is sick, the other is too, if one is mad, guess what..” I laughed. Luks: "Then I have another set of twins. Babalobuhle. Girls, identical. They're 7. If you know destruction. That's them. Then there's Luyanda, he's 6. Absolute prince, well mannered. You'll love him. Then there's Lubambo. The last born. Also 6." He sighed. Luks: "He's all of them, ALL, in his tiny little body." Me: "Wow!! You can open your own school." He laughed. Me: "It's nice that you're so clued up on all of them." Luks: "Best feeling in the world." Our food arrived. Luks: "Perhaps you can help me." Me: "With?" Luks: "You said your company builds brand image right? Well, I want to network. I have a company. Just a small business for youth skills development. I'm having a difficult time lifting it up. Everyone knows me as Ta Luks and I don't think they believe in this project." Now he's speaking my language. Me: "Youth skills development? Explain." Luks: "I want to have this agency. I'll have different short courses available. The research I came into taught me that most of the developed countries brushed up on skill set of their youth. The most things that we see as unimportant, plumbing, landscaping, making bricks. Those skills can be put to good use. In the courses, I want to offer a bit of admin, business and management practicals on top of the skill set. So that even if the learner doesn't get a job, they have enough intel to start their own small business in the community. What do you think?" My heart melted. Me: "I'm going to help you. With anything you need. Your idea is speaking into my soul. This is amazing. You know what else? I can get a few companies to partner and invest with yours, once a learner or two graduates from this program they can offer a small internship." Luks: "That is perfect. This is exactly what I want Spho. I've done a lot of bad to communities with my drugs and work. I want to fix it. Not all kids are destined for university. That doesn't mean they should be left out in the cold. This is what this program should do." I just stared into his eyes. Luks: "You're making me nervous." Me: "I'm sorry. It's just... been so long since I shared a passion with someone." He leaned forward on the table and whispered. Luks: "I thought this wasn't a date. You friendzoned me." I laughed. Me: "If you can pull yourself out of the friend zone. I'll let you out." Luks: "Challenge accepted." Our dinner went smoothly after that. He was so sweet and very attentive. After dinner, he drove me home slowly cruising. We watched the city lights quietly. Luks: "This was great. I haven't had such a wonderful night in a very long time." He parked in my driveway and pulled down his seat. Me: "I enjoyed myself too. You're a pleasant human." Luks: "You're a gorgeous girl." I blushed. Me: "I should.. go.. I have one more question." Luks: "Yeah?" Me: "You have tattoos. Can I see?" He smiled. Luks: "Nope." Me: "Come on, why? I've never seen tattoos up close." Luks: "I don't show them to friends. I only strip for someone who agrees to be my woman." I laughed. Me: "You're so sneaky. Let me see." Luks: "I don't want.

What you gonn strip me naked now?" He chuckled. Me: "Fine then. Keep your shirt on." Luks: "I plan to." He smiled again. That beautiful innocent smile. Me: "I have to go." We got out the car and he walked me to the front door. Me: "This was nice." He stood directly in front of me with hands in his pockets. Luks: "It was." Me: "Thank you Lukhanyo. For a night I actually forgot about-" He pulled me with one hand and kissed my lips. Luks: "You're welcome." He whispered. I was dizzy. Me: "Goodnight." I managed to say and walked into my house. I stood in the kitchen, dazed the fuck out then heard his engine roar away...

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Friday morning. I was still tingling from last night. That kiss. As brief as it was, it was effective. I made my way to the shower and came to make the bed. Chris woke up, I bathed him then got him dressed. Chris: "How was dinner mummy?" Me: "It was lovely sweetheart." Chris: "Was he nice?" Me: "Uhm. Yes my angel. Very." Chris: "That's good." I went to make breakfast. Sandile was in the lounge watching TV. He's never up this early. Me: "Hey Sands." He didn't reply. I looked at him. Me: "Sandile?" Sands: "Hm?" He looked at me. Me: "Are you okay?" Sands: "Yeah. I just need to get to work. I'll see you later." He walked out. Me: "Breakfast?!" Sands: "See you later." He yelled from his car. I wonder what's wrong with him. Chris ate his breakfast and My phone rang. Luks. Me: "Good morning." I said formally. Luks: "You're trying so hard to resist." Me: "I'm not." Luks: "How was your sleep?" Me: "It was good. Yours?" Luks: "Amazing." "TATA!" Luks: "Hold on.. Luhle?" Luhle: "My hair!" Luks: "Where's your brother to help you?" Luhle: "He's in the bathroom Tata." He came back on the phone. Luks: "Duty calls. Luhle has the most outrageous hair and her brother usually helps. I'll talk to you later okay?" Me: "Okay. No problem." We hung up. Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "Hi." Lakhe: "You okay? You look flushed." Me: "I'm fine." Lakhe: "Where's Sandile? I can't get hold of him. He's been acting really strange. This is usually his disappear time." Me: "Yeah he has been weird. He left here in a rush." Lakhe: "Please talk to him." I nodded. Me: "How's Nosi?" Lakhe: "Healing. Still not talking though." Me: "I'll come see her later." Lakhe: "Okay. Is it okay if I take Chris this weekend?" Me: "Sure. Yeah. I'll bring his stuff later on." Lakhe: "Perfect. Later then." Chris: "Bye mummy." Me: "Bye sweetheart. I love you so much okay? Have a great day my angel." Chris: "Oh umama ke." He left with his dad. I didn't need to be at the office early so I snuggled in bed with my phone and Lam. He was still asleep. I took a video of his feet and hands with music in the background then posted on Instagram story. I hadn't been using this app for a while but

my following tripled when the scandals broke out. "So precious." Someone replied. I checked the name. It wasn't even a real name, fourshots_ec. I looked through his profile. It was just quotes. No personal pictures. A fake account probably. I went to the (i) button and another message came in. "It's Luks." I smiled. "Was about to get yourself blocked." I replied. Him: "Why?" Me: "Your handle is weird." He called right then. What is up with this man and phone calls. Me: "Aren't you busy with hair?" Luks: "We're done. They're off to school. What are you doing?" Me: "in bed with my baby. He's asleep." Luks: "That sounds so perfect. Need company?" I laughed. Me: "No. I don't invite my friends into bed." Luks: "Urgh.. Fine. But I want to see you. I'll bring you breakfast." Me: "I already had breakfast." I could hear him smiling. Luks: "Now I don't know how to entice you. I really do want to see you. I don't know when last I held a baby. I miss having one in the house." Me: "You have a soccer team of kids." I chuckled. Luks: "these agents walk out on me any time they feel like it. They have friends and smartphones. It's a matter of time, they forget who I am." Me: "Awww. Big bad thug can't get his kids' attention?" He laughed long and hard. His laugh sounded like trumpets from heaven. Just magical. Luks: "I can't believe you dipped that low." Me: "Just saying. So now you want to loan my baby?" Luks: "Yes. I can change diapers super fast and I speak Baby." Me: "I'm not sure about the diapers. Can you?" Luks: "My twins used to pee on me all the time. I learnt the hard way." I laughed. Me: "I can see that." Luks: "So? Can I?" Me: "Perhaps next time." Luks: "I'll hold you to that. I hope you know I like you Spho. I don't play games when it comes to people I want." Me: "I actually believe you. But I told you I'm not in the state for a new relationship." Luks: "Problem is that you've been spending too much time with little boys. Now it's time to give real men a chance Spho." Me: "I'm not letting you call my baby father a little boy." Luks: "I wasn't talking about your baby father." Me: "I've been through a lot okay? I just... you wouldn't understand. Or if you did, you'd probably run away too." Luks: "My nervousness must have given you the impression that I'm a coward ne? Don't worry. I'll fix that for you. Today is Friday. What will you be doing?" Me: "Well, Lakhe is taking Chrissie for the weekend so I'll probably be left with Lammy." Luks: "Chrissie is a little girls name." Me: "It is not!" Luks: "You know it is. I want to take you somewhere. Show you my life." Me: "I don't know." Luks: "You don't want the kasi experience? You're hurting me." I laughed. Me: "I have to take care of my baby." Luks: "Bring him. He'll love it. My last born went everywhere with me before he turned 1." Me: "Lam is a special baby. It is imperative I keep him far away from danger." Luks: "I understand. Next time then. Will you be going to work?" Me: "Yes, I'm leaving in an hour." Luks: "Hmm... I'll bring you some lunch." Me: "Every day?" Luks: "Every single day." I smiled. Me: "We'll talk later okay?" Luks: "Alright. Stay beautiful." He hung up. I sighed trying to get rid of

this smile. It was almost time to go so I started bathing Lam and getting us ready for work.

My Friday went well enough. I finished working on time. It was just before 5. I let Janice go home and I took my baby to my car. I had to drop off Chris' clothes at Lakhe's house and see Nosi. My rented car would have to go home tomorrow or perhaps I'd extend the hire. I drove to my previous house. Lam was blabbing to himself in the back. I was a little tired. The estate was filled with cars once again like it used to be. His whole family was here. Me: "Lets go baby." I took Lam and the packed bag, walking to the front door. Everyone was in the lounge except Sandile. He was probably still at work. Me: "Molweni bazali." Stella: "Hi Spho." Rob: "Hello Spho." Me: "I just came to drop Chris' things-" Lakhe: "Hey. Thought I heard your voice." He walked out the passage. Me: "Where is Chris?" Lakhe: "Taking a nap." He took Lam. Lakhe: "Here's your Dada baby." He kissed his son. Lakhe: "Come on, say it." Me: "Can I see uNosi?" Lakhe: "Yeah sure she's in her room." I walked down the passage to her. She was in bed curled up in a ball. Me: "Hey you." She didn't move. Me: "I'm sorry I couldn't be here earlier." Nosi: "It's okay." Me: "How are you feeling?" Nosi: "I feel nothing." Me: "I know it hurts sweetie. I wish I could do something." Nosi: "It's okay. I just want it all to end. I'm so sick and tired of being strong." Me: "I know but it will take some time okay? I want you to give it your best." Nosi: "I don't have the strength Spho." I hugged her. We stayed like that for about an hour taking a nap. I woke up around 6pm. She was still sleeping. I tip toed out of her room to the lounge. Lakhe was cuddling a sleeping Lam on his chest. He looked at me. Lakhe: "Did she say anything?" Me: "Yeah. She's depressed. I think it's best to keep a very close eye on her. Away from blades or pills. She might be suicidal." Rob: "What did she say?" Me: "She says she's tired of being strong. Says she wants it to end." Stella: "Oh no. That can't be safe." Lakhe: "Did you try talking to her?" Me: "There's only so much I can say Lakhe. I think she needs a professional." Lakhe: "Will it help? You're the only person she's responded to." Me: "Because she thinks none of you care. That's what she told me at the hospital when I said I'm trying to get hold of you. She said that none of you cared and were too busy absorbed in your own lives. I have to go. Just be there for her. She needs all of you to care." I went to take Lam. Lakhe: "Please leave him behind too? I kind of miss him. I promise I'll spend time alone with Chris too. I just miss my kids Spho." Me: "Kodwa Lakhe you're supposed to tell me these things before hand and not just tell me at the last minute." Lakhe: "I'm sorry Spho. It's hard for me to spend alot of time with them because I don't live with them. I'm begging." Me: "You're being unfair and you know it." I kissed Lam's cheek. Lakhe: "Thank you

for this." I went to say goodbye to Chris, pumped some milk for Lam then left. I honestly couldn't stand being there anymore. Now what would I do with myself? Perhaps a glass of non-alcoholic wine and movies? I didn't want to bother Fez especially now he had a man to keep him busy. Sibule was working. Sandile too. It sucks not having friends. My phone rang again. I parked in front of my house and answered. Me: "Lukhanyo." Luks: "Sphosenkosi." Me: "You've been quiet today. Where are you hiding?" Luks: "Had some trouble with work I had to fix. I'm sorry. How was your day?" Me: "Tiring. My sister in law had a miscarriage a few days ago and I just went to see her, she's so upset I don't even know what to do. Then I had to leave my kids with their dad for the weekend and I already miss them so much. I don't have friends available to hang out with. Now I'm about to have a glass of non alcoholic wine and watch a movie." Luks: "What am I?" Me: "A big bad thug." He laughed. Luks: "Get dressed. I'm coming to pick you up. I'll be there in 30 minutes." Me: "Okay." I hung up. Showering took me 10 minutes. I was super nervous. What would I wear? Well it was a hot day so far so I could do a mini dress. The white one with long sleeves? No that would be too much. The black sleeveless mini dress. It also cut off mid thigh and held my curves. Now it was a hard decision between a thigh high boot. Or the calf length black glove boot. I chose the glove black boot. For safety I would wear my black oversized jacket. I'm not much of a kasi person but I hope this wasn't too much. I did a natural face beat and clipped on my wig. A knock on the door finally. My heart raced. I went to open kanti it's Sandile. Sands: "Lost my keys. Tragic day. You look dressed up. Where you off to?" Tar was right. This was so weird. Me: "I'm going out." Sands: "You look gorgeous but what am I gonna eat?" I laughed. Me: "Get take aways. I'm not a mom today." Sands: "Hmm.. how was dinner last night? He's repulsive right?" Gosh Sandile. Me: "He's actually quite sweet." The familiar engine roar sounded outside. Sands: "Oh no. He's back?" I went to fetch my bag and phone. Lukhanyo knocked on the door. Sandile opened and stared at him. Lukhanyo stared right back. Me: "Hey." Luks: "Hey you." He smiled at me. Luks: "Wow. You look beautiful." Me: "Flattery will get you nowhere. So where to? I hope the movies." Luks: "Nope. I'm taking you to the ghetto. You're gonna eat iqadidi and bread for supper." I laughed out loud. Me: "You will not do that to me!" Luks: "Only one way to find out." He held my hand. Me: "You can use my keys Sands. I'll call you okay?" He just stood there in shock again. Honestly I don't know what's his deal. Lukhanyo led me out to his car. Luks: "Have you eaten?" Me: "Not in a while." He drove off. Luks: "I know this place with the best meat in the city. You'll love it." I just smiled like a shy teenager. Luks: "I thought the kids were with their dad." Me: "They are." Luks: "His brother is still in your house." Me: "I told you he's my best friend. He lives with me sometimes when he's trying to run away from his life." Luks:

"Hm..." Me: "It's not weird." Luks: "I didn't say it was." Me: "You said Hm.. which means you're doubting something." Luks: "My brother was the same. Then he slept with my wife. So I don't know." My breathing stuck in my throat. Does he always blurt out serious things like this and not look worried at all? Me: "I'm so sorry." Luks: "It was years ago. We're over it." His jaw tightened. He was definitely not over it. Me: "Are you suppressing your feelings to accommodate other peo-" Luks: "I'm not suppressing anything." He snapped. I kept my mouth shut. The rest of the journey was a little awkward now and I wanted to go home. I didn't want to spend time with a short fuse. In no time we parked in front of a car wash in a deserted area. It was huuge. Like a rally. And it was packed. I only imagined these places in Fast and the Furious movies. Luks: "Spho. My family and I sorted our problems out. We are fine now. I don't need to keep going back to that dark place. I was an ass most of the time. I just want to leave that period of my life there." Me: "Okay." Luks: "Don't worry. Okay? We're here to have a good time." I nodded. We got out the car. He was saluted by almost everyone there. What the hell was this? He held my hand into the car wash pub. Luks: "We have full meals, meat, salads, everything." Me: "So you own this place." Luks: "I own all of PE. I bought this place with my brothers and SomaSoso twins. Built this car wash, fixed the roads and equipped them for racing, my ex wife's company does the catering. Come." I can't meet this girl right now. Come on. He ordered food for us and we went to sit. Luks: "Don't worry. She's not here." He laughed. The music pumped loud on the speakers. Me: "But she does come." Luks: "Sometimes." A tall man walked to our table. This must be his brother? Their complexion, height and body size were the same. Luks: "Soso, hey." Soso: "Sup Luks. Hello." He said to me holding my hand. Me: "Hi." I took my hand back. Luks: "This is my best friend, Soso. Soja, this is Spho." Soso stared at Lukhanyo. Soso: "Where did yo-" another appeared and my eyes almost popped out my head. What the hell? Luks: "Oh and that's Soma. His twin." You mean clone? I don't even remember which one was Soso anymore. Soma: "Hey you. Who is this?" This one had seedy eyes and a huge smile. Me: "This is Spho." I was still in shock. How does Lukhanyo tell the difference? They pulled chairs and sat down. Okay. Wow. So much for a date. Another two came. One of them, light as milk and one that looked similar to Lukhanyo. Luks: "Is everyone coming in drips and drabs? This is Stuja, that is Thulz, my brothers." I greeted them and they greeted back taking seats. Right. My juice came and I sipped quietly. One of the twins. I think the second one started chatting to me. Soma I think. Him: "Are you from around here? I have never seen you." Me: "I live here in PE, yes." Luks: "Cheese girl." They chuckled. Luks: "Ebetshate noSobz." Soma: "Lakhe or the brother?" Luks: "Lakhe." Soma: "No wonder I don't know you. That man knows how to hide." Luks: "The brother lives with her." They all

stared at me. I looked at my juice ignoring their stares. After a few seconds they carried on with their chat in a language I wasn't familiar with. I minded my own but I was kinda bored now. Soma: "So you've met the gang. Now you can choose properly. Ufuna bani? I'm the sweetest of all." Soso: "Thulani is the sweetest of us all. He's like a baby bird." They laughed. Thulani's cheeks burnt bright pink and they laughed harder. I chuckled. This was so mean of them. Thulani was really light. Pinching him would cause a bruise. He was super cute with big Brown eyes and pink lips. He really looked like a baby. Thulz: "She can't pick because asiphelelanga." Me: "There's more?" Soma: "Lubabalo Morrison-" "NOOO!!" They all protested. Me: "Why no?" Soso: "He's evil." They laughed. Luks: "Ndizanaxela ninye bonanje." (I'm telling on you all.) Soma: "I'm not scared." Me: "Evil? That's it?" I laughed hysterically. Soma: "Is that your thing?" Me: "Not really. I just don't think you should throw the word evil around lightly." Soma: "Please call him Lukha." Luks: "He's in Cape Town. She'll meet him next week. And Her decision is already made." He stared at me and I blushed. Soma: "Welcome to our family Spho." Me: "Thank you So....?" Soma: "Soso." Soso: "Hm?" Soma laughed. I was so mind fucked. Soma was the joker I guess. Lukhanyo was having a private discussion with Stuja. I couldn't hear what they were saying but it looks serious. Soso: "What do you do Spho?" Me: "Everything." Soso: "Oh?" Me: "My first company focuses on building brand image, I've just signed my first client. Thomas Dewardo." The table was silent. Lukhanyo stared at me again. Thulz: "Tommy D? That's Lubby's best friend." Luks: "You don't say." Soma: "Everyone is Lubby's bestie." Me: "Signed the contract today." He smiled and continued with Stuja. Soma: "That's pretty huge. But you said first company, which already has a billionaire client. What is the next?" Me: "I'm also the owner of an investment firm listed on the JSE. With the programs I'm currently starting, I'll be selling it in a few months." Silence once again. Soma: "Lubby is going to glue himself on you with Bostik. Mncwi Stru." Soso: "You seem so young." Me: "I've got the connections." Luks: "That event. At that hotel last year. That was you?" Me: "Yes." Luks: "You know how pissed Lubabalo was when he couldn't secure a seat?" Me: "It was a private event." Luks: "You'll have to explain yourself to him. He's not over it. Don't ever mention Saturday night or Opera singer in one sentence." I chuckled. Soso: "Any kids?" Me: "Yes I have two boys. First boy is 5 years and the second is 6 months." Lukhanyo's private meeting came to an end. Thulz: "When last did we have a baby in the house." Luks: "He's the cutest. Qha anizomva. I will hide him if I have to." We laughed. Our food arrived. Two huge trays of meat, and drinks. I got my plate with samp and gravy. Lukhanyo brought me two pieces of meat and juice to my side. Luks: "Comfortable?" I nodded. He went to sit again. We ate our dinner. Soso: "Lukha, i'taima liyabuza uzokolusa nini?" (Father asked when you're taking the

boys to initiation) Luks: "Haibo. Zintwana nje ezi." (They're still little boys). Soma: "You know dad. He's been complaining of knee cancer for two years." They laughed out loud. Luks: "Khabanike 4 years qha. Xa besenza Grade 11, la December ndiyabafaka. Baphume ngo January. So they can focus on matric the rest of the year. Nothing else." Soma: "Fondin uyi drill sergeant yazi. You thought that far?" Thulz: "Tata Luks is strict as hell." Stuja: "You're right. I took my boy to him for one weekend and he came back with manners and respect. Ndiveske ndibuze Awumkhumbul uTata Lulu? Ayohlala yedwa ekoneni umntanam aziculele." Everyone laughed. Me: "Hayi Lukhanyo." Luks: "They've learnt." Soso: "Except the girls. They just give you one look and it's the end of you." Soma: "Ncawww." Luks: "Nyansile. I cannot discipline the girls at all. Luhle has this look she gives me. Her big eyes all out and her bottom lip shivers then her voice saying 'but Tata sorry.' Yoooh. My daddy manuals fly out the window. Nobody will touch my girls. Kunganyiwa." Soso: "Same. Mine just turned 14. Unala iPhone ndizoyophula. I have to stalk her Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook and Twitter. Fucking full time job because she posts every second." Soma: "You've set notifications on your phone for every single thing she posts ne? That's creepy." Soso: "I need to make sure the content she posts is within my guideline." Soma: "She's a TEENAGER. Give her space!" Soso: "It's bad enough she has a boy she likes." Luks: "You stalked him too?" Soso: "Of course I did. He plays rugby and is one of those fuck boy shits. Ought to punch him in the throat." Soma: "That's illegal Soso. Leave the kids alone." I held my mouth laughing. Luks: "Advice? Don't leave them alone. Take her out for ice cream and explain that she can't date till she's 31. Luhle knows, Lutha made her sign a contract." Soma: "You're unstable. Soso, let Siphesihle date. Get to know this boy. They're teenagers. She's supposed to fall in love and get heartbroken a few times. You need to trust her and she will know who to lean on. If you're going to be a monster about it, she'll date him behind your back, she will listen to him and fall pregnant. Take hold of it now. It's early." Luks: "Nope. Not on my watch. Andikhathali noba yintwana encinci. I'll shoot him in between his eyes if he tries my daughters." Me: "Soma is right to a certain point. When I was 14 I became close with this boy in my class. Brandon. My dad knew him and spoke to him regularly. He was so scared of my dad after that. I also just saw him as a friend nothing more. Girls like to rebel. Don't feed it with anger." Luks: "Chumani even has a girlfriend. I saw it on his phone and when I picked him up from school. He keeps brushing it off as nothing. He's a child." Me: "A teenager. Sit him down and have a chat with him." He sighed. Thulz: "I think my son is gay." The whole table exploded with laughter. I really wasn't expecting that confession. After a few minutes Everyone finally calmed down. Me: "Why do you think that?" Thulz: "Well.. he's different. He plays Tennis. He's always rolling his eyes and his fashion sense is sick." Luks:

"That boy knows how to dress." Thulz: "I asked him what he wanted to be and he said he wants to be a fashion designer." Me: "That doesn't mean he's gay." Thulz: "I know but I'm not sure. He says he doesn't want to go to the Bush and instead go to a private hospital so that they handle him with 'care' apparently he doesn't want infections." Luks: "Okay. So what if he's gay? Uzothini?" Thulz: "He's my first born. I don't know Luks. I love him with all my heart but I can't accept that." Me: "Why is that?" Thulz: "I like doing boy things with him. I always thought I'd discuss girl problems with him, advise him to treat women better, have grandkids for me. All of that goes down the drain." Me: "You know how much better all your problems will be once you talk? Sit with him and ask. Just because he's gay doesn't make him less of your son. He'll still enjoy boy things with you because you're his dad. His hero. The most important gift a parent can give their kid is happiness. Your role is to ensure their stay here on earth is less painful. Less traumatic. Would you rather he commits suicide because you can't accept him? Would you rather live in a world without him?" He sighed. Thulz: "I'd rather lose myself before I lose him." Luks: "I cannot imagine having a gay son but if that's the case then so be it. Qha angajoli nentwana efakela izinto zamacherrie. Ndiyoy'khaba inye." Another round of laughter. Hayi sana the daddy club was really nice shame. They loved their kids. The food was delicious no doubt. The guys then left to go watch the races. Big lights switched on the sides of the road. Lukhanyo took my hand leading me out. Luks: "Usegrand?" (Still fine?) Me: "I'm okay." Luks: "My family is alot. I hope it's not too much." Me: "It isn't. They're really nice." Luks: "Awusencume." We leaned on the car. Me: "Ndonwabile." He smiled. Two cars were at the starting line, revving their engines. A Golf 7 R line and a BMW M6. Luks: "If the Golf wins, you owe me a kiss." Me: "I don't kiss my friends." He laughed. The cars sped off on the road. Everyone was cheering loudly. The area where we stood was restricted. He looked over my head. He was taller than me so I turned around to look too. Luks: "There's something I need to sort out." He whistled for Soma and he came over. Luks: "Ndiyabuya. Don't move." He walked away. I stood with Soma. Soma: "So why does your ex's brother live with you." His eyes were fixed on the racing cars, arms folded on his chest. Me: "He's my best friend. More like my twin actually." I smiled. Soma: "And your ex is okay with that?" Me: "Yeah. He knows he lives with me." Soma: "Is he okay with it?" Me: "He never said he isn't. Lakhe knows I'm close with Sands. He doesn't mind." Soma: "Luks does." Me: "Excuse me?" Soma: "Luks does mind that he lives with you. And Luks doesn't like competition." Me: "It's not a competition." Soma: "Yet. Just be careful, okay? If anything ever happens, call me." Lukhanyo walked back to me. Soma walked away..

Sandile walked into his brother's house. Lakhe was on the couch watching TV with Miya. Lakhe: "What got you all broody?" Sands: "We need to talk." Lakhe: "Now? I'm in the middle of something." Miya: "Actually I should be heading home. It's getting late." Lakhe: "I said I'd drive you home. In the morning." He smiled. Miya laughed. Miya: "That's sneaky of you." Lakhe: "How is it sneaky? Come on Mi." Miya: "Maybe next time okay? I'll call you when I'm home." Lakhe: "Miya. I'm not letting you drive at night in that thing. I refuse it." Sands: "I'll be in my room." He walked down the passage to his room. Lakhe: "Come on baby, you can't leave me with him. He's depressed." Miya: "Which means he needs you Masilakhe. What if something happened? Talk to him." Lakhe: "Fine but you're not leaving. I will chain you on that couch if I must." She laughed. Miya: "Your determined face is so adorable. Fine. I won't leave but you're not getting in my pants. I know these tricks." Lakhe: "I don't even want to get in your pants lady. Relax." He laughed. Miya: "Go talk to your brother Lakhe!" He got up and walked to Sandile's room. Lakhe: "Mans?" He knocked and went inside. Sandile was standing by the window with his hands in his pocket. Lakhe: "You okay?" Silence. Lakhe: "Sandile? You're acting strange. This isn't like you. Can you please talk to me? Please don't disappear again. I don't know if I can take it. With Nosi in her depression, dad's new drinking problem... Sandile our family doesn't need this. Please." Sands: "I'm not going to disappear." He finally said. Lakhe: "Then talk to me. Did you break up with Liz? Did you fight with Spho? What happened?" Sands: "Liz and I are okay. We're still together. I'm good with Spho." He turned around to look at his brother. Lakhe: "Fez?" Sands: "He's dating some Italian idiot. Giovanni." Lakhe: "And?" Sands: "He's already changing him into something he's not. Dictates what he wears, where he goes, who he talks to. Fez isn't happy but he hides it. He doesn't talk to me anymore." Lakhe: "I'm sorry. I know he's your best friend. This isn't easy on you." Sands: "I don't want him to get hurt. He doesn't understand this. I swear if that boy lays his hands on him I'll slit his throat and pull out his oesophagus." Lakhe: "Why are you so angry? What is the real problem?" Sands: "Spho has become friendly with a new guy." Lakhe: "She's dating? Oh..." Sands: "She said he's a friend but.. I don't trust it. She's trying to protect my feelings." Lakhe: "Is that why you're mad? Sandile you act like Spho's first born. Of course she's trying to protect your feelings. You even live with her. How do you expect her to date freely?" He swallowed. Sands: "It's not that. It's the guy." Lakhe: "Did he threaten you?" He hissed. Sands: "No, bhuti. He didn't." Lakhe: "Sandile? Why do you have that look on your face? What did he say to you!" Sands: "He's bad news. Spho seems to be attaching to him. Tonight is their second date. Yesterday was their first. She doesn't know who he is." Lakhe: "Who is he?" Sands: "Lukhanyo." Lakhe: "Lukhanyo who?" Sands: "Mzinyathi. Ta Luks." Lakhe: "HOW THE FUCK DID YOU LET THAT

HAPPEN!!!!!!" He screamed. Sands: "I didn't-" Lakhe: "Don't fucking lie to me!!!! You knew!!" His eyes ablaze with anger. Sands: "What was I supposed to do ke? Lock her in the house?" Lakhe: "FUCK !!!" He paced the room. Lakhe: "No. Spho can't date him. She hates criminals and he's the worst kind." Sands: "She dated you-" Lakhe: "We were about to be married and she threatened to leave me. She doesn't care, she will not associate with criminals. I know Spho. We need to tell her." Sands: "Bhuti, ever since we got here we haven't been in anyone's way. We haven't stepped on toes. Our work is just shipping merchandise and nothing that involves other people's territories. We've never had to cross paths with Lukhanyo and his team. But bhuti, one thing i know about him is that he doesn't let anything get in his way. He owns this city. I cannot stress it enough that it'll be a cold wintery day in hell before he let's go." Lakhe: "You're going to let your sister date this fool Sandile?" Sands: "Of course not!! I don't want her hurt! I also don't want YOU hurt. Why can't you two just sort things out?" Lakhe: "Lukhanyo is not getting away with this. Spho won't touch him with a ten meter pole if she found out what he is." Sands: "And if she already knows? What then?" Lakhe: "Get me an army. I will start a war if I have to. There's no way in hell I'll let Lukhanyo Mzinyathi walk away with Spho!!"

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The sky had turned dark with only a few stars laid out. The lights in the arena were brightly lit. Classic kwaito songs basted through the speakers. The cars continued to race, tyres screeching and men whistling. It was beautiful to watch. Luks: "We'll be leaving soon." He whispered in ear. His arms rested on on my waist. I was leaning against him with my back. Me: "Where are we off to? I like this show." Luks: "Kugqityiwe nje. My cars are done racing." Me: "Your cars? You've been standing here with me the whole time." Luks: "I have four drivers that race for me." Me: "For fun?" Luks: "kind of." Me: "Meaning?" Luks: "It costs money to race here. You put forth 50k each driver. If your driver wins, you get 100. If he loses, you get nothing." Me: "And you won?" Luks: "I won 3 races. Lost one." I turned to look at him. Me: "Not only are you a thug but you sell drugs and gamble too? What makes you think I'd date you?" Luks: "I don't sell drugs anymore. This isn't gambling. And you'll date me because I'm interesting. Aren't you the least bit curious?" He pulled a gorgeous puppy dog face. Me: "No." He pulled my waist standing me in between his legs then kissed me. His lips were soft and gentle. Luks: "Even now?" I shook my head. He kissed me again, gently sucking my bottom lip, his hand snaked up my back seductively with the tips of his fingers. My knees started to give in. I

pulled away from his lips trying to breath. Luks: "How about now?" Me: "You think seducing me is going to help you?" Luks: "Why do you keep stopping me?" Me: "Because people are watching." Luks: "Ungumntu ka Ta Luks. Obviously."(You're my woman) Me: "Don't get ahead of yourself. I am not yours. I don't date thugs." Luks: "U-sure? Ta Luks uzok'phatha kakuhle baby."(Ta Luks will take care of you.) I chuckled, shaking my head. I can't lie and say his Xhosa wasn't sexy. It has that thing. That sultry rough thing. Me: "Still no." Luks: "Uyakwazi uyirakisa indoda sisi. What do I do with you."(You can drive a man crazy.) Me: "I don't know sir. Unfortunately for you, I don't give in easy." Luks: "Spho ndiyak'funa fondin. Ndenze njani? I can sing in front of all these people if you want."(Spho i want you. What should I do?) I laughed. Me: "You mean the big bad thug wants to embarrass himself for me?" He laughed out loud. I so loved his laugh. Luks: "Why do you call me that?" Me: "Well aren't you?" He bit his lower lip. Luks: "Uzondithanda yazi." Me: "I doubt." Luks: "You know you will. You're going to be mine. In three years, carry my triplet boys in here. Then I'll remind you of today." I laughed harder. Me: "YUUUH. Triplets? Never." Thulani came to us. Thulz: "Siya-mover Ta Luks." Luks: "Lets go baby."

We moved to his house. A beautiful double-storey in Lovemore Heights. It was light Grey and mainly protective glass. No doubt bullet proof. Inside the lounge was white and Grey with a touch of red. Two toy trucks were on the carpet. The guys walked to another living room which was equipped with a bar and play station. Luks: "We haven't spent time alone. Just you and me." He sat me down on the couch in the main lounge. Me: "You have a beautiful house." Luks: "Thank you. Juice? Or water?" Me: "Neither. You've been stuffing me all night with food and juice." He smiled. Luks: "That's the best way to someone's heart. Not just a man. Even women." Me: "Has it worked before?" Luks: "I've never met a Spho before so no." I smiled. Luks: "You're really beautiful. There's this light around you.. it makes me feel comfortable and calm." Me: "Thank you Ta Luks." He chuckled. Me: "Everyone calls you that. It's so cute." Luks: "Heee. Ndimdala Spho."(I'm old Spho) he leaned back on the couch. Luks: "I think you're the only person that exists who ridicules me like this.. it hurts." Me: "You're a big bad thug. You'll get over it." He leaned over and kissed my lips, holding my face. I held on his shirt. He pulled me closer to him then slowed down. I pulled away. Luks: "We can take it as slow as you wish. I'm not in a rush." I had to catch my breath. His glorious cologne was not making it easy. His index finger lifted my chin up. My eyes staring into his. Why was he so beautiful. Luks: "If you call me big bad thug one more time, you must understand you're mine. No backsies. I know you want to say it." I

laughed. Me: "You are so confident that I'll date you. I think not. You are not my type." Luks: "Where is your type?" I sucked my teeth. Luks: "Exactly." He planted soft kisses on my shoulder. Luks: "Movie?" Me: "Yes.." although I wanted to just suck his face some more. He switched on the TV. Luks: "Lubby connected ShowMax on every television we own. I still don't know how to ... Okay there. Pick one." I picked a horror movie. He stared at me. Me: "Don't tell me you're scared." Luks: "I ..." Me: "No!!" Luks: "Look, I like a lot of things but demonic movies don't make the cut. I'm sorry." The air stuck in my throat. I choked and coughed. Luks: "You okay?" I nodded and cleared my airway. Me: "I should go." Luks: "What do you mean?" Me: "I kinda have to go home." Luks: "Is it about the movie? It's okay baby. Masibukele ke but you're gonna have to sleep next to me." Me: "It's not about the movie." I couldn't tell him. It's about this whole us. Sooner or later my demon family is gonna start creeping up on him. He has kids. I can't risk it. Luks: "Spho, kwenzeka ntoni ngoku? Did I make you uncomfortable?" (What's going on now?) Me: "It's not you. Lukhanyo. You're great, amazing. Just perfect. But... I don't think this is going to work." Luks: "Spho. Don't do this please. If I'm coming on too strong, I'm sorry. We can be friends. I'll respect it. I swear." Me: "Lukhanyo I don't want to be friends with you. I don't want anything else. I just... I can't give you what I want. I can't explain it. I can't risk your life. You're a brave and determined guy. A go-getter. I don't want to endanger your life." Luks: "I've been through everything you can imagine. Nothing is close to destroying me. Tell me what's going on. Is this about your ex? Uyamoyika?" (Are you scared of him?) Me: "No. Lakhe is fine. It's not about him. It's my family." Luks: "Your dad?" Me: "You know my dad?" Luks: "The doctor, yes. Dr Ngudla. I told you I searched for everything about you." Thank God that's all he could find. Luks: "He's strict?" Me: "Kind of." Luks: "Your ex's fan huh?" Me: "Not really." Luks: "Jonga. Ndingakwenzela nantoni na oyifunayo. Ndixelele qha." (Look, I'll do anything for you. Just tell me.) Me: "Please take me home." His face fell with disappointment. Luks: "Okay. Let's go." ...

Saturday morning. Last night Lukhanyo brought me straight home without another question. I could see he was hurt. I did want to be with him. More than anything. I just could not risk his life like that. I know if I told him about me, he would be shocked but welcome it anyhow. He will do whatever it takes to be with me and that's why I can't give him that option. I have to think of his family. I cried myself to sleep when he left. I didn't want him to go. My jacket still smells like him. My eyes were now swollen and red. I sat on the kitchen counter with a bowl of cereal in my t shirt and undies. Sandile wasn't here. Sibu opened for me last night and he was probably already at his

restaurant this morning. I was alone and lonely. I'd spent my entire week working my ass off and I didn't have anything to work on which was a good thing because I need the rest. My phone was off since last night. I couldn't bear look at it or hear it ring. I got off the counter, putting my dish in the sink and went to shower quick. After air-drying I pulled on skinny jeans and a plain white loose t-shirt. I wore my sneakers combed my natural hair and off I went driving to my father's house. I don't care if he's a demon. I wanted an explanation and a hug. I couldn't take being lonely anymore and I shouldn't. His car was in the driveway so he was home. I parked next to it and went to knock on his front door. He was avoiding me. I knocked again and again. Finally, he opens. Me: "You're still sleeping?" Khaya: "Uhm. No. I'm just in bed. Reading. Hi baby." Me: "Hiiii." I squinted my eyes. He looked suspicious. Me: "Anyway, I need to talk to you." I walked in the house to the lounge. Khaya: "Of course." He came to sit with me. Me: "When you killed my mother, or perhaps watched her die, did you ever think about me?" He stared at me wide eyed. Me: "She was trying to protect me." Khaya: "I'm sorry Spho. I couldn't stop him. I wish I could. I haven't stopped thinking about her. Ever since she died, I haven't been the same." Me: "I saw her." Khaya: "In your visions?" Me: "No. She's alive. I saw her when I was with Sibu. She pretended not to know me." I could see beads of sweat on his forehead. Khaya: "You think it's really her?" Me: "I know my mother. It's her." Khaya: "Did you talk to her?" Me: "Why should I ? She deceived us Tata. Along with Komander. I thought she died kanti all along she's gone to be with him." Khaya: "That's not true." I put my legs up on the couch, hugging my knees. Khaya: "What's going on my angel?" Me: "My life is a joke." I laughed. Khaya: "No its not." Me: "Lakhe has been trying for weeks to get me back. Saved my life when I almost got killed on the side of the road. I just.. couldn't look at him the same Tata. Ever since I found out I am pregnant, I keep seeing him.. his.." I held back my tears. Khaya came to sit next to me, pulling me to his chest. Me: "I keep seeing his face. His demonic face... when he.." I breathed. Khaya: "Kadir the second raped you? That's how you got pregnant?" I broke down in his arms. Khaya: "It's okay love." He rubbed my back. Khaya: "Why did you never tell anyone?" Me: "I can't. Nobody would believe my husband's demon raped me." Khaya: "Spho, that wasn't Lakhe. It was using his body, yes. But Kadir the second is not the real Lakhe. It's a demon. You can't blame Lakhe-" Me: "I don't blame him Tata. That's the problem. I feel sorry for him instead. I remember when I was in compulsion. I did anything Rex asked. I was not in control. Lakhe was used the same way I was. It's just... I can't get the image out of my head." I breathed for a while. Me: "So I decided to put it behind me and try and fix us. I thought perhaps by spending time with him I could erase the evil I see when I close my eyes. I went over to his house, I cooked and everything. He walked

in... but he was with someone. He'd already moved on." Khaya: "I'm sorry."
Me: "For what Tata? I played myself. Lakhe chased me for months." Khaya:
"You're being too hard on yourself Sphosenkosi. You're still human even with
your powers." Me: "That's not even the end of it. I decided to go out with Fez
for a drink and some food. I just wanted fresh air and good company. I met
someone. A guy." Khaya: "Okay. Then what happened?" Me: "He asked me
out on Thursday and we went out for dinner. Then again yesterday to his car
wash race track. I enjoy his company. He's sweet. When we got to his
house...I just freaked out after a while. I started thinking about the demons.
His life, his kids. I don't want to ruin him. So I asked him to take me home and
he did." He sighed. Khaya: "Do you like this guy?" Me: "So much." Khaya: "And
you think he can handle this-" Me: "I don't want him to handle anything. I
don't want this for him. He has a good family. I can't do that to them." Khaya:
"Did you at least give him a choice?" Me: "No. And I won't Tata." Khaya:
"You're scared he will reject you." Me: "He has every right. I would reject me if I
could. Sometimes I wish I never dug deeper looking for K. His name
unleashed everything wrong in my life." Khaya: "Komander loves you. You're
his daughter. He has done everything that is anything to protect you." Me:
"Would've been much better if he kept his shirt on." He laughed. Me: "I'm sorry
about barging in here. I didn't know where else to go. I miss mama so much. I
just wish I could have my normal un-demon family back." I sniffed. Khaya: "I'm
sorry. I'm not pleased about me either. I should've just died." Me: "Kadir
brought you back to life. You didn't ask to be demonized." Khaya: "You're
welcome here any time you want okay? This is still your home." Me: "Yeah but
I should go." Khaya: "Where exactly will you go?" Me: "I'm going to help Sibule
with his restaurant or maybe I should look for Sandile first. Lakhe asked me to
talk to him about something." Khaya: "If you need anything or someone to
talk to, call me. I am your father Sphosenkosi. I love you with everything I am."
He gave me one last tight hug before I left.

Sandile's hotel was abuzz today. Probably a celebrity was around. I walked
up to his penthouse and knocked. The doors opened and I walked in. Sands
was sitting on the couch with Boogie on his chest. Liz in the kitchen making
breakfast. This was such a cute picture. Me: "Morning guys." Liz: "Hi Spho."
Sands: "Hey you. What you up to?" Me: "You owe me a smoothie. I'm bored." I
took boogie from him. Sands: "He's gone? For good?" Me: "Yes." Sands: "What
happened? Did he hurt you?" He stood up, balling his fists. You'd swear
Lukhanyo was standing behind me. Me: "No he didn't. I cut it off." He smiled.
Sands: "Okay. I'm making you a smoothie." Me: "Is there someone important
downstairs? There's cameras and everything." Sands: "Casper Nyovest. He

was in town for a show. Hung out till late. He'll be leaving in an hour or so."

Me: "You're friends with Mufasa now?" I smacked him. Sands: "Ow! We were just hanging out. Nothing much." Me: "Don't be modest! You know you're a social class above me now." He laughed and made me a smoothie. Sands: "I'm glad you broke it off with him Spho. Lukhanyo is not the type of person you want to be around." I hugged Boogie tight really trying not to cry again.

Me: "So I was thinking of going over to help Sibú at his restaurant." My voice a little shaky. He stood in front of me holding my upper arms. Me: "Perhaps after the smoothie?" He pulled me into his chest and hugged me careful not to suffocate Boogie. Sands: "I'm sorry. Okay? You'll find someone. Someone better." Me: "I don't want someone Sandile." Sands: "Lakhe?" Me: "Lakhe has a girlfriend." Sands: "She's a nonfactor. I can make her disappear." Me: "No Sandile. Don't do that. He deserves to be happy." I pulled away from him putting the puppy on the floor. Sands: "I care about you. I don't like seeing you like this." Me: "I'll be fine. I promise." He poured the smoothie in a bottle handing it to me. Me: "Let me go find Sibú." Sands: "I'd come with you but I've got date plans with Liz and her parents." Me: "It's cool. I'll see you later. Bye Liz." She waved and I left the apartment. Seemingly everyone was in normal relationships except me. My only normal relationship was my kids and I felt so lonely otherwise. When I climbed in my car I could feel someone staring at me but I couldn't find their eyes. It was so annoying. Sibú's restaurant was about 10 minutes away and I made it there under that time frame. He wasn't out front so I waited at a table. Again I could feel someone gawking at me. I got really uncomfortable now. Sibú walked out the kitchen. Sibú: "Hey." We hugged. Sibú: "What's wrong?" Me: "I'm bored." Sibú: "Great because I'm busy and short one waiter. Ask Penny to give you an apron and notebook." Me: "Can't I be a cashier or something?" Sibú: "Nope. Move it." He went on to the next table. I went to fetch an apron and notebook studying the menu for a second. This shouldn't be hard. I stood by the door waiting for new customers. A familiar face walked to me. He stood in front of me and smiled. One of the twins. Not sure which one but he was Lukhanyo's friend. Me: "Hi." Him: "Hey." Me: "Would you like a table?" Him: "You don't remember my name do you?" Me: "I do. But I'm not sure which one." Him: "Soma. A table for two." I nodded and led him inside in search for a table. We found one at the back and I gave him a menu. Me: "Would you like something to drink?" Soma: "Heineken. Two." I jotted it down and went to fetch it. Sibú stood with me. Sibú: "Is he bothering you?" Me: "Who?" Sibú: "That guy. Why is he staring at you like that?" Me: "I don't know." I put the two beers on a tray. Me: "He's Lukhanyo's friend. Met him yesterday." Sibú: "Guess who just walked in." Me: "Jesus, I hope?" I took the tray to the table and boom, Lukhanyo sits down. Why Lord? Why me? Can you pick on anyone else for once? I set down the tray and

handed them beers. Me: "Hi." Luks: "Hey." Soma: "I want today's special." Me: "There's no special hun." Soma: "Really? Okay. How are the ribs?" Me: "I've never had them but I'm sure they're good." Luks: "Uzothini apha Spho? Wenzanton?" Why did he look irritated? Me: "I'm helping my brother." Luks: "As a waitress?" Me: "Why? Do you have a problem with that?" He drank his beer. Soma: "I'll have the ribs. Lukhanyo will have the steak." He gave me the menu. I walked away to place their orders and look for new customers. Thulani stood at the door with the second twin. Soso. I cannot believe they're doing this. Lukhanyo cannot be this petty. I led these two to their brothers and moved them all to a bigger table. Thulz: "Ayobhabhalaza mntase. Khandiphe Extreme." Me: "We don't have extreme Thulz." He held his head. Thulz: "cider. Any cider mntase." Me: "Soso?" Soso: "She knows my name!" He beamed. I smiled. Soso: "Heineken is fine." Luks: "Two." He put down an empty beer bottle. That was quick. I took it and went to the kitchen. Sibuh: "What the fuck is going on." Me: "They came to eat." Sibuh: "Okay. Do you want someone else to serve them?" Me: "I can handle it." I got them their drinks and took the two food orders. Luks: "You can't be doing this Spho. Kukunya mos oku. Umithi fondini. You can't do this!" He was on his feet. Soma: "Hayi Lukhanyo, she's pregnant? Give us a chance!" Me: "I'm not a cripple. Take your seat. You're scaring my customers." I walked away. Sandile walked in the restaurant and held my arm. I looked at Sibuh. Me: "Really? You called Sandile?" Sibuh: "I'm too busy Spho." He rushed off. Sands: "What is he doing here?" Me: "You're supposed to be on a date." Sands: "I postponed. You need me more. Do you want me to throw them out?" Me: "No. They just came to eat. You should go back to Liz okay? I'm fine." Sands: "I'm not going anywhere." I looked at their table. All four of them stared at Sandile with contempt. Sandile stared right back like a wolf ready to attack. Me: "Hey." I shook him. Sands: "Is the baby okay?" He held my tummy. Me: "He's fine. What is up with everyone and this baby?" He took off my apron and put it on himself. Me: "NO. You're not going to do that." Sands: "I will if I have to. I'm not letting him ridicule you." Me: "I'm not being ridiculed. I like this job. It's simple and I've got other customers besides that table. Please go?" Sands: "I will stand here." I took my apron and went to serve other customers. I honestly cannot deal with this shit. I thought I'd be distracted by helping Sibuh work here but I brought drama. I seem to drag it everywhere I go. My orders were on time and I had to go back to the "table" to refill theirs too. Lukhanyo had a sour look on his face. The others were super chatty to me. Probably trying to cover up their ridiculously angry friend. Thulz: "So how many months Spho? I cannot believe we're having a baby." Me: "It's only four and a half months. It's not -" Soma: "WHAT. All this time, Lukhanyo was hiding you? That's not cool man." Then they all rained down on him. He didn't even flinch. Psychopath. "Spho." A voice said behind

me. I knew that voice. The chatter died down instantly. I turned around to look at him. Me: "Mr Sobukwe. How can I help you today?" Lakhe: "A word." He walked to the kitchen. Sana ayo-drama namhlanje. Would it be bad if I ran back to my house? I didn't want to hear what he wanted to say. Lukhanyo stood up, Soso held him back with Thulani. The restaurant was quiet now. Everyone staring. I decided to carry on with my temp job waiting tables. I was wiping a table, it's customers just left and I could feel his presence behind me. Me: "Masilakhe I'm working." Lakhe: "Not here." Me: "What do you want? You could've at least brought me my kids-" Lakhe: "How are my kids going to look at me if I let their mother work a basic job!" I stared back at him. Sandile walked to us. Sands: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "She's embarrassing me Sandile. An apron, serving other people? No!" I crossed my arms over my chest. Lakhe: "You're carrying my child Sphosenkosi. I cannot let you do this." Me: "You cannot let me but you will. You will walk out of here with your dignity still intact unless you want us to fight it out for the masses?" Sands: "Sphosenkosi." Lakhe: "Spho you can't do this to me. I know I hurt you but damn it, what do you want from me!" Me: "Bring me my kids for starters. And stop following me around." Lakhe: "I need to know that you're going to be safe at least. Tell me you'll be careful and you'll rest." Me: "I will. Now you can leave. Take Sandile with you." He took his brother's arm and walked out. I continued with my work. The "table" orders were ready. I took the first two plates and placed them in front of Soma and Luks. Soma: "What was your ex doing here? You were standing too far, I couldn't hear him. He looks angry. Was he angry?" LOL. Soma never wasted any time. Me: "He, like your friend over here, hates this job." Luks: "At least he has some sense." He stabbed at his vegetables. Soma: "Okay. So he doesn't want you back?" Me: "No." Soma: "Thank God. So you don't wanna date me? Since Lukie also didn't make the cut?" I laughed. Soso: "Somangaye you are married." Soma: "She didn't need to know that!" He hissed. Me: "There's a ring on your finger." Soma: "Damn it. But you're gonna forgive Luks right? He's a thunderball but he means well. He loves you. He woke everyone up by 6am and dragged us all to fol-" Luks kicked him under the table. Soma: "Ow!! And he's violent as hell!! But he means well. You'll forgive him right?" He rubbed his leg. Thulz: "I'm hungry." I went to fetch the remaining two meals and gave them to Soso and Thulz. Soma: "Say you'll forgive him?" Me: "He didn't do anything wrong." I could almost hear Lukhanyo sigh in relief. Soma: "Okay. So what happened? You don't like him?" Me: "I do bu-" Soma: "Then it's settled. Mommy and Daddy are back together. We're having a baby. Let's eat." He dug in. Thulani started a whole different conversation and that was it. I didn't even have a say. Me: "Lukhanyo and I aren't having a baby." Soma: "But you're pregnant." Me: "I met Lukhanyo on Wednesday." Soma: "So?" Me: "The baby is Lakhe's baby."

My ex." Thulz: "Lakhe is the stepfather now. You're dating Ta Luks and that baby, belongs to Mzinyathi." He twisted the salt shaker on his food. Soma: "Stepfather is a little too strong. Let's say, Co-father. Sis, Lukhanyo loves you and your baby. I like you. So does Thulz, and Soso and Stuja, where ever he is. You're not going anywhere. You're one of us now. Stop running away from us, Lukhanyo will always find you." He got another kick. Soma: "For fucks sake!! I am your advocate damn it!" Lukhanyo stood up and looked at me. I couldn't even look at him. I was so scared for him. He had no idea what I was. He would run if I told him. Perhaps I should. Then he'd stay away for good...

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Lukhanyo stared at me expectantly. His brothers and friends stared at me too. I couldn't do this here. Me: "Okay. I just need to finish helping Sibu." Luks: "I can get people here to help him. Talk to me." Me: "You can't keep abusing your family for me." Luks: "I'm not abusing anyone. My youngest brother, Sinethemba has a placement agency. He can call a few of his people to help out. It's mostly graduates in need of a start up job. Must I call him?" I nodded. He took out his phone, dialing a number and spoke to his brother. While he was distracted I took some time to admire him. He looked so in tune with himself. He wore casual gripping jeans and a black sweater. I wonder if he had anything on underneath it. He also rocked black flat sneakers. He hung up. Luks: "You checking me out?" Me: "I'm not." He smiled. Luks: "It's okay. I don't judge." Me: "I really am not." Luks: "Okay. He'll get two of them here in a short while." Me: "Let me finish up then." I was about to walk but he held my arm. Luks: "I'm sorry." Me: "I told you, you didn't do anything wrong." Luks: "I feel like I did. I don't like seeing you sad. And I also realize I might be crowding your space at times. So I'm sorry." Me: "Yeah. It was kind of unnecessary following me around all morning. It's like you don't trust me Lukhanyo." Luks: "It's not you. I'm the problem. I've never really learnt how to trust. Everyone I've ever loved managed to disappoint me." Me: "I'm not everyone." He nodded and let go of my arm. I walked to the rest of my tables. In about 45 minutes I got tired and sat down in the kitchen. Sibu didn't mention that Kamva was a chef. I thought she was just a manager. Kamva: "Hi boss." She waved at me. Me: "His sister." I smiled. Kamva: "Still the boss to me. I'm Kamva." Me: "Spho." We shook hands. Me: "He didn't say you were a chef. Just a manager." Kamva: "Manager and chef. Mostly in the kitchen though. To oversee that all meals are dangerously tasty and safe to eat. I just created this." She gave me a side plate. Kamva: "Took me 19 minutes to make. I haven't created anything for a while. Wait! You're not allergic to

anything right?" She held on the plate. Me: "No I'm not." She let go. Sibü came in and sat with me. Picking from my plate. Sibü: "This is good. Where is mine?" Kamva: "This is just a sample. I thought you'd both taste and tell me what you think." Me: "I love it." Sibü: "Do you think we should add it in the menu?" Me: "Definitely. When are you launching?" Sibü: "Just wasn't thinking of launching." Me: "I think you should. Your restaurant has the potential of making it to top class 5 star. Tables only made on reservation. It'll be wild. The launch will introduce you as a new owner and your new amazing chef, also the meals she'll have added. Probably redesign the menu a bit, make a website. We can invite vloggers and lifestyle bloggers alike to the launch. They'll spread the word faster through their social media following. I can already see it in my head." Kamva: "You were right. She's good." Sibü: "Told you." Me: "Wait, you planned this?" Sibü: "Just a tiny bit. I didn't want to ask you because you have alot on your plate. When you came here today, I just felt comfortable you'd know what to do and give me ideas." Me: "I'll never be too busy for you." Sibü: "Yes but you must rest now." Me: "Can I at least plan your launch?" Sibü: "You can get a team to plan it. A few people you can mentor." Me: "You live in my heart." I kissed his cheek. Luks sent a text: "They're here baby." I got up. Me: "Your new waiters are here." Sibü: "New waiters?" Me: "Yes. Lukhanyo's brother has a placement agency and since you needed help, and I need to rest, he called two of their applicants. I forgot to tell you. I'm sorry." Sibü: "Why didn't you tell me you were tired Spho?" Me: "Sibü, please." Sibü: "I need to interview them and do background checks." Me: "Okay." Sibü: "Go home okay?" He kissed my forehead. I went out to meet Lukhanyo. He was waiting for me by his brothers and friends. Me: "You didn't eat." Luks: "I'm not hungry. Here is your two new waiters." Me: "My brother has to interview them first." I sent them to Sibü for their interviews. Luks: "We can go now." He took off my apron. Me: "Okay, relax." I said my goodbye to the guys. Soma was on the phone but he looked at me and smiled. Soma: "Bye Spho. I'm talking to your second boyfriend." Luks: "Cut it out." Me: "Who's my second boyfriend?" Luks: "Lubby. Don't let him intimidate you." Me: "Why is he my second boyfriend." He held my hand out of the restaurant. Luks: "He's... just like me. Like another me." Me: "Is this the one that.. " Luks: "Slept with my wife? Yes." I nodded. This topic seemed a little too much so I didn't ask further. I'll reserve judgements until I knew them properly although I do think she had a solid reason. Actually it was not even my business, what I think is absolutely irrelevant. Luks: "What?" I shook my head. Me: "Nothing." He opened the car door for me and I got in. He drove us and I could tell the route is going to his house. Me: "So how long have you been following me and why?" Luks: "I like knowing you're safe. Not too long. Just today." I was nervous because of what I was about to tell him. What if he chased me out or called me a witch? What if he sets me alight?

That was a thing right? But I'm not a witch although my powers a little questionable. I was trained by a demon, who happens to be my real dad. My grandfather is another Satan who likes to play with people's souls, oh and steal them. I have an uncle who is also half demon and is roaming the streets like a normal human but destroying lives. What about the baby I'm carrying? A full dark demon, more powerful than any living Komander. He was King of the evil and the Heir to the Full dark bloods. Jesus it was a lot. I couldn't even breath. He parked in his driveway and looked at me. Luks: "Relax. Whatever it is.. you can tell me. Hell, I've done so much worse." I don't think so. We walked into his house. Now I started freaking out. He poured me a glass of water and gave it to me. Luks: "Baby." I gulped down the water really quick and set down the glass. Me: "I'm not a witch." I blurted out. He laughed. Luks: "I didn't think you were." Me: "This will go easier if you just listen." Luks: "Okay." He held my hand and relaxed back on the couch. I withdrew my hand fiddled my fingers on my lap. Me: "So, I'm a Komander." He raised an eyebrow. Me: "You do know the guy right? Komander?" Luks: "The man without a face. Everyone knows him. That's you?" He had an amused look on his face. Of course it would be funny to him that I was the big bad thug the world was scared of but he didn't even realize. Me: "Yes, him. He's my biological father." The smile wiped right off his face and eyes expanded to the size of tennis balls. Great. He's already gone. Luks: "H-how... I thought the doctor?" Me: "He adopted me. Komander couldn't have his kids around him for private reasons and of course his empire rests solely on him being invisible to the world." Luks: "You said kids. So you're not the only one? Oh shit your brother!" I nodded. He stood up and went to the small table and poured a triple shot of whiskey, gulping it all down at once. Luks: "Komander? Yeses Lukhanyo." He poured a double and brought it back to the couch to sit. Luks: "You're joking right? Because ndiligintsa and ufuna undoyikisa ne? It's working baby." Me: "I wish I was." I stared at my hands. Luks: "Shit baby. So you know what he looks like?" I nodded. Luks: "Phof you're his daughter, he wouldn't do anything to you. So, your brother... is he part of it? His dad's business." Me: "No. He's not. We're just living our normal lives the best way we can." Luks: "Okay. It's okay. So if your dad met me, would he kill me? Since you know the saying about not being alive to tell what he looks like." Me: "My father will only kill if you told someone else. He won't care if you know just, keep your mouth shut." He sighed. Luks: "I can do that. Let's just keep this away from Lubabalo. He can keep a secret but he's not shy to ask questions." Me: "Okay." He relaxed back into the couch. Luks: "Now you're the big bad thug between you and me." He smiled. Me: "Lukhanyo, that's not all." Luks: "I can't think of anything worse. Hit me." Me: "This part doesn't leave your lips." He stared at me holding his breath. Me: "Komander is not human." I could sense panic but very lightly. Luks: "What

does that mean." His tone very low. Me: "My father is a demon. That is what Komander is." He laughed. Luks: "Baby, he's just a gangster-" Me: "He's not Human." He stared into my eyes and swallowed. Luks: "I don't understand Spho." Shit, from baby to Spho. This is going downhill. Me: "In the beginning. Many years ago. About a century back. Two siblings, fell in love. They killed their parents and continued their incest, giving birth to twin boys. One of those boys experimented with a spirit. The Komander spirit. He possessed it and since he shares DNA with his twin, the other automatically became the pure. There's two kinds, the full dark blood, and the pure blood." He still stared at me quietly. "So eventually they grew up, both got married living separately. The dark twin sent a disguised female to marry his pure twin and overpower him. She killed all of the pure. Except for one child. He took revenge on Dark side by the power of God. The dark twin became a roaming spirit. A demon left unwanted or taken care of and it manifested some more. My grandfather, Komander senior is the full dark son of that twin. He collects souls. He drags them around. He tried to kill Sandile twice already. So Uhm.. he once married this lady, a good Christian woman. He tricked her into believing he was good but after marrying her, locked her in the dungeons underground his building. He raped her and she gave birth to my dad. For years on end. He did it but all the pregnancies after my dad was born ended in miscarriage. Until the last one. She gained strength and escaped. She ran to a house where she was helped by a woman, she gave birth. The woman took the baby to hospital, leaving her there and my grandfather found her. He dragged her back to hell, to torture her and with the last of her breath, she cursed him. So my father grew, you know his kingdom. Everyone does. He, also is a demon but only half because his mom was a Christian. Pure blood mixed with dark. He has moments. Where he is a human, you know? He just blends in, has a warm heart, a beautiful smile, loves kids. Then... he has the other side, he changes into something you never wanted to see. A real life nightmare. He had a woman who tended to his needs. Also kept underground his building. She got pregnant with Sibü, then me. My father, didn't hurt us the way his father did him. He protected us. He loved us. I remember him always playing with us. I never did wrong in his eyes. He would make the ground shake if I fell. I'm his little princess and Sibü his prince but... grandfather found out. He always wants to expand. That's why my father sent me to live with my mom but I was abused, and ran away when I was 14. Khaya and Zama found me and adopted me." I breathed. He still listened intently. Me: "I found out, I was a Komander about 8 months ago if I'm not mistaken. I was pregnant with Lam. Lakhe had a swollen throat so we went to the hospital and I saw him. I didn't know he was Komander. He was just.. he's... unearthly. Anyway, he gave us Chris, we adopted him. I then started to

unravel secrets. Until he confessed. It turns out... when my grandmother cursed her husband, she would do it through me. I am Queen of the Pure Komander bloodline. Mother to King Lam, The Heir of the Pure Komander bloodline and I'm currently pregnant with his rival. King of darkness. King Komander, full dark bloodline protector." I let out a long sigh covering my face. He was really quiet. I just heard him gulp down the liquid. Me: "It's alot to take in." Luks: "All of it is stuck in my throat." I looked at him. Luks: "Why did you tell me all this?" Me: "Lukhanyo. Dating me is a risk. You need to be spiritually strong. My father's demons attach very quickly. They will haunt your daily living and nightmares if you're not strong enough." He smiled. Luks: "Baby... if this is a joke, I'm shaking okay?" Me: "I wish it was a joke." Luks: "What does all this mean? Queen of purity and whatnot?" Me: "It means I can do this." I closed my eyes and focused my spirit. A bolt of lightning cracked in the sky. He dropped his glass on the floor, breaking instantly into pieces and he jumped up. Luks: "No." He breathed. Luks: "That had to be a coincidence." Me: "The sun is out Lukhanyo." He shook his head. The doors closed and the windows flew open. Luks: "Oh fuck.." I settled down. He covered his face. Luks: "Oh shit." I'd lost him. He was shaking. Luks: "So... You're a Demon? A real life demon? God... is that why you're so gorgeous?" Me: "I'm not a demon. I'm pure blood. I work with God only." Luks: "But..but... you say you're pregnant with... a king of dark." Me: "Yes.. sit." He sat down. Me: "I was kidnapped by the grandfather, he wanted me to bare his kids. Full dark and a pure blood make the strongest bloodline. He is King of dark currently and I'm Queen of pure, the only one in existence. The child I'm carrying is the most powerful Komander in history. I'm trying to turn him pure, I pray every night Lukhanyo. I don't want my baby to be a demon." I held my stomach. Luks: "Your grandfather did this?" He pointed to my stomach. Me: "His demon did." He clenched his teeth. I was silently waiting for the verdict. Luks: "So xandikutya, the demon will attach to me?" I giggled. Me: "First of all, that's disgusting, awuzonditya. And no, the demon can't attach to you." Luks: "So ndizothini ke? Ndizok'zeka?" Me: "No." I laughed. Me: "That is so ghetto Lukhanyo." Luks: "Oh? Ufuna ndiyikhumshe? When I fuck you then." Me: "That's not happening." I chuckled and hid my blushing face. He pulled me closer to him, holding me in his arms. Luks: "Fondin, andaz noba ndiyanxila ngoku but ndiyakthanda. I don't give a fuck about what you said about demoning and shit. That lightening thing did freak me out but I'm gonna need it again for when Lubby gives me some shit. But I love you and our demon baby." He buried his face in my boobs. Me: "Don't call him that." Luks: "Do you think he's gonna destroy the world? Blow up the moon? A true Mzinyathi quality." I laughed out loud. He kissed my tummy then looked up at my face. Luks: "Undivile? Ndithe ndiyakthanda, MaKomander. My queen." I laughed again. Lukhanyo was

something else. He put his head on me again. Luks: "He's kicking me." I lay back on the couch and he cuddled my tummy kicked off his shoes. Luks: "Tell me about your dad." Me: "Komander?" Luks: "Yeah. You think he's gonna like me?" I smiled. Me: "I don't think my dad hates anyone per say. He gives people the benefit of the doubt. Well, only if you don't snitch." Luks: "Hmm..." he was dozing off. I could hear him lightly snoring.

I'd fallen asleep in no time too. It was a while when I woke up probably mid afternoon. Someone was coming. I slipped away from Lukhanyo who was still asleep. I tip toed away from the broken glass and stood a few meters from the door. Up straight, in command. The door opened and a tall older man walked in. My instincts settled. He closed the door and turned to face me. He was almost shocked. He was an older version of Lukhanyo. Me: "Molo Tata." He looked around. Him: "Molo ntombi." He had a confused look on his face. Him: "Which one of my son's are you visiting? Lubby is not here, Luzuko is in New York, Stuja is married, Sine is ... Sine. Which leaves Thulani and Lukhanyo. My guess is on Lukhanyo?" I nodded. He sighed. Him: "Can I have some tea? Two sugars with warm milk. My teabags are on the shelf above the kettle." He walked down the passage. Okay? I went to the kitchen and boiled some water. I took the broom and dust pan to the lounge to clean up the broken glass then went back to make tea. I wonder if Lukhanyo was drunk through our conversation. I hope not. I can't say it again. I took the tray to the lounge and set it on the table. Lukhanyo woke up. Luks: "Hey baby." He mumbled. His sleepy voice was the sexiest that I've ever heard. He pulled me on to his lap. Me: "i think your dad is here." I whispered. The man walked out the passage and into the lounge. I quickly got off Lukhanyo's lap. Me: "I should probably-" Man: "Sit. I would like to know more about the young lady that makes my son miss our meeting." I looked at Lukhanyo. Luks: "Namhlanje Tata? Khang'uthi ngomso na?"(Today? Didn't you say tomorrow?) Him: "No." He stirred his tea and took a sip with his eyes closed. Him: "Amazing." Luks: "Tata, ngu Spho lo, baby this is my dad, bra Zakes." Me: "It's a pleasure to meet you sir." You should've seen the way I was sitting. Like Kate Middleton and all. Back up straight, legs crossed at the ankle, hands on lap. Zakes: "She's gorgeous." He sipped his tea. Zakes: "How did you get her? Ndiyakwazi kaloku nyana wena uyi moemish."(I know you my son, you're an idiot.) Luks: "Enkosi Tata." Zakes: "Not in a bad way. Your type is more... specific." Luks: "Uzama Uthini Tata?"(What's are you trying to say?) Zakes: "That you've done well. Good manners, makes amazing tea, beautiful. What do you do Spho?" I never knew which title to announce because my job was more than one. Me: "I rebuild company image, influence it's potential clients, and I own an

investment firm." Zakes: "You're exactly what I need." Luks: "Not that type of image Tata." Zakes: "Oh." Me: "Which type?" Luks: "He's the BBT." I held back a giggle. Zakes: "Uphi uLubabalo Mzinyathi?" Luks: "He hates it when you call him that, useKapa." Zakes: "Does he know?" Luks: "No." Zakes: "Oh." He sipped his tea again. Zakes: "I don't want a repeat of last time Lukhanyo. Tell him." Lukhanyo shifted uncomfortably in his seat. Zakes: "Ndizithumela nini iinkomo?" (When can I send the cows?) Luks: "Haike Tata." Zakes: "What? You haven't managed to secure a relationship in over two years. I think it's safe to bet, you will marry this one." I swallowed. Luks: "Soon Tata." He smiled at me. Luks: "Spho is pregnant. We'll talk about it after she gives birth." I stared at him, perplexed. Zakes: "Woow. Congratulations. I am happy. But... we have a problem." Luks: "Lubambo." They laughed. Me: "Who's that?" Luks: "The last born." Zakes: "He thrives on being the youngest child. He's not gonna be happy. He said he doesn't want to be a middle child." He emptied his tea and set down the cup. Zakes: "Undfownele Lukhanyo xa ugqibo ncanca. Spho, it was lovely to meet you honey." He squinted his eyes. Zakes: "You look familiar kodwa." Luks: "Sobukwe." Zakes: "Ohhh. Anyway, welcome to our family darling." He walked out the door. Me: "Why do you always tell your family I'm pregnant?" Luks: "Aren't you?" Me: "Yes. But you know how weird it makes me feel? Having to explain it's my ex-" I swallowed. Luks: "Wait... you said your grandfather's demon got you pregnant. But you keep saying it's your ex's?" What is going on?" I swallowed. Luks: "You said the Komander spirit roamed, after the dark was defeated. Then your grandfather had it. Somehow, it possessed Lakhe didn't it?" How the fuck did he piece that together? Luks: "Lakhe was possessed. That's what that whole media outrage was about? How you both landed in hospital. He attacked you!" Me: "How..did you.." Luks: "I read the articles Spho. The night I first met you I asked my brother to search everything about you. I knew that story in the magazines didn't make sense! I just knew it!!" He stood up and paced. Luks: "So is he still possessed?" Me: "No." He paced the lounge looking so adorable in his black socks. He finally sat down. Luks: "If he so much as tries anything." He hissed. Me: "He won't." Luks: "What if it's still in him Spho? What if it's dormant and waiting for this baby?" Me: "I made sure of it. I will fight it if I have to. Nobody will come near my babies." Luks: "Damn right." He huffed. Me: "Lakhe didn't hurt me because he wanted to. The demon overpowered him, greatly. It burnt him if he tried to fight. It was ready to kill him. Even after the demons left his body, he can't be near Komander because they weigh too heavily on his soul. He never wanted this life. He... left me because of it. He didn't want anything to do with it. It's my father who compelled him and threatened him into demon initiation. He didn't have a choice. It was either that, or he'd wipe out his entire family. That's why I didn't want you to know, its

why I tried to break away from you. I don't want you to ever have to make that choice Lukhanyo. You have a beautiful family that loves you to bits. You have wonderful kids whom I will fight till the death of me to protect. Don't blame him." Luks: "It's hard to view him the same. I didn't like him before, but now I want him dead." I held his face. Me: "Hey.. we'll be safe. No worrying about Lakhe. He's living his life and he's a good dad to our kids. Nothing more. Okay?" His eyes softened. Luks: "Okay." He kissed my lips. Me: "Promise me you'll never say a word about this. Ever. Not even the name Komander." Luks: "I promise." Me: "I'll do whatever it takes to protect you Lukhanyo." Luks: "I trust you." I cuddled him back in my arms...

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Saturday evening I sat in the kitchen watching Lukhanyo make us supper. Me: "Well, this would look so much better with your top off." Luks: "Oh?" Me: "If I remember correctly, a certain someone said he only strips for his woman." His face beamed into a gorgeous smile. Luks: "I remember that. So this means you're my woman?" Me: "Take off your top, then we'll see." He bit his lower lip, pulling the sweater off over his head. He had a vest underneath. Me: "You can do better and you know it." He laughed. Luks: "You want me to magic Mike you?" Me: "Try." He slowly pulled off his vest and waved it on top of his head then threw it at me. I laughed. Me: "Wow." Luks: "Like it?" I stared at his chiseled, fully inked torso. Dear God. I never knew many tattoos on one human could look so damn sexy. I squeezed my thighs together. Half his torso was inked including the entire arm. One even went over his shoulder to his back. The other half, the right side, just a couple on his arm, but his right rib bare. Me: "Love it." I cleared my throat. Luks: "Xa undibawela utsho ke baby. Ndingumntu wakho." (When you want me, tell me baby. I am your man.) I chuckled shaking my head. He went back to the stove. Me: "So tell me more about Ta Luks. What I've realized is that your name is more of a brand than your identification. Ta Luks is a brand. A respected image. Unshakeable and mighty." He blushed. Luks: "You love your work ne?" Me: "Too much." Luks: "I notice. Thank you baby. It took me years to build and rebuild myself. This is the one image that stuck. Sadly the image is more than one. You should see my brother, he's a clown. The other one is a woman chaser. Then there's Stuja who's quiet as shit. Haike Thulani, he's the adult Lubambo. Even Sine acts older than him." I smiled. Luks: "Otherwise. Ta Luks is based on family. Every single thing that I do. Every business I own, I'm building it for my kids. I'm a gangster by choice but I'll be damned if my sons take the same route. I'm building all this for them to have a better life." Me: "How did you start?" Luks:

"Being a thug?" He chuckled. Luks: "I was in high school. My dad, had an empire of... madness. He's the big bad thug here, not me." I laughed. Luks: "He started when I was born because of poverty. He dealt drugs, firearms, made connections all over, planned heists. He basically owned the city. When I grew. He never really forced me into it. I was fascinated so I joined him. Then he mysteriously died. My uncle's told me to take over and I did. Years later I find out, this guy didn't even die, he was in hiding the whole time." I gasped. Me: "He faked his own death? Why?" Luks: "People were after him. He had to. Lubby didn't take it well. He hated him for it. Low key still does but they're cool now." Me: "So Lubby is also a thug?" Luks: "I want to say yes, but it's no. Lubby is a business thug. He grew up rich, he was adopted as a baby. So he got to study and work with his dad Sebastian." Me: "Sebastian Morrison is his father!!" Luks: "Yes." Me: "Now it makes sense that he's Morrison not Mzinyathi. Carry on." Luks: "Lubby does get into it sometimes but he's not focused on it. He loves legitimate work. His companies and all." Me: "How did you meet your ex wife?" He looked at me. Me: "It's okay if you don't wanna talk about it." Luks: "It's fine. I met her, walking down the street-" Me: "You were following her." He laughed. Luks: "I was not!" Me: "Yes you were. It's your thing." Luks: "I really wasn't. She was walking in my neighborhood.. Okay maybe I followed a bit." I shook my head laughing. Luks: "We just started dating, I got her pregnant. I was already in love with her anyway. So I married her." Me: "Then you divorced? Why." Luks: "Eish baby. It was alot. Our marriage was toxic. I'm even embarrassed talking about this." Me: "I won't judge." Luks: "You will." Me: "Hey. I told you my gory secrets and showed you my powers. Nobody has seen them first hand. Except my brother when I broke his hand but, no one outside my family. I trusted you not to judge me. Now trust me." Luks: "I was abusive." That was a little hard to swallow. Me: "You beat her?" Luks: "Among other things yes. I'm not that man anymore Spho." Me: "I said I trust you. So she divorced you, because of that?" Luks: "No. Lihle forgave me for the abuse. She stayed with me. Even when she left she always came back. I was the one who left her. For another woman." Woah. Luks: "I wanted to divorce her but I didn't. I faked the papers so that she left me alone but I still wanted her around. It was a fucking mess." He stirred the pot, staring into it. Luks: "I stripped her off everything. Money, homes, cars. Even clothes. I remember, kicking her out of our house. She had nothing. I just... hate myself for everything I did to her." I swallowed. Luks: "So my brother came to the rescue. As usual. They always had a bond. A weird, little too friendly, bond. She finally gave in and slept with him. That wasn't even the worst part." He smiled painfully. My heart was clinging. Luks: "She fell in love with him. Then Lubambo came along. My baby boy. We didn't even know who was the father between me and Lubby. You know what they did? They eloped. Went

to get married in Dubai. Even Soma was there. She gave birth there. I wasn't told. I only found out about a week later. Lubabalo had registered the baby's name to his. They were engaged or spiritually married by the time they landed back in the country." A lone tear rolled down his cheek. He was still hurt by this. All of it. Luks: "I wanted to kill them both. And I almost did. I left them to die in the house that I bought her." I went over to hug him. He was shivering. Either with hurt or being cold. I dressed him in his sweater again. Me: "It's okay Lukhanyo. It's over now. I'm sorry I brought this up." Luks: "No baby. I want to tell you. I feel comfortable, letting you know." I stood next to him. Luks: "Anyway, fast forward to better times. I started private counseling classes with a lady my mom used to visit. She taught me about God and forgiveness and peace. I grew. I left my dark ways. I started being free. They'd broken up long before. And it kind of stung even more." Me: "Why is that?" Luks: "They broke up to spare my feelings Spho. Not because they wanted to or they hated each other which I would have preferred. No. They broke up because of me. It kind of broke my brother's soul a little bit. And I'm okay with that. It was hard Spho. Lihle was... is a good woman. I still love her. I'm not going to lie about it. Lubabalo still loves her, he hides it but I can see. And she loved us both. Which she also hides. It's a triangle of darkness. So when we got back together, everything was okay at first. We went for counseling and things. Then it got to be intimate... that was difficult. We would start then she'd stop me before going further. It bothered me honestly because I would think she wanted him or was thinking about him instead." He took the lid off the pot and stirred again, reducing the heat. Luks: "It got to almost a year without sex and I was losing my mind. I started getting angry. Not beating her. Just... outside anger, cheating. When she found out, she understood. We got to talk. And she confessed that.. she was scared. Of me." He closed the pot. Luks: "The things I did to her would flash back during our intimate time and she would freak out. That's why. I hated myself even more. We tried so hard Spho. It started affecting the kids. And that's where we drew the line. I can be anything but I'll never accept being a horrible dad. She's the same. We opted to be better parents apart rather than miserable together. Our children have never been happier since then and that's what is important to us." He sighed.

After our dinner, I washed the dishes and we went to chill with cups of chocolate dessert and a blanket in the lounge. I was sitting in between his legs enjoying my mousse. Me: "You're such an amazing cook and baker." Luks: "Thank you baby. Bachelor life I guess." Me: "I thought your brothers lived with you." Luks: "They're married. I only live with Lubby. When he's in town. My

brothers only arrive xa begxothiwe ngabafazi babo. Which is often."(When their wives kick them out) I laughed. Luks: "Thulani is not married though. He's been with Namhla, on and off for years. Stuja is married to Sindiswa, mother of his child. Lukhanyo Junior. I realize I haven't mentioned him, I barely see him as much as I like to but he's still my son." He smiled proudly. Luks: "I was there when he was born." Me: "9 kids." Luks: "11 and a half." He held my tummy. Luks: "When am I meeting Chris and Lam? Like a proper intro?" Me: "It's still early baby. They're still recovering from Siyanda." Luks: "Ngubani uSiyanda?" Me: "The guy I dated after i was divorced. We were together for three months." Luks: "Okay. So I must wait 3 months? Hayi baby." Me: "Please Lukhanyo. I don't want to confuse or upset my children. Especially Chris because he understands but he's a super smart child. His IQ is very advanced, almost like an adult. He's already upset that Lakhe has a girlfriend. He was counting on us getting back together. I just need him to recover." Luks: "I understand baby. I'll wait. There's no rush." He smiled shyly. Me: "You want Lam don't you?" Luks: "He's so cute my love. I miss having a baby." Me: "Lukhanyo.. Lam is a special baby. He has a healing spirit. Made of peace and reconciliation and harmony." Luks: "I figured. I remember the first time I held him when I came to pick you up for dinner. My heart relaxed. Everything I said, about my life, I thought I'd keep it for a later stage but that child of yours encouraged my heart to open up. I thought I was just being brave. Now that I know more about you, I realize it was him." I smiled but the feeling subsided quickly wiping my smile away. My heart ached. Lam is pure and that's what he does to people. What about the Unborn King? What kind of effect will he have? I shivered with the realization. Luks: "awww. He's kicking me again." His hand was on my tummy. Luks: "He definitely likes me." I smiled faintly. Luks: "What are you worried about Spho?" Me: "Him. I love my kids. The one I'm my tummy doesn't want to connect to me. I love him Luks but I feel like he's deliberately not connecting for some reason." Luks: "From what you told me. I think it's because of the different sides you're on. You're still his mom. He doesn't want to hurt you." Me: "If he could just connect. I think I can change him. Bring him over, you know?" Luks: "We'll do everything we can. If funeke sithandazile day and night then so be it. We'll find a way." Me: "You know I haven't spoken to anyone about this. I feel like my family is tired of hearing about demons and such." Luks: "You can talk to me anytime you want." Me: "Because you haven't experienced it." Luks: "Says who? Yayazi phof sekhe ndalandelwa sisporho? Hee ooSpho bethuna." I laughed into his chest. Me: "You are so silly." Luks: "When you meet Soma again, tell him to tell you the story. Put them together noLubby, you'll laugh all week I swear." Me: "A ghost baby?" Luks: "A ghost my love. Isporho. It possessed me even. It was bad." I couldn't stop laughing. Luks: "Hee akusemandi." He put our dishes

aside and cuddled me in his arms under the blanket. Me: "I need to hear this story." Luks: "You will baby. Don't worry." Me: "Thank you for stalking me." He chuckled, his chest moving with the sound under me. I loved it. Luks: "Why?" Me: "I would be home, miserable and alone right now. I think I kind of snapped a few days ago and didn't realize. I was this mechanical person. I take care of everyone in my family. From morning to night and I love that. I just wasn't emotionally happy. I wanted a companion, someone to take care of me too. My brothers and kids shouldn't have to carry that load. I'm their mommy. I had to be strong. When I went back to Lakhe a few days ago, I was tired of being strong. I needed to unwind. But... he walked in with a girl. A part of me snapped. I ran out the house to my friends place and sat in their couch trying to piece together my mind again. When I finally did, I decided to be happy. I decided to stop being this negative, sulky, depressed human. I decided to give a positive energy to the universe. At the time I wasn't expecting anything really, i just needed a break from my lonely world. So I took Fez out that night and I met you. I'd like to think the positive energy I gave to the universe that day, drew me to you. If I'd retreated back to depression and wallowed in self pity, I wouldn't have taken my friend out and met this amazing man who stalks me." Luks: "I love how your brain works. It's fucking incredible." Me: "And you're always complimenting me." I nuzzled his beard. Luks: "Because I adore you. Am I allowed to kiss you?" Me: "Do you want to?" Luks: "Yes, Please." I nodded. He held my face and kissed my lips. I held onto him when he gently sucked my lower lip. His tongue teased mine a bit then continued to kiss slowly finally pulling away leaving me dizzy. He was smiling again. That silly grin. Luks: "I'm glad I stalked you too." Me: "Yeah?" Luks: "Yeah. I can't remember when last I was this happy. I know we just met but I feel things. Things I want to grow." Me: "Are you sure?" Luks: "Yes, Ma'Komander." I laughed. Me: "Don't. You don't wanna summon that one here. Trust me." Luks: "Oh shit. His name summons him? Hayi baby uzondilwela mos?" Me: "He wouldn't dare touch you. Rex is trapped in a portal bound by the fire of the Holy Ghost. He can't come near us. Kadir is... trying to mend his ways. The last thing he'll do is try me. Rex is grandfather." Luks: "At first, I really thought you were joking yazi baby. This is serious. So I'm dating a queen. Actual royalty." Me: "I don't think actual royalty-" Luks: "You're Queen of a bloodline. That's royalty. You make the skies shake and cry. Uyindudumo yam. Izulu Lam. Awu madoda." I covered my face blushing. Luks: "Look at me." He pulled away my hands staring into my eyes. Me: "Don't even think about saying something silly." Luks: "Andikho silly mna baby. Ndithetha nyani zodwa. Ndifuna ukuthutha." (I'm not silly baby. I speak the truth. I want to praise you.) Me: "If uzandithutha ngoMa'Komander I will smack you manyan." (if you're going to praise me with Ma'Komander...) He giggled. Luks: "Awww.

Ma'Komander ka Ta Luks. Inkosazana yobumhlophe. Indudumo yam eyomeleleyo. Umama weKumkani yeKhaya. NeKumkani ezayo. The mover of my heart. The lightening of my day. Even one day with you, is the time of my life." (Princess of purity. My strong thunder. Mother of King of our home{can also be warmth, safety, but mostly home and also Khayalam the baby} And the coming King.) Me: "Stop." I hugged him. Luks: "You want me to sing instead?" Me: "No. You're being way too cute. It's annoying." Luks: "Ndiyekile ke baby. Bambelela kumntu wakho." (I'm done baby. Hold on to me.) I hugged him closer.

Sibu drove into Lakhe's estate and parked. He'd been called by Sandile, much to his dissatisfaction. He walked up to the door and knocked. Sandile opened. Sibu: "You called me." Sands: "Come on in. This is your home. Why you standing at the door?" He went to the lounge. Lakhe was waiting on the couch with Lam on his lap. Sibu: "My home is with Spho. You know that." Lakhe: "Well now that she's dating Lukhanyo, is his house your home?" Sands: "Bhuti." Lakhe: "What Sandile! She literally ran off with him!" Sibu: "Why am I here?" Sands: "Please sit Sibulele." Sibu: "I don't think so." Sands: "Please mans." He pleaded. Sibu sat down. Sibu: "You have 5 minutes." Sands: "Lukhanyo is dangerous. This you know." Sibu: "And?" Sands: "Is that the kind of guy you want your sister to end up with?" Sibu: "Well... she ended up with worse about a year ago.." Lakhe: "Wow Sibulele. I know you hate me but I loved your sister. I never wanted to hurt her. I hid that part of my life and protected her from it. I made sure she was never exposed to it." Sibu: "Until she had to dig a grave for you." Sands: "Sib-" Sibu: "No Sandile. Tell your brother about that night. We had to go to a graveyard with your pregnant wife. She had to stand in the presence of cold air, in a cemetery to point at a grave. I went inside the grave for you digging out that coffin full of money. Spho was not okay, she acted like she was. Her nature is to take care of everyone else but when it's time to take care of her, nobody wants to step up. When shit got real, you were the first to duck out bhuti. Yes, you love her but you left her when she needed you. Shit happened. My family is fucked up, I for one know that very well. Even I blame myself for leaving her. Leaving her in your hands. With everything that went on, I made myself believe Spho was strong enough to handle you just because she said she was. Truth is, she wasn't. After being kidnapped and compelled, her strength reduced, she had to come back and face you. Stand by you. Help you. And I left her. What did you do?" Lakhe: "I'm sorry Sibulele. I know what I did was despicable, unforgivable. I am truly sorry." Sibu: "Was that so hard to say?" Lakhe looked at the floor. Sibu: "After everything she's gone through involuntarily, because let's face it, none

of us signed up for what happened months ago, none of us are responsible. It happened. But all of us are trying to pick up the pieces. Sandile, you have a girlfriend who adores you. Yet, the minute you chicken out you run to Spho and she coddles you like her baby. Nawe bhuti, you have a girlfriend. The minute you feel stuck, be it work wise or emotionally, you run to Spho and as fucking ridiculous as it sounds, she coddles you too. Advises you on your work, prays for you, cooks for you. Both of you. Now you want to strip her one ounce of happiness because this guy intimidates you? Why do you hate her? What did she ever do to you?" The house fell silent. Sibulele: "If Lukhanyo decides to play with her heart then that's his karma. Have you forgotten her power? Her father? For now, let her enjoy this moment and learn from it herself. The more you push, she will start to resent you both. She is trying her best to live a normal life. Now I've failed my sister once, that is not happening again." He stood up and walked out. Sands: "Well, fuck me. Sibulele knows how to make someone feel like a piece of shit. My heart hurts." Lakhe: "I know. Is that really what we do to her?" Rob walked in the lounge and sat down. Rob: "That was heavy. When I heard him talk, I couldn't bring myself to walk out. We have done Spho wrong. Many times. She's always treated us like eggs. Never have I ever felt misplaced or unhappy around that girl. Yet when things went south, I chose to go the other way and swallow rumors. Ruining her career." Sands: "I think we should do something." Lakhe: "Like what Sandile? You heard her brother. Now I don't want a deranged Sibulele walking back in here with their demonic father in tow. I'm good thanks." Sands: "No. Like something similar to what she did for us. An appreciation party. She threw one for us months ago and got each of us a present and told us how special we were." Rob: "We were dressed in All white. You weren't there. We even had a photo shoot. Hayini madoda. We must do something." Lakhe: "Okay. I'll call in the chefs to come in the morning." Sands: "I'll get Liz to decorate with umama. She's been wanting to meet her forever." Rob: "I'll get the presents. Everyone write down what you want to get her and I'll go buy them." Lakhe: "Perfect. I'll pretend I can't bring the kids and ask her to come fetch them. That way we can surprise her." Sands: "I just hope she likes it. She didn't even celebrate her birthday this year." Lakhe: "Sandile please stop making me feel worse." They sat in silence. Lakhe: "So what now.. we just gonna let this guy be?" Sands: "I suppose we have to back off. I'll keep a close eye on him. That guy and his family are just bad. I cringe to think what he'd do to her." Lakhe: "I'd rip him limb by limb if he even thinks about it." Rob: "I thought Spho was dating Siyanda?" Sands: "They broke up because of Lakhe and then when she emotionally availed herself to him, he decides to get a girlfriend. I'd be having beef lasagna right now but nope." Lakhe: "Jesus Sandile are you ever gonna let it go?" Sands: "No I won't-" Lakhe: "How the fuck was I supposed to

know!!" Rob: "Umntana Masilakhe!!" Sands: "You could've given it one last try bhuti. You saw how she reacted when you dressed up for her. And when she heard you had a date? She practically ran to her bedroom unable to finish her food." Lakhe: "You told me to leave her be and not confess it was a stunt." Sands: "Yes, I did. I didn't tell you to drink yourself into a coma though. I didn't tell you go on a real date! Spho came to you bhuti. Had you waited just a few more days, you would have gotten what you wished for." Rob: "Why are you more upset about this than Lakhe is?" Sands: "Because Tata. We were perfect. Before the whole demon thing. We were happy. For the first time, our family lived in harmony. When was the last time, you, mama, me, bhuti and Nosi laughed together? It all happened in this house. Spho invited us into her home, to fix our hearts. Eventually we would have left you alone bhuti. Was it so difficult, to finish fixing our family that you had to chase everyone out? I wasn't planning on staying here forever. I just needed a few good memories of our family before utata jetted off into the world with his supermodel and mama marries some fitness trainer guy. We never had much of them growing up. Between dad's work and moms compulsive shopping. We had everything but this kind of love. So yeah, maybe I am a little too attached to Spho but she's the one person who's never been too busy to listen to me. I didn't know how a mother's hug felt like until I touched her. Even umama, became more warm to us. Admit it, or am I lying? So I'm so sorry for trying to steal a little bit of your happiness bhuti." He walked to the door wiping his tears. Nosi held his arm. Sands: "Hey. You're out of bed." He hugged her. Lakhe: "I'm the monster in this family." Sands: "You're not a monster bhuti. You're a little selfish." Lakhe: "I made you cry." Sands: "I'm not crying. My eyes are a little sweaty." Lakhe: "I'm sorry Sandile. I guess I was trying to break away from the coldness of our family. When I met Spho i really just needed her for myself. She felt like home. I love you guys but... it's been tough growing up in that house. The money we have didn't buy us happiness, just an illusion." Stella sat down. Stella: "I'm to blame. I should've been more caring to you all. I was so self involved the entire time raising you. I did things I had to do but left out the emotional support you needed." Rob: "That's on me actually. If I'd been around more often, loved you better, respected you, you wouldn't have been so miserable. I left you in that cold house day after day because of selfish reasons. No wonder Lakhe left immediately after high school and Sandile followed straight after. It hurt the most when even Nosi didn't stay and started jetting off in the world. I thought our kids were spoiled but ... ndim. I broke them." Lakhe: "You didn't break us Tata." Sands: "Bent us probably but definitely not break. We had happy times at home. It wasn't always a crazy town." Lakhe: "Yeah. I think the coldness was better than having to see you fight. That probably would've broken us. You did your best. You couldn't have

forced yourself to be happy Tata." Stella: "I'm sorry. We shouldn't have forced this marriage that long just to raise you in a house with two unhappy parents. That's the only reason I stayed. I didn't want a broken home." Lakhe: "But here we are now. Divorced happy parents. We're not broken, we're still together." Stella: "I guess we should've had this conversation years ago." Rob: "So what do we do tomorrow." Lakhe: "All white again. She'll love it. I wasn't around the last party and I'd like to be present for this one." Sands: "But how will you be sure she'll be dressed in All white?" Lakhe: "You live with her, convince her to wear a white dress." Stella: "Would it be a stretch to invite Pastor Graham? Spho likes to pray, so maybe... she'll enjoy having someone to help." Lakhe sighed. Lakhe: "Fine." Chris walked in the lounge. Chris: "So nobody thought of waking me?" They laughed. Lakhe: "Come here boy. It's way past your bedtime." Chris: "I'm hungry Tata." Lakhe: "Sure thing. Hold your brother." He stood up. Lakhe: "So we'll all meet in the morning right here at 8am?" Rob: "Urrr. I have a golf tournament at 7am, I thought this was an afternoon thing-" Lakhe: "Tata!" Rob: "Okay fine!" They all said their goodbyes and went their separate ways.

#201

I woke up a little late on Sunday morning. For the first time ever. It was around 11am. I sat on the edge of the huge bed. I slept in sweatpants and a vest. Lukhanyo's. He walked in with a tray putting it on the side table. Luks: "Morning." He knelt in front of me in between my legs. It hadn't been a good night. Luks: "Hey.." I couldn't even look at him. Luks: "Baby." Me: "Lukhanyo." Luks: "What happened last night? You were distressed in your sleep. I tried waking you but you didn't. You scared me Spho." The lamps were broken on the floor. It was a really bad night. Luks: "Nightmare?" I shook my head. Luks: "Please talk to me." Me: "Why didn't you leave? I gave you an option to turn and walk away from this! Why did you have to be brave and stay!" Luks: "For a few broken lamps Spho?" Me: "It starts with a few broken lamps! Then it's windows then it's bones and soon, it's your head." Luks: "Okay. Tell me what happened." Me: "I can't. It's... one of the things I can't say." He looked frustrated. Luks: "I want to help." Me: "I know you do. Why aren't you worried? About yourself?" He looked at my stomach then held it. Me: "What happened when I was sleeping?" Luks: "Tossing and turning." Me: "Did I hurt you?" He shook his head. Me: "I need to do something not now though. Just later." He nodded. Luks: "I made you breakfast." Me: "It smells wonderful. You spoil me." Luks: "I have to. You're my woman and this little guy needs to eat." He kissed my tummy and stood up. My phone rang. Masilakhe Sobukwe. Lukhanyo

stared at and sucked his teeth. Me: "It's probably about the kids." I answered. Me: "Sir." Lakhe laughed. Lakhe: "How are you?" Me: "Great. What's up?" Lukhanyo was sitting on the bed staring. Lakhe: "When will you be coming over?" Me: "For what now?" Lakhe: "Uhm.. I can't bring the kids. I'll need you to come fetch them. I'm not gonna be home. My parents will be though. Since Nosi is still sick, they don't want to leave the house." Me: "But Lakhe why do you do this? You always speak at the last minute! I have to cancel all my plans for you! Every single time! Like Friday, you didn't tell me you'd want me to leave Lam as well, I didn't even have time to prepare myself for it. You never think about how I feel when you decide something and honestly I can't even take it anymore." I was near tears now. Lakhe: "I'm really sorry Spho. This is the last time, I swear." Me: "I'm only coming later. Right now I'm busy." I hung up. My eyes were burning with tears. Lukhanyo pulled me to his lap. Luks: "Yinton ngoku?" Me: "He wants me to fetch the kids. Apparently he's not home." Luks: "Well.. we'll get the kids later. No issue." Me: "No Lukhanyo. You don't understand wena. You're a man. It's acceptable for you to appear when you like but as a woman, it's a whole different story. As their mother I literally have to drop everything otherwise I'm labeled as an irresponsible mother who'd rather spend her time with a man rather than her children. It's a whole different world for us! We shouldn't even have a breath of happiness without our children." I picked up my jeans with tears streaming down my face. I really wanted to spend a few more hours with him. I also missed my kids. My mind was a whole cluster fuck right now. I think the pregnancy was starting to kick in. Luks: "Baby." Me: "No Lukhanyo. No." Luks: "Spho. You're not leaving this house. You gonna eat and relax. Once you're ready to fetch your children, that's what you're gonna do. Masilakhe is not going to bully you into a corner. If he's not home where the hell does he think you are? Makangaqheli uMasilakhe apha." Me: "But my children!" Luks: "Did he leave them outside by the pavement?" Me: "No. They're with his mom and dad." Luks: "Good. Let them bond with their grandparents then." He took my jeans and tossed a grape in my mouth. Luks: "If anyone dares try to judge you, bring them to me uyeva? You're a damn good mother and you're gonna be happy whether you like it or not. Your critics are gonna enter a brand new day with my hand around their necks if They're not careful." Me: "I don't want you hurting people Lukhanyo! Not for any reason!" Luks: "Okay ke baby. But nobody is going to try you." He kissed my lips. Luks: "My woman... ahhh, My everything." He sang. I laughed. Me: "Gosh. You're crazy." Luks: "Tell your man to draw up a schedule with times of pick up and drop off. Akunike notice futhi if he can't make it. Asizova ngaye kaloku thina." Me: "He has a schedule and he's not my man." Luks: "He sure as hell thinks he is. Busy giggling on the phone." I smiled at him. Me: "You're jealous." Luks: "Of course I am. If he has a

schedule then why does he still bulldoze his way?" Me: "I let him. He loves his kids but he's just always busy." Luks: "Who's fault is that? Hayi Spho, you're too nice! You bring your last born to the office and work while taking care of him. I've never seen that. Anywhere. Any other person would take them to day care or get a nanny but you insist on having him on you the whole time. Hayi Spho. No." He pushed me gently into bed. Luks: "Khangе ndiphiwe nophiwa ke. So I'm a little frustrated right now." (I didn't even get some) I laughed. Me: "You're gonna have to wait." Luks: "Kanti ndiyokutshata ngoku mna. Don't even." I laughed. He gave me my tray of food. Me: "How do you work with your ex with the kids?" Luks: "There's a schedule. A very strict one. If the kids need me for anything else, they call me. I get them for 3 days a week, Lihle the remaining four. We rotate the days. Attend parent meetings together, sports events. She's on the school SGB with Lubabalo. It's not my thing. Thulani is mostly a driver for car pool after practice. Everyone in the family has a role to play." Me: "Is it difficult? Seeing them together?" Luks: "Who?" Me: "Lubby and her?" Luks: "They're not together. Lihle is dating Rem'boy." Me: "Who's Rem'boy?" Luks: "Remy. A Doctor." Me: "And you're okay with that?" Luks: "Not really. He tries to upstage me every chance he gets but my kids like him so..." Me: "The same way you're tryna upstage Lakhe?" He laughed. Luks: "Okay, yes." Me: "It's healthy that you're honest with yourself." Luks: "Aren't you worried about Lakhe's new girlfriend? Doesn't it feel uncomfortable for you?" Me: "It does. He boyfriends really well. But that was my house. Where I cooked and bonded with his family." Luks: "We're just human after all. A little sting of envy is normal. As long as they're happy. I think for me that's what was important. He makes her happy, keeps her safe, treats my children well. I'm fine with that." Me: "I don't know the girl he's dating that well. Do you think I should? For the kids that is. To know what kind of person they'll be around." Luks: "Yeah but only if you're sure. Don't force yourself and end up being an evil manipulator to turn them against her. That's not healthy. Not for them or for you." Me: "You're really smart." Luks: "I've been through it all." He cuddled next to me in bed. Luks: "Not even one round ke baby?" I laughed. Me: "Not even one." Luks: "It's fine. I'll wait." He kissed my cheek. Luks: "Ulumke ke sisi because nam ndiyatala." (be careful, I'm also stingy.) Me: "Good thing andibawi." He laughed. Luks: "Mxim. Eat baby." I had a bowl of fruit salad, a cup of yogurt, a small plate with three flapjacks drizzled in syrup (my mouth watered) and a plate of two Sunnyside eggs, two strips of bacon, two slices of toast, baby tomatoes and fried mushroom. I was so hungry all of a sudden. I started with fruit and yogurt. My phone rang again. Luks: "Yoh ha.a Masilakhe bra. Ndakwenza ntoni?" I took my phone and answered. Me: "Hey." Sands: "Mummy. Uphi?" Me: "What do you need?" Sands: "I'm coming to your house. I have a crisis." Me: "I'm having breakfast but not at home." Sands: "It's okay I'll

wait. Love you." He hung up. Me: "I wonder what is it now." Luks took a piece of bacon and ate. Me: "Say it." Luks: "They're up to something. Then again you did say this brother is your baby too so maybe uzokufekethela." Me: "You're not worried?" Luks: "Should I be?" Me: "No." Luks: "I'll try not to be." ...

A few hours of chatting and a nap with him, I got ready to leave. He was sulking now. Me: "Stop that." Luks: "I can't mummy." I laughed. Me: "You did not just pull that card!" Luks: "What choice do I have? You only run to your kids. Thina madoda amadala asihoywa." Me: "I'll see you soon. We'll talk on the phone." I got dressed in my jeans and his t-shirt. Luks: "Come back to me." Me: "You're a drug." Luks: "Baby we left your car at the restaurant. Take mine since you need to go see this boy quick, I'll go fetch yours and we'll exchange later." Me: "Nice try. You're angling for a way to see me again." Luks: "I'm going to miss you." Me: "I'll miss you too." He stood up and came to me. Luks: "So..." Me: "No. You're dropping me off at the restaurant to fetch my car." He groaned. Luks: "Okay." We walked to the garage door connected to the house. It fit 3 cars in it. His Bentley stood out in the drive way. Inside here was a black Maserati, a green McLaren and another Bentley SUV in light blue. It was so beautiful. Luks: "Like it?" Me: "I've never seen anything like it. I love it." Luks: "It belongs to Lubby. If you call him with his pet name, he'll hand it over faster than you can nod." I laughed. Luks: "The Green Lantern doesn't get the same courtesy though. Not even I get to drive it." Me: "And the Maserati?" Luks: "It's mine." He gave me the key and slipped in the passenger seat. I've never driven a super car before. My hands were tingling. I backed out the driveway and off we went to fetch my wheelbarrow because wow Lukhanyo's cars will make you feel so insignificant. Me: "You don't like big cars?" Luks: "I Do. I have a SVR in his garage since I don't have space here because of him." Me: "Range Rover? I had that. Crashed it." Luks: "Really? Shame baby. What happened?" Me: "One of my grandfather's tricks trying to kill me but I made it." Luks: "I'm glad you did." He held my thigh. Me: "I will crash this car into a wall." He laughed. Luks: "Sibulale baby. Romeo and Juliet!" I laughed. Why was Lukhanyo like this ? Me: "You're crazy." Luks: "About you. What are you doing for the rest of the day?" Me: "I'm thinking of taking my babies to the beach. We haven't had a beach day. I'll pack a lunch and goodies. Some quality time with them. I couldn't spend the public holiday with them last week because Nosi had a miscarriage. It was hectic." Luks: "Can I come?" Me: "No. And you can't stalk either. Promise me Lukhanyo. You need to stay away today." Luks: "This is going to be difficult because I have nothing else to do but I want to make you proud. I'll stay away and show you I'm a big boy." Me: "I'm already proud but I'll know if you do follow and I'll

send lightening." He laughed out loud. The radio started playing Lion of Judah. This song did so many things to awaken me. I turned up the volume and sang. Me: "Hae Dume! Rea rapela. Hae dume!" My spirit was taking over. I stopped the car. Me: "God. Hae Dume." I announced. Me: "I come forward to you God. Open the gates of Heaven. My spirit is banging on your doors dear Father. Heal me! Revive my faith, my God. Shake me out of my place of comfort where my enemies think they can trample on me and my heart. Clear the paths and show them who's God. Show them who represents You God. Break down the buildings they tie my soul in, break them down and burn them father. I worship you, Lion. You restored my spirit and gave me strength. I am coming before you. Again. I humble myself to you, God. Accept me home! Bring me home!! Rea rapela. You are the Holy, the Only. I will forever praise your name. Break the shackles on my hands. Break the chains in my ankles. Draw me to closer to you. God." I could feel the drums of heaven beating, the angels surrounding. My hands shook. Tears streaming down my face. Me: "Hold him Father. Hold his heart. Release the pain. Release binds of struggle and hardships in his heart. Pull him forward home to you God. We bless your name and we worship you Lord. Strengthen his faith and heart in your kingdom. Build him up from the ashes. Let his enemies live to see him Prosper. Let them breath his success. His good. His positive energy and gracious heart. Sithandaza kuwe somandla. Lukhanyo is your son. You have mounded him into what he is, broken him and rebuilt again. You are here God. Working around us. Surrounding us. Making a way as you always do! You brought him to me for a reason. Unravel the knots in his heart, father. Use him as your vessel, turning lives around, impacting in a positive passion. We call upon you God. We need a miracle worker. We need a way maker and that is who you are!! I can depend on You. Whatever happens in my life, You've made a promise to protect me and hold me up Father. YOU will never fail me. YOU are a promise keeper. My deliverer. My healer at all times. I give you my heart God." I opened my eyes. The radio was off. Traffic started moving again. A white Benz stopped next to me, rolling down a window. "Are you okay ma'am?" It was a white lady. I nodded quickly. She hooted and drove off. I looked next to me. Lukhanyo was bent over the seat, his head in his hands. He was struggling to breath. Me: "Baby?" I held his shoulder and his whole body shivered. I started the car and pulled to the side of the road. Me: "Babe?" He sniffed, wiping his face sitting up straight, still covering his face. Me: "I'm sorry I just..." he shook his head. Luks: "I'm okay." He croaked. Me: "What's wrong?" Luks: "I can't. Not now." I nodded and waited until he caught his breath. His eyes were red and swelling. Luks: "I could feel my soul shift." He whispered. Luks: "I.... everything.. I..." he turned to me and collapse in my arms. Me: "You're connecting. It's good." Luks: "Time stood still Spho." Me: "It

did, didn't it? And the angels? You felt them?" Luks: "They were here." He sobbed and laughed. Luks: "They were here for me." I chuckled. Me: "They'll always be here for you." Luks: "I'm never washing this car again." Me: "Of course you're gonna have to wash it baby. This is spiritual not physical." Luks: "I don't ever want you to leave. Please." He looked into my eyes. Me: "I won't." The rest of the drive to the restaurant was quiet. He just stared out the window, holding my hand. I parked the car and we got out. He stared at his vehicle, all around. Then looked at me. Luks: "The angels touched my car." Me: "Your brothers gonna be so jealous." Luks: "I'm never telling them, they'd latch on to you like baby sheep." I laughed. He hugged me tight. Luks: "Thank you so much. For our time together. For praying for me. I've had prayer in my life but... this was alot. I realize now." Me: "Realize what?" Luks: "This family. Why they're so... attached to you. Queen Komander. I respect you." Me: "Oh no.. are you gonna latch on to me like a baby sheep?" Luks: "Best believe it." I smiled. Me: "Will you be okay to drive?" Luks: "No. My hands hurt." I laughed. Luks: "The angels will drive me home." He kissed my forehead. Me: "I'll call you." Luks: "I adore you. I'm going to do my best to make you proud." Me: "Opening your heart is the best." I kissed his chin and went to my car. He watched me drive off.

Sandile was waiting for me in the lounge barely able to contain himself. He looked quite excited and I didn't understand why. Me: "Hey." Sands: "I like your t-shirt. Hey." Sibú was watching TV. I almost forgot he didn't work Sundays. My cheeks were burning with embarrassment. The whole fact that I slept out. I may be old but wow did it feel weird. Me: "Thank you Sands. Hi Sibú." Sibú: "Hey bhabha." Sands: "So.. how was breakfast? You left really early." Fez came out the bathroom. When did he get here? Fez: "Hey boo. I don't get invited to breakfast now?" Me: "I thought you were busy." I occupied my hands with tidying up the kitchen. Fez: "Oh. Em. Gee. You slept out." Me: "I did not!" I lied. Fez: "You are so guilty right now. I can see it on your face! Who!" Sands: "Slept out? I thought you said you're having breakfast." Me: "I was." Fez: "At his house!!! WHO!" Sands: "You slept at Lukhanyo's?" Fez gasped. Me: "Before you even get excited, NOTHING happened. We just had food and a conversation then SLEPT. Clothes on!" Fez: "I do not believe you. That's his t-shirt!" Sands: "Nah. Sphe would never. I know her. First day sex is not her thing. Siya had blue balls for three months and still didn't get none. She mean." He bit into an apple. Me: "Who told you that?" Sands: "Nosi." Because privacy is a myth in this family. Fez: "Why though? Lukhanyo is sexy. With muscles and tattoos and that bad boy look. With that short rugged hair, faded off the sides." He sighed, clearly day dreaming. Me: "Stop it. Lukhanyo

and I are starting a fresh relationship, by bonding and getting to know one another." Sands: "Sleep overs are a big step Spho." Me: "You guys ought to leave me alone. I'm not sleeping with him." Sibulele: "You will. Why are you shy?" Me: "Because." I gathered my stuff. Me: "Just. Sandile you called me here for a crisis." Sands: "Took you 3 hours." Me: "I'm here now." Sands: "Okay. I missed you. Can I take you out?" Me: "I need to go fetch the kids." Sands: "I'll take you." Me: "Okay. Let me change then." Sands: "Wear that nice white dress I like." No wonder he looked so radiant, he was wearing his white shirt. Fez was wearing a white shirt dress. Me: "You guys look so pretty. But I don't wanna wear white. You know Lam likes to make rub his food on me with his face." Sands: "He won't. I'll make sure of it." I sighed and went to the bedroom. I'd already showered earlier so I put on my make and let my natural hair be. It was still a nice and short afro. My wigs came in handy but this weekend, I wanted natural I wore the white baby doll dress and white stilletoes. I was never a sandal person. Sneakers yes. This dress didn't support sneakers. I took my stuff and went out to them. Me: "Happy?" He stared at me. Me: "Sandile?" Sands: "Hm? Yes. Of course. Sibulele, let's go man." Sibulele switched off the TV and got up with a long sigh. Sandile and Fez got in their car and I got in with Sibulele. He drove. I was still ashamed because he was quiet. Why can't I just be a big girl and out in peace. Me: "So .. I told him." Sibulele: "Everything?" Me: "The basics." Sibulele: "How did he take it?" Me: "A little panic but well. He accepted me." Sibulele: "That's good." Me: "But I had a weird night. I was visited by Queen Mother." Sibulele: "Oh yeah? What did she say?" Me: "Nothing other than the ordinary. To keep faith. Pray. We spoke about the Unborn. She showed me what he could do. Sibulele, it's bad." Sibulele: "Did she come up with a solution on how to help?" I shook my head. Me: "Then I saw Rex." Sibulele: "The fuck ..."
Me: "He was begging me to let him go. He said he'd help me with The Unborn. That he knew a way to turn him. Then we fought." Sibulele: "Shit Spho, that's hectic. Next to Likhanyo? How did he react?" Me: "He's supportive. Crazy. But I appreciate him. I just need to go for more training. Only myself and possibly Graham. He can guide me. I need more strength." Sibulele: "I'll help any way I can. Just let me know." Me: "Where are these two idiots taking me?" Sibulele: "I don't know. He's been secretive all day. I'm tired of asking. What else happened." Me: "I was driving to fetch my car and my spirit took over. I stopped in the middle of the road to pray. He was next to me. Everything just happened so fast by the time I finished he was crying, painfully. He said he felt the angels." Sibulele smiled. Sibulele: "That's what I love the most about your prayers. You prayed for him? You must really like this guy huh?" Me: "I do. I think something else pushed me to pray for him. I don't usually just fall into a trance and pray especially in the middle of the road while driving. His soul was crying out from whatever is eating him. He won't tell me. He laughs and

jokes like everything is perfect but I can feel he is restless inside." Sibú: "I think it's about his brother. You heard the story right?" Me: "Which?" Sibú: "Really Spho? What rock do you live in? His brother and wife got together. The media was all over it. Years ago. You were probably in varsity." Me: "Shit. He told me but I didn't know it was in the news." Sibú: "You don't know anything about this guy do you?" Me: "I didn't want to go digging. He told me though. About his life and the affair and his illegal stuff. Not details but.." Sibú: "Hm.." Me: "Why would he be insecure about his brother?" Sibú: "Has he met you?" Me: "Not yet. I only met Thulz and Stuja. Then the twins." Sibú: "That's why." Me: "Bhuti." Sibú: "He's probably scared you'll fall for his brother too and leave him behind." My heart cringed into a dry ball of despair. Me: "I would never do that to him!" Sibú: "Because you haven't met the brother. Apparently he's... alot. Billionaire, funny, legal, connected to everything, and really smart. A Lakhe type of guy. Very much Lakhe. I think, perhaps since Lukhanyo saw and knows Lakhe; he thinks that's your type. You've had the life once. Why not." He followed Sandile's car into the driveway of Lakhe's estate. Me: "Sibú I would never do that to Lukhanyo. I don't care about all that." Sibú: "Even his dealings?" Me: "I'm working on that but I'm not a materialistic person. His brothers money and charms won't make me leave him. I like Lukhanyo. Alot." Sibú: "Yeah. We know that as your family but he doesn't. Just be careful okay? Of the brother. Be very careful of him." We got out the car. I texted Lukhanyo while walking to the house. I was behind my entourage and smiling my cheeks off at the replies on my phone. Before I fell on my face I decide to look up and step in the house. "SURPRISE!!!" my heart jumped..

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I was stunned, still standing at the doorway. The whole family was in the lounge, gleaming. What was going on? Lakhe: "Okay. This is your appreciation party Spho. Don't just stand at the door." Me: "But.. why?" Sandile pulled me in. Sands: "This is to say thank you for everything you've done for us. For this family. Bringing us together, opening your homes to us because we are everywhere you are. You deserve this." My heart melted. Me: "That is so sweet." Stella: "You're the sweet one. You've never expected anything from us. You're always ready to shower us with love. I'm really sorry my angel for what I did." Me: "It's okay ma. It's the past." I hugged her. Me: "Is this why I was forced to wear white?" Sands: "We have a photo shoot." Me: "Oh?" I laughed. Rob: "You're our glue Spho. We won't forget what you've done for us. I hope you can forgive me." Me: "Tata, it's no worry." Lakhe: "This is why we're doing this. You forgive, care and forget our wrongs. Sphosenkosi,

you're God's gift to this family. To me. I'm grateful that you're the mother of my kids-" Sands: "Are you gonna propose again-" Lakhe: "Keep quiet Sandile." He looked at me again. Lakhe: "I am sorry for what I've put you through. I am sorry for not standing by you when you needed me. I am sorry for the things I've said and things I've done. Thank you for never giving up on me. You came back for me Spho, everytime. You almost lost your life twice, because of me. Again, you came for the third time while I sat in that hospital. Ready to take me back after I almost killed you-" Rob: "WHAT!!!" Sands: "Shhh." Rob: "No Sandile! Lakhe what are-" Sands: "Tata man!" He covered his father's mouth. Sands: "We're listening Lakhe." Lakhe: "I should have come back to you. I should have let you love me, the way you always have, with my flaws, my imperfections." He sighed. Sands: "Same thing. Keep going." He whispered. Lakhe: "I was a coward Spho. I was scared. I was scared of falling into that dark dangerous demonic space again. The thought, just the thought would make me cry myself to sleep. So I ran. For that, I am sorry. Once I saw you happy, I kind of snapped a bit. I snapped back to reality, to the vows I made to you. I wanted you back. I realized I couldn't stand the thought of another man holding you. So I conspired. I lied. I manipulated my way. And I failed. Truth is, I still want to conspire and lie and manipulate you back. I love you. You're the mother of my children. All 3 of them. The best mother. You're a great partner-" Lam: "Dada." Awwww. He came crawling. Lakhe: "I guess I've been talking too much. We love you Spho. All of us here." Sands: "And.... you.... ?" Lakhe: "Shut." Sands: "want...." Lakhe: "Sandile, not now." Me: "What is up with you two?" Sands: "He wants-" Lakhe held his mouth. Everyone laughed. I picked up Lam. Me: "Hey bunny. Oohhh, you made a mess didn't you? Dada." Lakhe: "Yoh. Ha.a Spho. I did enough this week. Mans poop bombs. I can't." Me: "Haibo Lakhe, he's begging. Look." Lakhe: "I'm not letting his eyes trick me again. No." Me: "Lakhe you're committing a sin." Lakhe: "What's one more?" I chuckled and went to the nursery to change Lam. Me: "Your father is something else baby. Why doesn't he want to change his little peanut? You're such a sweet little boy. Your little brother will be lucky to have you." I set him down, undressing him. Me: "You're gonna help mama change him too right? Of course you are. Where's Chris?" Lakhe: "Taking a nap." He closed the door walking in. Me: "Hey." Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "Thank you so much for this. Everything looks great out there. All of you look lovely. You didn't have to." Lakhe: "I did, Spho. I've put you through so much shit. I had to do just one small thing for you." Me: "Well, it's sweet. Thank you." I wiped Lam and disposed of his smelly diaper then got him ready for a clean one. Lakhe: "So, how's everything?" Me: "Great. By you?" Lakhe: "Fine. Fine." Me: "Can you pass me another pair of his crawl pants?" Lakhe: "Dinosaur or tiger?" Me: "Tiger." He gave me the pants and I dressed the baby. Lakhe: "When is the doctor

appointment for our Unborn King?" Me: "On Tuesday. Just a check up. You don't have to come." Lakhe: "Of course I do. I want to be there for you and our baby." Me: "It's okay, honestly. I'll bring you pictures." Lakhe: "Spho. I'm clearing the whole of Tuesday. I am there. Okay?" Me: "Okay." Lakhe: "It still bothers me that I wasn't fully there for Lam's appointments." Me: "You were there. For most of them." Lakhe: "Yeah. A couple of them. I should have been there for all. I will do better. I swear." Me: "Don't stretch yourself too thin Lakhe. I knew what I was getting into making babies with a multimillionaire." He laughed. Lakhe: "You know how to stroke my ego shame." I was done dressing Lam but he was fiddling with my chest now looking for an entrance. I should have known. My baby doesn't compromise for titty time. He doesn't even care if you're dressed to kill. Lakhe: "So.. perhaps, our next baby may be a girl?" He was standing behind me now. Me: "I think I'll find out on Tuesday if it's a boy or girl. I would love a baby girl." Lakhe: "And if it's a boy?" Me: "No worries." Lakhe: "Do we try again?" He whispered in my ear. Me: "What are you doing?" Lakhe: "Sandile was right." Me: "Right about what?" Lakhe: "I love you Spho. I fucked up okay? I'm always going to fuck up but you're my salvation." I turned to look at him. Me: "What are you talking about Masilakhe Sobukwe?" Lakhe: "The reason I moved on with Miya was because I thought you didn't want me, then it got awkward last week when we got home and you were here. Then you explained that you're just dropping the kids and making them food. Then you ran off. I didn't think you were here for me. I fucked up okay?" Me: "What did you want me to do Lakhe? I can't fight." Lakhe: "I wanted you to tell me. I wanted you to stand there and tell me you love me. But you left without even an explanation and I thought of running after you but I remembered how you've been pushing me away and telling me no so I didn't want to be that guy. That's why I kept quiet. It's only recently Sandile tells me, you wanted me too." Me: "It's the past Lakhe." Lakhe: "We need to talk about this Spho. We're raising kids. Do you love me?" Me: "I do." Lakhe: "Then what's stopping us? We don't need to explain ourselves, do we?" Me: "No Lakhe. I love you, I just don't want to be with you. You've moved on, I've moved on. Now I don't know how you feel about Miya but I know how I feel about Lukhanyo and that's who I want to be with." I put Lam in his crib. Lakhe: "Yet, you love me." Me: "I'm not going to lie about that. I do." He stared at me. Me: "Don't do that." Lakhe: "What." Me: "That stare." Lakhe: "Why not." I looked away. Me: "Lakhe, please. We don't need this complication." He kissed my lips. I pulled away. Me: "No." His face fell with disappointment. Lakhe: "So this is it?" Me: "Please." I couldn't stand seeing him cry. Lakhe: "I need you to look me in the eye Spho. I can't accept it if you don't." I looked at him. A lone tear traveled down his face. Lakhe: "You're choosing him? This is the end of us?" Me: "Yes Lakhe." He nodded, looking down. Me: "I'm sorry."

Lakhe: "Don't be. I want you to be happy Spho. You deserve a break. If he's.. the..." he swallowed. I hugged him. Me: "Thank you." Lakhe: "It's the least I can do." I tried to pull back but he held a little tighter. Lakhe: "Just one more minute. I need it." After a little while longer we let go. A little knock on the door before it opened. Miya: "Babe?" I looked at 'babe', I've known him for a while to understand his irritated look. Lakhe: "Yes Miya." She walked in. I picked Lam up. My baby needed to eat. Miya: "I've been looking for you. Calling." Lakhe: "We're having a family thing. We'll talk later." Miya: "Okay Lakhe, the next time you decide you want to spend the day with me, please notify me by the time you change your mind." She walked out. Me: "You know she doesn't deserve that Masilakhe. You chose to start dating Miya. Regardless of your feelings for me, you chose to be in a relationship with her. Do not be cruel. That girl loves you and you can't keep putting her second." Lakhe: "You're the mother of my children Spho. You always come first-" Me: "Yes but right now I don't need you. She does. Your family is here for me. And perhaps we need a minute away from each other." Lakhe: "Why are so nice about this? Wait.. you want to guilt me into accepting Lukhanyo? That's not happening." Me: "I'm not guiltting you into anything. Your affection for Lukhanyo has nothing to do with me. However, I'm not going to let you be a piece of shit to your girlfriend when I'm around because she is going to hate me and then take it out on my children. That is not right." Lakhe: "Nobody will ever hurt my kids." Me: "Masilakhe. I am not negotiating with you. Go to Miya. There's plenty of cake and snacks here." Lakhe: "Spho it's weird. My ex and my girlfriend in my ex's party?" Me: "I'm not a regular ex. I'm your supernatural ex. I can deal with things regular humans can't." I smiled. Lakhe: "I'm supposed to not love that?" Me: "Go. I need to call my boyfriend." Lakhe: "Spho, that man is NOT coming into my house!!" I laughed, walking out with Lam. I needed to find my Chrissie cakes.

My pumpkin was just waking up from his nap. Me: "Hey baby." I hugged and kissed him. Chris: "Mummy. I missed you." He climbed onto my lap with Lam. I don't know how I was going to cope when our Unborn makes his debut. Me: "I missed you too my angel." Chris: "Daddy is throwing you a party." Me: "I saw it baby. It's wonderful. Did you help?" Chris: "Since morning. I got tired." Lam was reaching up for his boob by now. I needed to feed him his vegetable purity that he hates. The fitty would be his reward. I know if I start with the boob, he'd never have his vegetables. Everything is tricky with this kid. Chris went to fetch his tin of purity and he fed him. Chris: "So where did you go this weekend? Did you have fun?" Me: "I did. I went to work for Uncle Siby at his new restaurant." Chris: "And what else?" Me: "Then I went to see a friend."

Chris: "The one that took you to dinner?" At times, I forget I have a genius for a child. Me: "Yes honey." Chris: "Is he your boyfriend?" Me: "Well... uhm." Chris: "It's okay. You can tell me. Tata told me Aunty Miya is his girlfriend. She has a child too. Tata said I will meet with her next week." I nodded. Chris: "So? Is he your boyfriend?" Me: "We're still trying to figure it out honey. You don't have to worry." Chris: "I'm not worried. If he's nice to you then it's okay mama." Oh, my sweet boy. Chris: "I think Aunty Miya is nice. Not like Sis Onika. Urgh." Me: "I'm happy she's nice to you baby. You also have to be kind to her okay?" Chris: "Does your boyfriend who is your friend have kids?" Oh bethuna uChris. Me: "He does baby. Lots of kids." Chris: "Really? How many?" Me: "9." He gasped out loud. Chris: "That's my whole class mama!!" I laughed. Chris: "That is too many kids. Is he gonna bring them? I hope he doesn't. It's enough I have to go through it at school not at home too." Me: "He's not bringing them sweetheart. Listen to me, your father and I love you. You're our first baby, Lam is our second baby, and this one in my tummy is our last baby. We will always take care of all of you. Nobody will come between that. I want you to tell me every time you need me. Don't ever be afraid to come to your mama okay? Sometimes, I forget and I'm busy but you must always come to me. Always Chris. Your father and I will never abandon you all." Chris: "But you don't forget mama." Me: "I know baby but there's gonna be three of you now. Sometimes mama will forget but you're my big boy and I want you to remind me if I'm away from you too long. Okay? I love you Chris." Chris: "I love you too mummy. So is he gonna bring his kids?" Me: "Not yet. I promise. Besides, his kids are a little older than you." Chris: "Older but I can assure you, dumber." Me: "Christian. No name calling." Chris: "No name calling. I cannot promise no condemna... I forgot the word." Me: "Condemnation? Christian don't go using those words. You're 5." Chris: "I have to mama. This is how I communicate with Julie." Communicate? I'm taking him to Grade 1 next year. Me: "Okay. Promise me you'll be nice to Aunty Miya and her child next week. Behave." Chris: "The girl is 3 there's not much I can do BUT behave." He sighed. Chris: "I'd have to dumb it down more than the usual." I didn't want to laugh yazi. Chris is alot. Chris: "When am I meeting him?" Me: "Who?" Chris: "Your boyfriend who is your friend." Me: "Not for a while baby. I need to get to know if he's in good shape to meet my angels." Chris: "I am Christian Sobukwe. This is Lam Sobukwe. He will never be in good shape. It'll be better for him to adjust to the settings." I shook my head, giggling. Lam was ready for the boob now. I let him suck happily until he got sleepy and full. Chris went to play with Boogie out in the back. I burped Lam and went to lay him down to sleep. Now time to go to my party but my phone rang. Oh yes. Me: "Hey you." Luks: "Hmm... am I being ignored?" Me: "No baby. I was feeding Lammy and having a conversation with Chris. It takes alot of focus to do both." He

chuckled. Me: "Oh. And im having a party. The Sobukwe's organized me an appreciation party." Luks: "What's that? Some white people shit?" I laughed. Me: "Nooo. It's a tradition I started. Just a normal party to appreciate someone. So they threw one for me." Luks: "Hmm. That's nice. Am I invited?" Me: "Not this time." He laughed. Luks: "I'm a nice party starter njena." Me: "I don't doubt that at all." Luks: "So ndize?" Me: "Nope." Luks: "He doesn't want me there?" Me: "No he doesn't." Luks: "He's welcome in my house, anytime." Me: "I'll let him know. So, what are you up to?" Luks: "Chilling at home. Waiting for Soso. We're going to the race track for lunch." Me: "That sounds nice." Luks: "I want to see you." Me: "You will see me, for now I'm going to party up a storm and take shots of warm milk while you sit and relax." He laughed. Luks: "Fine. I'll relax. Enjoy yourself my love." Me: "Thank you. You too." We hung up. I went to the lounge where everyone was. Sands: "There she is. Here you go." He placed a crown on my head. Sands: "Our Queen." Me: "Where does this come from?" He pointed to Niny. Me: "Ncawww Neenz!" I went to hug him. Me: "Thank you so much." Niny: "Its from Siya." Me: "Tell him I said thank you. How is he?" Niny: "Worried about the queen." Me: "He doesn't need to be worried. I'm fine. Is he happy at least?" Niny shrugged. Me: "Tell him I said, he need not worry about me. I'm doing fine. I want him to be happy." He nodded. I went to Graham. Me: "Hey." Graham: "Hey." Me: "Little late for your hair cut?" Graham: "Yeah. Was busy with church revival this week I forgot all about it." Me: "I like it like this. It suits you." Graham: "Even when I tie it into a ponytail?" Me: "You can?" He pulled up his gold strands of hair into a short ponytail. Me: "Yep. Even with the ponytail." He laughed. Me: "You look well." Graham: "I am. So I hear you're seeing someone." Me: "Sandile told you right?" Graham: "I wasn't gossiping." Me: "I know. I know he and only he has the guts to tell everyone." Graham: "I take it it's not Lakhe." Me: "I'm surprised he left out the name of Who I'm dating though. No its not Lakhe." Graham: "Oh. That's... oh." Me: "What?" Graham: "I assumed you are... still together, hence the party." Me: "No. I'm not with him. He has a girlfriend and I'm dating someone else." Graham: "Oh. I see. Well, that's good. I'm happy. You seem positively happy. And glowing." Me: "I'm sure it's the pregnancy." Graham: "How's that going?" Me: "I don't know Gray, when I pray the baby doesn't seem to harm me. He's so calm." Graham: "That's good. No episodes lately?" Me: "None whatsoever. I did have a few dreams though. Queen Mother and another of Rex. He wants me to set him free." Graham: "That's a trap. Don't go near him at all. Your Unborn could be able to release him if you're anywhere near. We never know." Me: "You're right. Also, I thought about training some more. Without Kadir this time. Just the pure side. Are you in?" Graham: "I don't know how to train a Pure blood Komander Spho." I stared at him, a sudden feeling of unease settling in my stomach. Me: "So you know how to train a Full

dark-" Sands: "Sphooooool!! Honey!!!!" He screamed from the other side of the room, I looked at Sandile. He held a big wrapped box in the air. Sands: "Your present!" Rob: "It's not yet time Sandile. We haven't even had lunch." Sands: "I can't wait that long. Come Spho. Come see!" I looked back at Graham who has nowhere near me. He was talking to Niny in a distance. I'd get back to this.

We all sat down at the table. Sands: "Open it." Me: "Okay. Don't explode with excitement, sit." He sat down. I unwrapped the box. You could tell he was pleased with himself. I flipped open the box and took out a brown fluffy medium sized teddy bear. Me: "Woow. This is so cute!" Sands: "Right? Squeeze him." Me: "Okay." I squeezed the teddy and a whiff of Sandile's cologne filled the air. Me: "And he smells like you? Woow." Lakhe: "Sandile. SANDILE." Sands: "You're ruining the moment bhuti. Spho, Do you like it?" Me: "I love it. It's beautiful." Sands: "When I'm not around, you can hug him." Me: "Thank you so much." Sands: "Graham, you're up. I wonder if you can top that." Graham: "I wouldn't want to." He chuckled, giving me an envelope. Sands: "Really Graham? A card? You couldn't have pinched from the Church Collection just for today?" Graham laughed. I opened the envelope. Me: "A spa treatment? That is amazing! Thank you Gray." He stood quite far away. Graham: "Niny you're up." Niny knelt down and gave me a pot plant. Me: "Awww. Thank you Niny. I'm going to name her Nila." He stood back up and nudged Lakhe. Lakhe: "Sarah!!" He yelled. Sands: "Urgh. Pathetic. You got her an assistant? Even Niny did better than you." Sarah rolled in a covered tray. Lakhe: "No, keep talking." Sands: "What is that? Food?" Lakhe thanked Sarah and pulled the tray to him. Everyone was awaiting the surprise. It was covered with a navy suede cloth. Lakhe: "This was too last minute, but I managed to get a hold of these. It's not much..." Me: "Show me already." He pulled off the cloth and I stared at the sparkles, my eyes unblinking. Sands: "WOOOW, Are you a show pony. Good going putting everyone to shame with your money and fame. Hey, here's a thought, you could've kept that for... I don't know, an anniversary or some shit." He folded his arms. Lakhe: "Jealous?" Sands: "Spho won't wear jewelery to bed. Think." He smiled. Lakhe stared at him. I was still staring at the tray of diamonds. Rob: "Are you okay Spho?" There was a diamond encrusted choker. Diamond earrings, about three pairs. A fully diamond bejeweled watch. Bracelets of diamonds. Everything diamonic. Lakhe: "I wanted to engrave your name on one of the pieces but we were short of time. I can still do it if you'd let me. Please accept this Spho. Unlike the Porsche, which by the way is still in the garage, waiting for you." I had a lump in my throat, unable to speak. How do you even...

wow. Rob: "Great. Thanks Lakhe." Me: "... I don't know what to say." Lakhe: "You love it?" Me: "It's a lot." Lakhe: "Not really. They didn't have half the merchandise I wanted. I'll have to order it from Cartier." Me: "No, you can't." Lakhe: "I can. It'll take just a few days." If I could just get some air into my lungs. Me: "I mean, you shouldn't. It's too much. It's... alot of.. I can't believe I'm saying this, alot of sparkles." Lakhe: "You love sparkles." Me: "I do." There was a thin band ring with a ginormous rock the size of a boulder on it. Me: "Jesus Christ. That's a ring?" Lakhe: "Yes." Stella: "Just so you know. The family is not impressed with you Lakhe. Could've kept this for another day. I've never felt like such a failure." Me: "No mama. I love all the gifts, they're all equal to me. The fact that you thought of me at all means the world to me." The gate buzzed. Lakhe put the ring on my right finger. Lakhe: "Mother of my little dragons." Me: "Don't call my children dragons." Sands: "What's this doing here? You invited him Lakhe?" Lakhe: "I didn't invite anyone." He couldn't stop staring at my eyes. Lakhe: "Looks beautiful." Me: "You're not even looking at it." Lakhe: "I don't have to. Is it light? I don't want it too heavy for your hand." Me: "It's ridiculously heavy. There's like a billion carats on it." He laughed. Dumi rolled into the house. Beads of sweat collecting at his forehead. Me: "Hey." He stared at me then at Lakhe's hands holding mine. Me: "Welcome Dumi. Can I get you anything? Where's Zingi?" Dumi: "I need to talk to Lakhe." Lakhe: "Talk." He folded his arms on his chest. Dumi: "It's about that thing you asked me to look for." Lakhe: "I'm listening Dumisani. I don't have all day. As you can see." Dumi: "I take it she told you?" Lakhe: "Want me to beat it out of you?" Sands: "What's going on? What's this thing doing back in this house anyway?" Dumi: "It's Spho." Lakhe: "It's Spho what?" Dumi: "Spho sent SARS to tear down and audit your father's company, knowing the share price will plummet as it did, she bought it all. Thus kicking out the remaining board members. She launched the Youth project a week ago. She took your father's legacy." The air was stiff all around. Everyone stared at me. Guess the party was over now.

#203

After the initial shock, Sandile grabbed the wheelchair. Sands: "You either wheel out. Or you fly out. And I'd better never see your face again." He moved closer. Sands: "Because it will be the last thing you see." Dumi started and rolled out the house. Lakhe: "This true?" He looked at me. Me: "Yes." He walked down the passage but came back immediately like he'd forgotten something. Lakhe: "WHY." He demanded. Me: "I would've given it back-" Lakhe: "How about not stealing it in the first fucking place!!" He roared. Me: "I didn't steal it. I bought it!!" Lakhe: "With WHAT. The money you laundered from

me?" Me: "That was MY settlement!!" Lakhe: "You said you wanted nothing! Yet you saw this opportunity and took it!" Me: "Are you serious right now?" Lakhe: "Not as serious as you are deceiving my entire family thinking you're a good person. Fine, you 'bought' the company then why hide it? Why not show your face at board meetings, at the launch or anywhere else?" Me: "Give me a chance to explain." Lakhe: "Get out of my house." Me: "Tata-" Lakhe: "No. You don't get to manipulate my family again. Leave." Me: "I want to speak to your father-" Lakhe: "You're not speaking to anyone in my house." Sibuy: "Let's go Spho." He was carrying Lam in one arm, his hand holding Chris. Nosi appeared from the passage dragging a suitcase. Nosi: "I'm coming with you." Lakhe: "You're not going anywhere." Nosi: "I am." She stood by the door. Me: "Nosi, stay with your family." Nosi: "I don't want to. I'm coming with you. Sooner or later they'll go back to their lives, my guess is that'd be tomorrow. I'd be by myself again." Me: "You won't be alone. You'll go to school. This is where you belong." Nosi: "You don't want me in your house either?" Me: "Of course I do. I can't let you abandon your family for me." Rob: "Nosi put your bag back in your room." Nosi: "Andifuni." Me: "Nos-" Nosi: "If you don't want me in your house I'm going to Trevor." Lakhe: "Who the fuck is Trevor! Nosiphiwo Sobukwe. Get your ass back in that room!!" Nosi: "NO." Sibuy: "Let's go." He led the way out of the house to his car. I carried Chris on my hip, grabbed my pot plant, plus voucher and went after him. Nosi followed behind me. Sandile and Liz got in their car as well as Graham and Niny. Lakhe probably kicked everyone out. I hate how this ended but speaking to Lakhe while he's still angry is futile. It can only anger him more. Sibuy: "You okay?" Me: "I'm fine. Nosi?" I was in the back seat with the kids. Nosi in the front. Nosi: "Much better. I love my family but they can get pretty much self absorbed. I can't deal with this alone." Me: "Okay." Sibuy drove us home in silence.

Lukhanyo and Soso were in the race track for their Sunday chill. Luks: "Wife threw you out again?" Soso: "Khayeke Luks sani." (Leave it alone man.) Luks: "You a piece of shit. I don't know why Zol puts up with you." He sipped a beer. Soso: "What's up with you? Where's your girl?" Luks: "With her ex." He sucked his teeth. Soso: "No wonder you're in a sour mood." Luks: "I'm not in a sour mood. They have kids. There's a party going on there. It's nothing." Soso: "Want me to kick his ass for you?" Luks: "No." He stared at his ringing phone. Soso: "You know sooner rather than later he's going to come looking for you right? He's been blowing up my phone for three days straight. Honestly, Lukhanyo I can't do this anymore. Answer him!" Luks slid the screen with his phone. Luks: "Hello." Lubb: "Well there you are!! I've been calling you for days! Where you been!"

Luks: "I've been busy." Lubb: "Busy? With what!" Luks: "What do you need?" Lubb: "Lukhanyo. What's going on?" Luks: "Nothing. Why?" Lubb: "You're acting weird. You didn't answer my calls two nights in a row. I haven't spoken to you in days. I was just about to get on the jet to fly me back to PE, honestly expecting to find your body slowly rotting on the kitchen floor. Yazi, for a triplet, you're a problem. I cannot keep working and keep my parents sane and still worry about my second piece which is YOU." Luks: "Lubabalo. I'm not your girl. Leave me alone. We don't need to talk every night." Lubb: "You made a PROMISE!" Luks: "I did." Lubby gasped. Lubb: "You have a girlfriend." Luks: "Stop calling me." Lubb: "Oh my Gaaaad. You do. Who? Who is it? Do I know her? Of course I do. Do I?" Luks: "Bye Lubby-" Lubb: "Wait.. wait. Are you home?" Luks: "No. I'm at the track." Lubb: "Did you feed Mathew?" Luks: "Lubby, Mathew is a horse. You got him a horse sitter. He's with him right now. I am not going to baby a horse." Lubb: "Is it because he kicked you? Lukhanyo I told you to stop frowning your face, it scares him." Luks: "I'm done with this conversation." Lubb: "Hold on.. did you visit Thuli?" Luks: "Still no guilt naming your dog after your brother I see. Thuli is fine with Remy and Lihle. I'm not going there." Lubb: "We had these pets together Lukhanyo. You promised to be a good dad to them. Our kids together. Without other people. But I have to make arrangements when I leave town because their dead beat dad is too busy." Luks: "You're right. I'm sorry. I'll try to be better." Lubb: "Thank you. I gotta go okay?" Luks: "When you coming back?" Lubb: "In about two days. I love you okay?" Luks: "Lubabalo." Lubb: "Lukhanyo." Luks: "Love you too." He hung up. Soso was laughing silently. Luks: "He's so clingy." Soso: "To have and to hold." Luks: "He bought the horse and told me it's our "baby". A whole horse. I honestly don't know what goes through his mind sometimes." Soso: "Why didn't you tell him to send it back." Luks: "Then I'd have to deal with an emotionally unstable Lubabalo and I'm not ready for that." Soso: "It's been two years since he bought it." Luks: "Yeah. Two years." Soso: "You know Lubby bought the horse and dog for you? After you split with Lihle. He got Mathew just to distract you. Then when she started dating Remy, two days later Lubby brings home Thuli. Your twin loves you more than himself. If we could swap." Luks: "I didn't need a distraction. Especially not pets." Soso: "You pushed everyone away Lukhanyo." Luks: "I needed time alone." Soso: "Either way, that boy is crazy about you." He sipped his beer. Lukhanyo stared at his phone. Soso: "What?" Luks: "Spho isn't responding." Soso: "Maybe she's busy." Luks: "Maybe." Soso: "You gonna tell him?" Luks: "I'll tell him when he's here." Soso: "Really? Or you'll just sneak out like a teenager when you have to see her?" Luks: "Soso. Can we just have a beer and watch our cars race in peace? Good, here's your twin finally. Oh God." Soso: "What?" Luks: "He's high." Soso: "Somangaye!!" Soma: "Heeeeeeyyy." Soso: "What the hell! How did you drive

here!" Soma: "With my good friend the Holy Ghost." He sat down. Luks: "Give me your phone." Soma pulled out his phone. Luks: "You were talking to Lubby? About?" Soma: "Shoes." Luks: "You spoke to Lubby for 34 minutes about shoes." Soma: "Nice shoes. Yes." Luks: "Somangaye." Soma: "Lubabalo." Soso: "Why is your girlfriend a secret?" Luks: "She isn't-" Soma: "You have a girlfriend?" Luks: "I just don't want chaos. Spho will meet Lubby. I will introduce them soon and we'll be fine." Soma: "You scaaaared." Luks: "I'm not scared." Soma: "You real scaaaared." Luks: "You're the one that's gonna get scared if you don't keep your mouth shut." Soma: "I'm haaaaappy. Look at yooouuuu." Luks: "Soso talk to your man." Soma: "I'm haaaappy. Lemme alone." Soso: "Thandie is gonna whoop his ass. Let me take him home. You coming?" Luks: "Nah. I'm going to my dad for a minute. We'll link up later." Soso: "Shot. Let's go duplicate. Get up." Soma: "Bye Lubby." Luks: "Crazy how you only see Lubabalo when you're high." Soma: "Lubbbby." He hung on his arm. Lukhanyo laughed. Luks: "Fuck off. Soso take him." Soso: "Hold on." He positioned his phone to take a photo. Soma smudged a peck on Lukhanyo's cheek. Luks: "That is Disgusting! Suka kum!" Soso: "Done. I'll send it on the group email." Luks: "Delete that!!" Soso: "No can do. Brotherly love. Send." He locked his phone. Soso: "Lets go Soma." He pulled his twin to the car. Lihle walked in carrying a box of supplies. Lihle: "Mr Mzinyathi." Luks: "Hi Lihle." She stared at him. Lihle: "That's new. I usually get a "Mrs Mzinyathi" back. Giving up?" Lukhanyo laughed. Luks: "You've been begging me to." Lihle: "True. So who is she?" Luks: "Who." Lihle: "Obviously you're seeing someone. Who?" Luks: "Can I just get my relationship up and steady before I introduce everyone?" Lihle: "This one is serious." She put the box on the counter. Luks: "Later." Lihle: "Don't you walk away from me!" Luks: "Bye." He walked out.

Sunday evening. I was done cooking supper. Sandile walked in and stood in the kitchen. Sands: "You forgot him." He held up the teddy. Me: "Awww. Sorry about that." Sands: "No worries. I would've come sooner but Liz was having period pains. I took her home, got her comfortable. Cooked for her. And then she threw me out." Me: "Why?" Sands: "I have no idea." Me: "She's emotional Sandile." Sands: "I know so I decided to come here for a second to chill. At least she's napping now." Me: "How do you know that?" Sands: "I have cameras installed in my house. And I wanted to talk to you about something." I switched the stoves off. Me: "Sure." Nosi was in her room listening to music, I could hear her singing along. I was so glad that she's recovering at least. Sibu was with Lam and Chris in the garden out back. Sands: "I need a job." Me: "You have a job. The hotel." Sands: "I'm selling it. I put it up today. I don't want it. So once I get a buyer. I'm done." Me: "No Sandile that is your gift from your

brother." Sands: "You're right. I would sell it to him but I know he won't take it so I drew up a contract. The buyer I get will buy it from me and hold it. If Lakhe wants it, he'll sell it to him at their negotiated price." Me: "You even drew up a contract." Sands: "Well, Liz did. She's good with that type of stuff." Me: "Honey are you sure? Why do you want to sell the hotel?" Sands: "I can't be living in my family's shadow for the rest of my life. Everything I am, is given by them. I gave up my dreams to be closer to them and it feels like I'm a liability to them sometimes. So, I would like to venture into my own space. I need your help. Listing the hotel and a new job." Me: "I can't afford you if you think I'm going to hire you." He laughed. Sands: "If it makes you feel any better, nobody can afford me Spho. Nobody can buy a Sandile S. That's what I go by now. Are you going to help me?" Me: "I'll see. I'll try." Sands: "What are we doing tomorrow, boss?" Me: "I'm going to be mad busy tomorrow with Tar. Oh and I need to make the building more appealing. I'm going to have to use the space for a while since I've decided on constructing rather than buying a building." Sands: "I'll help. First you need to paint those sewerage pipe looking walls. Your assistant will look for nice furniture online. I'll fetch the paint in the morning and get started." Me: "They're not sewerage looking." Sands: "The paint is peeling. It looks like a storage facility from the 90s." Me: "Stop dissing my place of work." Sands: "Sorry. Are you okay?" Me: "I'm fine." Sands: "Lakhe is a piece of shit. Don't give the company back. It's yours now." Me: "I have to Sandile. Lakhe will make it very difficult for me in business if I don't." Sands: "People respect your work." Me: "They do but he has connections of a lifetime. Nobody will work with me if he opens his mouth once. I might even lose my only client, Tommy. Which I can't afford to let happen." Sands: "I'll talk to Lakhe-" Me: "You're staying out of this. All of you are. I don't want any one of you going against your family and you won't!" Sands: "You're still wearing his ring." I stared at my hand. Me: "Forgot this stupid thing." I pulled it off my finger and put it on the table. Me: "I'll courier it to him in the morning." Sands: "Mummy. You're a nice lady you know that?" Me: "Thank you Sandile. That means a lot." Sands: "I mean it. I love you Spho." I hugged him. Me: "I love you too but I don't want you fighting or going after your brother. Leave it be." Sands: "Fine." He walked out to the back.

Monday morning was quite busy. I woke up a little late. I was groggy and sluggish for some reason. After a shower, I was still feeling the same. No use dragging it out then. I made my bed quick and went to bath Christian. I got him dressed up in his dirt blue jeans and a black t-shirt. He wore black sneakers and his cap then went to have breakfast with Siby. I bathed Lam and dressed him as well. Also his cute tiny jeans and a black t-shirt. I pulled on

the tiniest most adorable black Ugg boots on his little feet. I made his porridge and fed him, then gave him a bit of milk then burped him. I gave him to Sibbu. Now for my third child. Me: "Sweetheart." I knocked on her door and opened. Me: "Time for school. Get dressed. We leave in 30 minutes." Nosi got out of bed and to the shower. I got out of my gown and dressed in an oversized baby blue shirt. Between nude thigh high boots or glass block heel with two transparent straps over the toe and on the ankle. I sat and gave it some thought. I chose the block heel instead. My make up was quick and natural. Foundation. Nude eyeshadow, extra long false lashes, fleeced eyebrows and some lip gloss. I hooked on my hoop earrings and wore my long wig. Me: "Nosi, we're leaving." I yelled. Nosi: "Almost done." I packed Lam's bag with his food and changing clothes plus diapers. Me: "Chrissie, are you ready? Is your lunch packed?" Chris: "Yes mummy." Me: "Show me." He brought his bag to me. Me: "Alright. Please hold Lam's bag too." Giving him the bag, wiping his mouth corners. Chris: "Daddy usually takes me to school. Where is he?" Me: "I'm not sure baby. He's probably busy. He's already 20 minutes late." Chris: "Call him." I made the call and it rung twice before it cut off. Me: "He's busy babe. Let's go." I took my bags and off we went. Sandile was waiting in the kitchen. Sands: "Hey." Me: "Hi Sands. I need to drop Chris off at school and Nosi as well." Sands: "Did you eat?" Me: "I packed a lunch. Let's go." I took Lam. Me: "Bye bhuti. Enjoy your day." Sibbu: "You too." We got in Sandile's jeep. He also rents from the airport like I do but he liked this jeep. Me: "I'm thinking of buying a car. A-Class." Sands: "That's a cute car. I like it." Me: "Yeah. I just need something to get me from point A to B, but also safe enough for my kids. I don't want what happened with my previous car to ever happen again." I sent Jan a text to book an appointment with Mercedes-Benz. Hopefully they can send someone to me as opposed to me going there, I did not have the time. We dropped off Nosi first. Me: "Have a good day sweetie. Call me when you get off." Nosi: "You'll come fetch me right?" Sands: "I'll be here to fetch you." Nosi: "Okay." We watched her go in. Next we dropped off Chris. I took him inside with his bag. Me: "Enjoy your day sweetheart. Behave, okay?" Chris: "Love you mummy." Me: "I love you too pumpkin." I kissed his cheek. Chris: "What did we say about kissing mummy?" Me: "I'm sorry bab- Chris. It won't happen again." Chris: "Pull it together." He took out his little handkerchief and wiped his cheek. Julie appeared. Julie: "Hi mummy." Me: "Hey Jules. How you doing?" Julie: "Great. Are you available for a play date? My dad's are going through something and I need to be out of their hair a while. Maybe a sleep over. We can paint our toe nails and have apple juice in champagne glasses again." She smiled. God, how I craved for a daughter. Me: "I'd love to. I'll call your dad's and set up a day okay?" Julie: "I love how you dress." Me: "Thank you honey. Enjoy your day okay?" Julie: "You

too." She turned and skipped to class. My heart was fluttering. A compliment without condescension from Julie would do that. Time for work.

In my office, Sandile dropped us off and went to buy paint. I specifically gave him the color white, and only white. I had a meeting with Tar. Jan watched Lam for me as he slept in his work cot. He had one now, thanks to Sandile. Tar was obviously pissed about Dumi finding out and coming to the house to snitch. He couldn't even keep his hands still. Me: "It was bound to come out-" Tar: "Not like this Spho. Lakhe and Dumi will ruin your image and the share price will go south once more." Me: "What do we do?" Tar: "Make a statement. Announce yourself as the new owner. Today. I can get the press ready in 20 minutes for you. You know how they love a juicy story about you." I laughed. Jan: "Spho." Me: "What's wrong?" She went quiet. Tar stood up and went to her. Tar: "Shit." Me: "What is it?" I followed him. He gave me the iPad. A new story. About my theft. Tar: "Dumisani doesn't learn does he?" Me: "Leave him to me. Let's get a strategy underway." Dimitri marched in with his two assistants, they were also lawyers but they looked like assistants with the way he carried on. He looked mad. Me: "Hey Dimz." Dimitri: "Hi Spho. You good?" Me: "Great." Dimitri: "What the fuck." He looked at Tar. Tar: "We just saw it. I'm on it-" Me: "I said, leave it alone. I will deal with Dumisani. Trust me." Dimitri: "Fine, you deal with Dumisani. Tar and I deal with the company before it starts going down. Spho, I'm sending a PR Officer here to help you with a statement. Y'all done?" Me: "For now, yes." Dimitri: "Lets get moving." Tar was texting on his phone. Tar: "Call me if you need anything." They marched back out. I sighed. I needed to call Thomas Dewardo. He can't read the press and not hear from me. I rang him up quick. Tom: "Miss Spho." Me: "You've seen the news." Tom: "Oh yes. How you doing?" Me: "Thomas, our arrangement has nothing to do with that company. I can assure you that." Tom: "I'm not worried. Spho, I trust you. I gave you my business to work with and I'm on your side, lady. Fuck what they think. Oh here's my brother, say hi." Me: "Hey.." Bro: "Hey Spho. How's it going." Me: "Great. Despite the circumstances." Bro: "Don't worry about it. It'll be done for in the morning. Cheers." Thomas came back on the line. Tom: "Listen I have to go. I'm looking forward to meeting with you and seeing what you've come up with." Me: "Alright. Thank you Tommy." We hung up. He's such a cool guy. I moved Lam's crib to my office again and continued with work. Someone was gazing at me. My eyes looked up and met with Lukhanyo. Me: "Hey." Luks: "Hey. You've been distant since last night. What happened?" He walked in with a bunch of flowers and a packed lunch box, on top of it was a chocolate. My mouth watered. Luks: "My eyes are up here baby, stop undressing me." I laughed. Me: "Alot happened babe. Sit.

You want some tea?" Luks: "No I'm okay. Talk to me." Then I relayed the story from Dumi's live snitch performance to about 30 minutes ago with the article. Luks: "You don't seem that bothered." Me: "I'm not. I never wanted the company anyway. I just wanted my project." Luks: "This is the company you said you'd give away in a few months right? Investment firm?" Me: "You have a good memory. Yes." Luks: "So why are they mad at you? You broke down the company to clean it up and build it back properly. They should be on their knees thanking you. Sooner or later Sars would have come knocking anyway and destroyed it. Imagine if a stranger bought it. Don't give it back. It's yours to keep. They fucking crazy." Me: "I don't know Luks. The look on Rob's face is haunting me. He was so disappointed." Luks: "He made his bed. Why is there no security here? There's a baby with you Spho. You're pregnant. You can't fight the press off with a stick." I chuckled. Me: "Relax. They don't even know where I am." He took out his phone texting something. Luks: "Eat." Me: "Thank you for the flowers. They're gorgeous." Luks: "Not as gorgeous as my woman." He put down the phone walking to Lam's crib. Me: "Lukhanyo." Luks: "Just one hug?" Me: "Move away from the baby." He pulled his puppy face look. Me: "Don't do that." Luckily his phone rang and he went to answer it. Luks: "Niphi. I need at least 10. Ba'kher' instimbi." (fully armed.) He hung up. Me: "What does that mean? Bakher'intsimbi?" Luks: "Nothing you should worry about baby. Can I have my hug?" Sandile walked in. Luks: "Hehake. Did you wander out of preschool?" I nudged him. Me: "What's wrong Sands." He stared at Lukhanyo then at Lam. Sands: "Nothing. I'm going to start painting. Good morning Lukhanyo." Luks: "Hello." Lam was stirring in his crib, wide awake. Obviously hearing Sandile. Me: "Why would you do that." Sands picked him up smiling. Sands: "We're gonna go paint. Ne boy?" Me: "What color did you choose?" He smiled walking out. Me: "Sandile!" Sands: "It will be fine. Don't worry!" Me: "It better not be black!!" I yelled. Sands: "Oh... well. My bad." Honestly, I sat down and ate my food. Me: "I'm sorry about that." Luks: "My hug please." I stood up and hugged him long and hard. Me: "I missed smelling you." Luks: "Smell all you like baby." Me: "Don't you have to go to work?" Luks: "I do actually. I have some security who's gonna stand guard outside at all entrances okay? I want you to be safe." Me: "I will be safe. You don't have to." Luks: "I'm not taking any risks." He kissed me. Luks: "I'll see you later tonight?" I nodded, mesmerized by his cologne. Me: "Hmm." I moaned into his chest. Luks: "Baby?" Me: "Yes." Luks: "Okay. My brother will be back this week." Me: "That's nice." Luks: "I want to introduce you two. Perhaps a dinner." Me: "That would be lovely. Come with your brother, and I'll have mine as well. We can have a family dinner." Luks: "With the kids?" Me: "Chris expressed some concern with the number of your kids." He laughed. Luks: "Why?" Me: "He has the problem at school. Too many kids. Says he doesn't want to deal

with it at home too. Especially having to dumb it down." Lukhanyo couldn't stop laughing. Luks: "I need to meet this kid." Me: "Soon. He thinks his ready but his brain is still a 5 year old brain no matter how advanced his IQ is. His emotional intelligence is still that of his age. I need to prepare him well and get him to adjust first. Can you wait for us to do that?" Luks: "I'll do anything to make you happy mntu wam." He kissed me again. Luks: "I will wait and respect your decision. You're an amazing mom." Me: "Thank you." I checked my phone. Me: "Nosi." Luks: "Who's that?" I looked at him. Me: "Lakhe's sister." Luks: "She okay?" Her message was short but I didn't understand. "I can't do it anymore." Luks: "Where is she?" Me: "At school." I was so numb dialing her number. Nosi: "Spho." She answered between sobbing. Me: "Baby what's wrong?" Nosi: "I can't Spho. Please come get me." I fast paced out the office. Lukhanyo closely behind me. Luks: "I'll drive you." Me: "Sandile. I'm going to fetch Nosi. Please look after everything." Sands: "She okay?" Me: "I don't think so. I'll be back soon." We got in the car and Luks sped off. I was still not used to his driving. I called her again while jiggling in this car. Me: "Where are you Nosi? I'm on the way." Nosi: "I'm outside school. They're laughing at me and taking pictures." My heart broke into a million pieces. I could hear it cracking in my ear. Me: "I'll be there in two minutes." The rage in my heart. I swear if they even try. Lukhanyo pulled up and I jumped out. I could see a mob of teens and young adults screaming and laughing. I pushed through them and saw Nosi. I pulled her arm and she collapsed in my chest crying. I couldn't hear anything above the screams and laughing but the sound of a gun shot silenced everything into sudden panic. Everyone ran. I stared up at Lukhanyo. He was carrying a large gun in his hand. A young boy screaming for help, crawling on the floor with a bullet wound in his leg. Me: "What did you do." Luks: "Get in the car."

#204

I didn't know whether to scream or cry. I took Nosi to the car, she was still holding on to me. Lukhanyo went to the boy and bent down, talking to him. I couldn't hear a thing but the young boy was nodding, with tears in his eyes. What was Lukhanyo saying? A man I couldn't identify walked up to them and bent down as well. Lukhanyo spoke to him and turned back to the boy. What the fuck was going on? Just as I was getting out the car Lukhanyo walks to his car, starts it up and drives off. Nosi and I are in the back seat. Me: "Why." I needed to know why he decided to shoot a young child and leave him on the pavement. I didn't get a response. I was boiling. He drove to my house, parking in the driveway. Nosi went to her room. I was left with Lukhanyo in the

kitchen. I wanted to slap his face. Me: "You almost killed a child!!" Luks: "I would never kill a child. Spho, he was mocking your sister-" Me: "Lukhanyo you can't just go shooting people for that!" Luks: "He was carrying a camera taking pictures of her." Me: "You don't have the right. YOU DON'T. You can't go on a shooting spree just because. There are ways of dealing with this. LEGAL ways. You are making everything worse!! Do you realize the kind of pressure, the scrutiny I'm under right now? If this gets out, actually WHEN it gets out, nobody will want to come near me!! I can't ruin my image because of you and your thug solutions. Get out of my house!!" I screamed. Luks: "Sph-" Me: "Get out!!!" He walked out the house. I tried to breath. Nosi: "I'm so sorry Spho." Me: "It's okay baby." Nosi: "I don't want you to fight with ubhuti Lukhanyo. Please forgive him." Me: "What happened at school." I sat her down. Nosi: "I was in class when people started laughing and everything. I don't know why. I just carried on with my work but they didn't stop. The class ended and we walked out. I noticed they were laughing at me. Then one of the girls said to my face that I'm a murderer." She quivered. Me: "Why?" She: "Someone said I had an abortion which is why I was in hospital. They say I killed my baby." I hugged her. Me: "How the hell did they find that out." Nosi: "Some blog wrote about it." She sobbed. Blog? Sandile walked in with Lam in his arms. Sands: "I drove over when you weren't taking my calls. What's going on?" I told him what she told me. Me: "Lukhanyo says that boy was carrying a camera taking pictures of you. Is that true?" She nodded. I cringed. Sands: "Who's this boy." Nosi: "I don't know him. I've never seen him before." Sandile gave me the baby. Me: "He already... did something." Sands: "What did he do." I was so ashamed. Me: "He shot him." Sands: "Lukhanyo shot this boy?" I nodded. Sands: "Dead?" Me: "No. Just in the leg." Sands: "Should've killed him." He marched out. Me: "Sandile get back here!!!" He walked in, fuming. Me: "You can't do anymore. My reputation is already on the line. Please." Sands: "Fine. What do you want me to do?" Me: "I have to work. I can't take the day off. I can't afford to." Sands: "Take my car. I'll stay here with Lam and Nosi." Me: "Are you sure?" He nodded. I gave him the baby and drove to work.

The rest of my day was crap. I couldn't focus. The phone kept ringing off the hook. I was so frustrated. I ended up leaving the office, asking Jan to lock up as well. There were armed guards right outside and honestly I was not in the mood. It was so unnecessary. I drove to Chris' school and went in to find him. Stacy: "His dad picked him up." Wow. I got back in my car and drove home. When I arrived, his Audi was still parked outside. Unbelievable. Lakhe wanted to scream at me some more? It's crazy. This time I'm screaming back and

attacking him if he's not careful. I slammed the car door and stomped into the house, fuming. Sandile was cooking supper. Lakhe was in the lounge with Lam in his arms. I greeted and went to look for Chris, he was in his garden. I took off my heels and went to him. Me: "Hey baby." Chris: "Hi mama." Me: "How was school." Chris: "Tragic. Jake is going through something." Me: "What's wrong with him?" Chris: "He peed himself." Me: "Oh no. That's sad." For once he wasn't making jokes. Chris: "And he's having nightmares during nap time. I don't know what's going on with him. He won't let us play with him, he sits alone all the time. Will you talk to him mama?" My son probably thinks I solve problems for a living. Me: "I don't know baby." Chris: "But you can. You make everything okay. Please talk to him." Me: "I'll talk to his mom. I promise." Chris: "Thank you." I let him do his gardening in peace. Back in the house, Lakhe was putting Lam in his crib. Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "Hey." Lakhe: "I'm sorry about this morning. Things got a bit hectic." Me: "Convenient." Lakhe: "Spho I'll never abandon my kids. Sometimes I'm just going to be busy. That's where you come in. I appreciate that." Me: "Okay." Lakhe: "I over reacted yesterday." I waited. Lakhe: "So yeah." Me: "That's it?" Lakhe: "Yes.. What do you want more?" Me: "Nothing." Lakhe: "What time is our appointment tomorrow?" Me: "10. Do you have Jake's moms number?" Lakhe: "I have his dad. Why?" Me: "Chris says he's going through something. I want to talk to his mom and find out if everything is okay. Also, I promised Julie a girl's night, so I was thinking perhaps of bringing the kids for a sleep over." Lakhe: "No." Me: "I'm not asking you." Lakhe: "You're pregnant and working. You have your own kids. Why do you need more stress?" Me: "I'm not stressed. I'm just having the kids over for one night in the weekend. I was thinking of collecting all the moms in the class and having a group chat to them about regular activities like this." Lakhe: "Just because of Jake?" Me: "Not just because of Jake but just getting to know each other and bonding with our kids. Giving mommy tips and such." Lakhe: "Am I gonna have to be involved?" Me: "No. It's just moms. We take care of the kids majority of the time anyway." Lakhe: "Now you're lashing out." Me: "You yelled at me before I could even explain to you!!" Lakhe: "Huh?" Me: "You threw me out like a piece of junk! Why Lakhe!" Lakhe: "So we just switch topics now?" Me: "Actually, get out." Lakhe: "No!" Me: "LEAVE!!" I screamed. He stepped back and stared. Sandile walked in the room. Sands: "Lakhe." He pulled him out. After a few minutes he came to check on me. Me: "I don't know what happened. A kind of rage took over me." Sands: "It's okay. Don't worry." Me: "It's not. I can't just snap at people. Where is he? I need to apologize." Sands: "No you don't. Did he apologize?" I shook my head. Sands: "Then he deserves it. Come sit and relax." But I couldn't relax. I hated yelling. I sat on the couch and was chatting to some of

the moms in Chris' school. They created a group. We needed each other. One of these days, I'll need help too. I'd like a friend also...

Evening came and I took Chris for his bath after dinner. I tucked him in and told him a bedtime story. He was sleepy. So I let him be. I went to Lam; his bath took much longer. He was energetic. It would be a miracle getting him to finally fall asleep. I took him to Nosi's room. Me: "Hey." Nosi: "Hi Spho." Me: "How you feeling?" She gave me her phone. It was another article. This was so infuriating. Me: "You need to ignore these things Nosi. These people don't have lives. You know you didn't kill your baby my angel. I know that. Your family knows that. That's what is important." Nosi: "How am I going to face them?" Me: "With grace. Your family name is powerful which is why they're paying attention to you. Focus on your school work and your projects. I'll have a word with your school HOD about this okay? Lakhe will be there too." Nosi: "Really?" Me: "Yes." She hugged me. Me: "Switch this off. Read a book to calm your mind and sleep okay? I'm here for you. Whatever you need, I'll be here. You're not alone." She nodded. I left her and went to look for Sands. He was watching TV in the lounge. Sands: "Hey Titty man." Me: "He refuses to sleep." He took the baby. Sands: "Go sleep. I'll take care of him." Me: "Sandile you did alot today." Sands: "I don't mind for you. Go. Me and Kyalami Estate are sorted." I went to my room and looked through my work for the last time. I was up to date at least. I'd met with the PR lady and she gave me pointers with writing the speech. I was terrified a bit. I really didn't want Robert's company which is why I never showed my face. Now that they know, investors are expecting me to show face. I don't want to but I have to. I crawled into bed, closing my eyes. Dumi is a real piece of work. Why would he do this? He could have waited until Monday morning. But noo, he had to go there Sunday afternoon and ruin my party. Piece of shit. He was supposed to be my friend, I'd never betrayed him before. I took care of him and fought for him. Lakhe wouldn't have even batted an eyelash toward him if it weren't for me. So why is he more loyal to Lakhe than to me? It ends today. I drifted off to sleep.

It's a crisp cold night. Dark and silent. He stood in front of Dumi's house. The wind blew strong and bold. Bolts of lightning flashed around. A cracking of thunder threatening to tear the sky in half. He. Stood. Still. Everything silenced down. No wind. No more thunder. An eery evil silence. His eyes came alight with red flames. His arms rising up his sides to the air and flames erupted all around the house. "BURN." He said.

I jolted awake from my sleep. My whole body was shaking. My heart hammering inside my chest. Me: "What did you do." "What needed to be done." A voice responded. Oh Dear God. I jumped out of bed and ran to the lounge. The TV was still on but Sandile and Lam were cuddled in the couch fast asleep in each others arms. I went to check on Nosi. She was sleeping as well. Chris was in his room also snoring. I dialed a number on my phone quickly. "Spho." He answered. Me: "Gray. Help me." Graham: "I'm coming." I waited on him shaking out of my shell. He arrived with Niny and Siya. Siya: "What's going on?" Me: "Dumi might be dead." Graham: "What happened?" Me: "I couldn't stop anything. All I saw was flames around his house. Then I woke up. I said 'what did you do' and a voice responded 'what needed to be done' I don't know what that means!" Siya: "I'll go over there and call for help if something is going on. Let's go Niny." They ran out. I was left with Graham. Gray: "Spho. It's him." Me: "Who?" He looked at my stomach. Me: "It's not possible!!" Gray: "That is the Unborn King of the full dark army. King Komander himself. He is capable of anything that's everything." I was shaking uncontrollably. Me: "Lets pray." Graham started with a hymn and praise song then we prayed. Me: " You are our keeper, O Lord, the shade on our right hand. Protect us from all evil and keep our soul. Guard our going out and our coming in. From this time and forever. Lord, I pray Your emotional, physical, and spiritual protection over my kids, over my family. And my friends. Keep evil far from them, and help them to trust You as their refuge and strength. I pray You will guard their minds from harmful instruction, and grant them discernment to recognize truth. I pray You will make them strong and courageous in the presence of danger, recognizing that You have overcome and will set right all injustice and wrong one day. Help them to find rest in Your shadow, as they live in the spiritual shelter You provide for them. I put Dumi and his family in your hands Dear Lord. Let no harm or evil come near them. Let them survive Father. Give them strength. I pray for their children My Lord. Guide them to safety Father. Cover them with the blood of Jesus Christ." ...

Tuesday, the next morning was when Siyanda came back with Niny. Sandile woke up from his slumber. I'd taken Lam from his arms only 3 hours ago. Siya: "They're safe." He confirmed. Siya: "Just shaken." Sands: "Morning. What you doing here so early, Siya? You do know Spho has a boyfriend right? He will not like seeing you here." Me: "Sandile, it's morning. Relax." Sands: "Who's safe?" Me: "Dumi. Siyanda, what happened?" Siya: "The time we got there the

house was in uncontrollable flames Spho. Two fire brigades were there. And the flames were not going off. So we prayed. Did you pray?" Graham: "All night long." Siya: "Thank God. The kids were at their grandmother's house with Zingi. I'm afraid if they were home they would have suffocated and probably died from the smoke. Dumi is in hospital. Shaken but alive." Sands: "Whaaaaat. Who did this!!!" Siya looked to the floor. Graham looked outside. Sands: "Spho!!" Me: "I didn't know! I just got a vision in my sleep Sandile." Sands: "This; does not leave this house. Are we clear??" He pointed at Siya and Graham. Sands: "That fire was an accident. Repeat after me." Siya: "It was an accident." Graham: "Agreed." Sandile looked at me. Sands: "Remind me not to get on your bad side. Last thing I need is getting burnt in my sleep. No offense." Me: "Should I go chec-" Sands: "No!! You go nowhere near him or that family. It'll raise suspicion." Siya: "Yeah about that. The cameras." Sandile gave him a deadly glare. Siya: "They show only a shadow of a man standing in front of the house. Almost like smoke." Sands: "At least they won't identify that with anyone. Where's titty man?" Me: "In his crib. I should get Chris ready for school. I have an appointment." How do you go on after such a night? Daily living? Thank God Zingi and the kids weren't home. I went to bath Christian and got him dressed. Chris: "Mama. Did you talk to Jake's mommy?" Me: "I'm going to do it today my angel. I promise." Chris: "I can't see him like that again. Please mama." Me: "I promise. I'll try my best." There was an urgency in his voice that I didn't like. Chris is a happy child. He doesn't really mind things. So when he's concerned for someone else, someone he doesn't even like; it's a big deal. Me: "I'll talk to her angel. Try and play with him also okay?" He nodded. I let him go eat breakfast while I showered quick. I would wear my white off the shoulder long sleeve dress made from thick cotton. It's length was just above my knee. I applied light make up. Just foundation, eyebrows done and lip gloss. Lam doesn't allow me to have lipstick on. I rolled up my sleeves and got him ready for his bath. He was more quiet than usual in his bath; I got him dressed in a white shirt and black ripped jeans. Me: "Your uncle is something else. Where did he get these jeans baby?" He smiled. Me: "Oh it's a secret? Okay." We were finally done and dressed. Chris: "Mummy!! Daddy's here." I carried Lam out to the kitchen. Lakhe was here in black jeans, white shirt and red sneakers. Red? Okay. Me: "Hi." Graham, Siya and Niny had left. Sandile was making breakfast. Where is my brother? Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "About yesterday.." Lakhe: "It's okay." I nodded. Me: "Triplets huh." I gave him Lam. Him and his kids were dressed the same. Lam: "Dada." Me: "Why can't you say my name then!" Lakhe laughed. Lakhe: "He only knows his Dada." Me: "Lammy I feed you." Lam: "Dada." Me: "Okay." No need hurting me some more. Lakhe: "What time is our appointment?" Me: "I already told you at 10." Lakhe: "Okay. Should I come pick you up?" Me: "No. We'll meet

there." Lakhe: "There's a meeting at Chris' school." Me: "I know. Late today." Lakhe: "I cleared up my day. I was thinking getting Chris from school at 12 as usual, come pick you and Lam up at work then go out as a family." Me: "That's not happening." Lakhe: "It's for our kids Spho." Me: "You yelled at me." Lakhe: "What was I supposed to do!! The way you went about this whole thing is dodgy!" Me: "You're yelling again." Lakhe: "Look. I'm doing the best I can for our children. The least you can do is meet me halfway!!" He was shaking with rage. Lakhe: "Masambe Chris." He gave me Lam and walked out. Me: "Bye my angel. I love you." Chris: "Love you too mummy." He ran out after his father. Me: "Do you think I'm being unfair?" Sands: "My opinion doesn't count babe. You need to do what's comfortable for yourself. You've been through a lot. You have to make yourself content now. Breakfast is ready." Me: "Where is Sibu?" Sands: "He went out with his lady friend." Me: "Lady friend?" Sands: "The one he works with. They went to see a concert then dinner and went to her place." Me: "Wow." I went to Nosi's room. Me: "Nosiphiwo." Nosi: "I can't." Me: "You can't what?" Nosi: "I can't go to school Spho. Not yet. Not after yesterday. Please don't make me." Me: "Okay. Only today but you're not spending it in this house. Get dressed. We're going to work." I went to wear my shoes and wig tying it in a low ponytail. I have to admit, I miss Lukhanyo. My heart ached for him. Did he really just walk out when I told him to? Okay I sound crazy. Maybe I should go apologize. But he had no right. How different am I from Lakhe if I won't let him explain? Okay. I'm going to his place after the doctors appointment. We are going to talk this through. Plus I need to know how that boy is doing. After breakfast we all got ready to leave the house. Sandile was still helping paint my work walls but gosh he was trying me. He literally painted his height and width on the wall yesterday and nothing else. It looked so crazy. Jan was already at the office working. Nosi helped Sandile with painting and I went to start my work. Tar came in and we had our meeting until 9:30 am. Sandile would watch Lam and I'd go to the doctor. I drove his car to my appointment. Lakhe was waiting outside, sitting on his car. We didn't talk as we entered the building. He was still mad I suppose. We had to wait a few minutes for the doctor to call us in. "Mr and Mrs Sobukwe. The doctor is ready for you." I got up and walked in. Lakhe behind me. Me: "Hello Paul. How are you?" Paul: "Great. Uhm.. again? You don't play do you?" He asked Lakhe, who smiled faintly. I got on the bed and the doctor assessed me. Paul: "5 months in. Looking absolutely healthy." Lakhe: "Boy or girl?" Paul looked at me. I nodded. Paul: "It's a baby boy. Again." He smiled. Lakhe couldn't help smile back but his phone rang and the smile disappeared. Lakhe: "Excuse me." He walked out. The baby's heartbeat was the only sound I could hear. I stared at him on the screen. My little baby. You can never be a demon mntanam. Mommy is going to fix it. I promise.

Once we were done, the doc helped me up without a word. Giving me my vitamins, writing notes in my folder. Lakhe walked back in. Paul went to get my baby's picture(ultrasound). Lakhe: "Dumi's in hospital." I nodded. Lakhe: "His house caught fire last night. Luckily the kids weren't home. His neighbor helped. He would have died." I stared at my tummy. Lakhe: "Can you hear me?" Me: "I heard you." Lakhe: "I know they're not your favorite people but Spho they just lost their home. They could have died. Everything they know, is gone. They don't have nothing." Me: "So I must take off what I'm wearing and dress Dumi now?" Lakhe: "Don't be ridiculous. What are you on about?" Me: "Lakhe if you're going to be here at these appointments, the least you could do is pay attention. You dashed out the minute your phone rang and didn't bother coming back to at least hear your son's heartbeat." I wiped my tears. Lakhe: "I never do anything right to you. Someone you used to call a friend almost died and you're worried about my presence." Me: "Dumi has a multimillionaire as a friend. I'm sure you'll be of great help." Paul walked back in. Lakhe stared daggers at me. Paul: "Great. So.. I'll see you at your next appointment?" I nodded, thanking him and walking out.

When I reached the car, Lakhe held the door closed with his hand. Me: "Please let go of the door." Lakhe: "Are we gonna do this forever? Spho, we're raising kids. Come on!" Me: "Kids you only have time for when it's convenient to you." Lakhe: "I cleared out an entire day to spend with you and them!!" Me: "One day? Just one? Did you see how fast you jumped out to answer your phone when we were checking up on our son? Did you bother to send a text yesterday morning when you couldn't fetch Chris? Lakhe, I'm not forcing you. Okay? Just don't try forcing things down my throat." Lakhe: "I can't stand seeing you cry." Me: "Let me go." Lakhe: "Okay but stop crying." Me: "I didn't steal your father's company." Lakhe: "Can we not do this-" Me: "No Lakhe. We have to do this. I didn't steal it. After the scandals broke out; I couldn't sit and do nothing. All the people I'd loved had turned their backs on me including you. I had their lives dug up and splashed out too. Like they did me. Your father stole my project Masilakhe. Something I created. You know how passionate I was about it. You were the first person I pitched to. I signed a contract with him and when I had trouble, he kicked me out immediately. Sars was going to find out sooner or later. I made it sooner and when the offer to buy the company arose I took it with both hands because I didn't want some shady crook to take it. I bought it, to rebuild it properly and to give it back to your father as a gift. It's in the contract I've signed. That's why I got rid of all the board members and only have a few left. They know it. Ask them. I was going to give it back. Even after the pain he caused me, I still love your

father. Your entire family. But every chance you get, you treat me like a criminal, like an outsider. You humiliate me every moment you grab. I don't understand. Wena ke mntu who knows me, is it in my character to be a thief? An illegitimate businesswoman? Have I ever done anything out of line that would compromise my career? No. But you grab the chance to destroy my reputation without batting an eyelash." I pushed him away. Me: "And you're not getting that company back. You made your bed." Lakhe: "Spho!" Me: "Don't touch me!" Lakhe: "Can you listen-" Me: "Did you listen? No. You are not getting in back. And that's that. Go tell your little investors, I said ANDIFUNI." I got in the car and drove off. The drive was not soothing my anger at all. I know I had to calm down. I just couldn't. Some 15 minutes later I pulled up at his gate. Pressing the intercom. "Hello?" I pressed it again and again. The gate opened. His Bentley was parked on the driveway. I parked next to it and stomped my way to the front door. Me: "Lukhanyo." I knocked. No answer. Kanti what was he up to? I opened the door and there he was leaning on the table with a suitcase on the floor. He was reading the mail looking all kinds of sexy in a powder blue 3 piece suit. His meaty thigh hanging on the edge of the table. I needed to focus and not be distracted by his sexiness. Me: "Lukhanyo Mzinyathi. I will not be ignored!!" Him: "Huh?" Me: "Don't huh me. I have been busting my ass for months trying to rebuild my reputation. I did everything I could to work twice as hard. Investors are starting to relax again. My companies are steady then you go and pull that stunt!! I will not allow it!" Him: "Uhm.. You're not talking to who you think you're talking to. I'm not Lukhanyo." Me: "Do not even try to piss me off any further." Him: "Lady. I'm not Lukhanyo. What are you doing in my house?" Me: "Are you being serious right now!!!!" I screamed. Him: "Calm down! Jesus put on your sneakers. Who are you!?" Me: "One fight and you act like you don't know me? You're garbage." I stomped out and drove off. "What the fuck just happened?"

Lukhanyo walked into his house an hour later. Lubb: "I called you an hour ago." Luks: "I was in a meeting Lubabalo. I told you that. Weren't you supposed to come back tomorrow?" Lubb: "What kind of nonsense are you up to? A crazy lady walked in here yelling at me. What did you!" Luks: "What crazy lady? Why do you always have to make shit up? Lubabalo, seriously our life is complicated enough. How was Cape Town?" Lubb: "You're not going to brush me off. Oh no, sir. I called you yesterday and you weren't okay. What's going on?" Luks: "Nothing." Lubb: "Lukhanyo. When you look in the mirror and look at me. Is there any difference you see?" Luks: "Not this again." Lubb: "Man. You've been acting weird. Distant. I asked Soma and Soso but they're not giving me answers. Thulani told me to ask you. What is going on?" Luks:

"Nothing." Lubb: "Okay. So everyone knows something that I don't. Is it about the lady that was here." Luks: "What lady is this?" Lubb: "A lady walked in here screaming about her reputation and investors. Short thing with a pretty face driving a Jeep." Luks: "Spho was here?" He took out his phone, hands shaking. Lubby grabbed the phone. Lubb: "So that's what you're hiding? Her?" Luks: "I'm not hiding her." Lubb: "Lukhanyo I'm not stupid. And I hate the implication that I am. Why didn't you tell me?" Lukhanyo looked away. Lubb: "Lukhanyo. I'm your triplet. The only one you're close to. We share kids, our houses, businesses, a life. How could you not tell me this?" Luks: "Because of that Lubabalo! I don't want to share her!" Lubb: "Wait.. so you think I'm going to go after her?" Luks: "Lubabalo. I haven't known Spho for long but I'm falling in love with her. I just don't want..." Lubb: "me to interfere." He nodded. Lubb: "I thought we were over this part of our lives Lukhanyo. I thought I'd made amends. I thought you'd forgiven me. But you and my friends can whisper behind my back about it." Luks: "Lubby-" Lubb: "No. It's not right. I fucked up by falling in love with Lihle but you can't possibly think I'd do it again. I was in love with her. I didn't do it deliberately to hurt you. Fuck." He grabbed his keys, Lukhanyo held his arm. Lubb: "Let go of me." Luks: "Lubabalo. We're not kids. Come on." Lubb: "I've been trying everything to make you happy. Everything Lukhanyo. For you not to trust me like this." Luks: "Would you trust me? If roles were reversed? You would have killed me Lubabalo." Lubb: "Then why didn't you? Why exactly am I still here if you're going to look at me like I'm a criminal?" Luks: "I'm sorry. I was going to tell you.." Lubb: "Look. I'm moving back to my house permanently-" Luks: "Lubabalo. Stop this shit!" Lubb: "Kanti what do you want!!" Luks: "God, Lubabalo just look at you!! It's a damn miracle how she even started dating me because I'm not in her league. When she threw me out yesterday, I realized it. I'm not good enough for her. I'm impulsive and insane to think she'd fall for me. She was married to a guy like you not so long ago. Millionaire, well educated and just your type-" Lubb: "So you thought she'd leave you for me?" Luks: "Don't make me say it." Lubb: "You're stupid Lukhanyo. You really are. There's a reason why she left the guy. She obviously wasn't happy. She came here looking FOR YOU. Nobody else. You're a millionaire with a degree now. What are you on about? Look... I'm not going to stand in the way of your happiness. I may joke around and all, but Lukhanyo I love you. I want you to be happy. If you so much as think I want your girl at any given moment then just cut off my balls and get it over with. Look at me, I'm talking to you. Hey!" Luks: "She hates me now." Lubb: "Yeah and I didn't make things easier. She thought I was you, so she screamed and left." Luks: "WHAT!" Lubb: "What? Hey, who was she married to?" Luks: "Give me my phone. You psychopath." Lubb: "I'm going to fetch Thuli from Lihle and Remy. You wanna come along and rile him up for a

minute?" Luks: "Leave Remy alone." He stared at his phone texting. Lubb: "You're right. I'm going to say goodbye to Matthew, he's going back to the farm tomorrow. You wanna come?" Luks: "I have to finish something at the office. I promise I'll come back on time." Lubb: "Okay. Are we gonna talk about her?" Luks: "What do you wanna know?" Lubb: "Who was she married to?" Luks: "Masilakhe Sobukwe." Lubb: "Oohh fancy. I play golf with him regularly." Luks: "Why are you lying?" Lubb: "Do you play golf?" Luks: "No. But I know for a fact you don't play golf with him." Lubb: "How would you know." Luks: "I've met him. He didn't even acknowledge my existence. Plus, you and me are identical." Lubb: "Fine. We don't play golf together. We're just in the same golf club." Luks: "You've never met him and you're not a member of any golf club." Lubb: "Okay Fine. Fine. I don't know what he looks like but I've read about his dad and I want to join his golf club." Luks: "Do you hear how crazy you sound? Anyway; his father no longer owns the investment company. He's broke." Lubb: "I read about that. I tried to buy shares but nope. Was closed before I could wink my buttocks. Do you maybe know who might have inside info?" Luks: "Lubabalo. Get off your crazy. I need to get to work. Sit still. I'm begging you. Stay away from that family. Don't leave this house until I'm back." Lubb: "Done." Lukhanyo walked to his car and drove off. Lubby took his keys and went out to the garage, getting into his blue Bentley then drove off.

I had to come back home. I couldn't carry on any longer at work. I was so depressed. The little energy I did have was reserved for Jake's mom. I finally got hold of her and we're meeting before the parent meeting at school. Sandile was still busy at my office but he brought me and Nosi home leaving us here. I wanted to soak in a bath with my Lammy and Unborn for a while then take a nap. What I'd do for a massage. Sibu: "So... how's things?" Me: "Crazy. I feel so guilty about Dumi." Sibu: "Why?" I whispered him the details of last night. Sibu: "Dumi dug his grave. A lesson needed to be learnt." I knew that was the Komander part of him that was speaking. As much as we hated it, that was who we are. As good as we tried to be, we still made mistakes. Someone knocked on the door and walked in. Me: "You again. Lukhanyo. I'm not talking to you." He stood in the kitchen with his hands on his hips. Him: "I am not Lukhanyo." He stared at Lam then my tummy. Him: "Oh my GOD. He downplayed this so much. I cannot believe that slimy piece of me!" He took out his phone. Me: "Hey!!" He looked at me. Him: "I'm Lubby. His brother. He didn't tell you?" Me: "First of all, Lukhanyo, this is childish." Lubb: "I cannot believe I'm doing this again." He took off his blazer and hung it on the seat then unbuttoned his waistcoat, hanging it also. Then proceeded to his shirt.

Me: "Why are you stripping!!" Lubb: "I am not Lukhanyo." He took off the shirt and stood in my kitchen with his pants hanging on his defined hip bone, his toned muscular torso with only one tat. What. The. Fuck. Me: "Huh?" I've never been so confused. Me: "Where's your tattoos?" Me: "Did you put make up on? Really?" Sandile walked in. Sands: "This is a common area for fucks sake! Spho, why does he get to be naked in the kitchen?" Lubb: "Who's this?" Me: "Wait! You say you're who??" Lubb: "Lubby. The adorable Lukhanyo." Me: "No." Lubb: "Okay. The sweet one." Me: "He said brother, not... a clone. You're him." Lubb: "Well, he's actually me. Just a little emotionally diluted. I came first. Now, the reason why I'm here is to clarify a few things-" Sands: "Put your shirt back on!!" Lubb: "Don't yell at me!" Me: "Hey!" Lubby put on his shirt struggling with the buttons. Lubb: "As I was saying. My bro is a little cray cray. But whatever reason that made you yell at him, isn't worth it. He's a nice guy. Really. I didn't know about you. What the fuck is wrong with this thing." He took it off to start over. Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "Are you fucking serious!" Lubb: "Is there a glowing skin alert in this house? Why is everyone walking in on me?" Me: "You're his twin?" Lubb: "Triplet. There's three of us. You won't really meet the third one because he lives overseas but yes, he looks exactly like this too. But your man, I call him Ink Man, is the only one that's branded. Okay? I don't want to come between you. He is in love with you but was worried that I'd steal his thunder because apparently, whooo I'm out of breath, can I get some water? This shirt is something else! Damn Versace. Apparently you were married to some caveman dodo with a fancy name-" Lakhe: "I'll knock you the fuck out." Me: "Stop it!" Lubb: "This him? Huh. Anyway, he was worried. But to be fair, I'm nothing like that. He's so uptight. But Spho, you have nothing to worry about. Bafo is a wonderful man and I am not interested in you. I came here to tell you that. We have a history. I fell in love with his wife. And I hurt him. I would never do that again. So if you ever have doubts. Just strip me butt naked and look for ink. Okay?" He took off his shirt again. Lakhe: "Fondin!!!" He roared. Lubb: "What? Are you jealous of my radiant skin? The trick is to moisturize with raw shea butter." Lakhe: "I don't care!" Me: "Lubby. Thank you for coming to clarify and explain yourself. That's not why I'm fighting with Lukhanyo. He knows what he did." Lubb: "Oh? So it's not me?" Me: "Not at all." Lubb: "Oh Thank goodness." He got dressed. Lubb: "Now I can carry on with my day." Me: "I should have known you weren't him. Your aura... it's very different. You're more wolf-like. Aggressive. Like a pin drop away from uncontrollable anger." He swallowed. Lubb: "I'm a very happy person." Me: "Are you? You have a dark energy in you." Lubb: "Me? Haha. Oh look, a spider." He pointed at the ceiling. We all looked up and he ran out.

I can't believe he actually ran out the house. Lakhe: "What the hell was that?" Me: "You heard him." Lakhe: "Spho. That was Lukhanyo." Sibuh: "His triplet." Lakhe: "That can't be right. No. There is no way in hell, three people can look that identical." Sands: "They do." Lakhe: "Have you seen them in the same room?" Sands: "No." Lakhe: "There you have it. That's one person masquerading as three." Me: "I believe him. Lukhanyo is much calmer than this one." Lakhe: "What if he's just got an alter ego." Me: "Why are you here?" Lakhe: "Spho, you can't trust that man. You said it yourself he's wolf-like." Me: "Why are you here?" Lakhe: "I want to talk to you." Me: "Okay." Lakhe: "I'm sorry." Me: "Okay." Lakhe: "Spho you can't hurt my dad like this. He's falling apart." Me: "Shame." Lakhe: "How much are you offering for it?" Me: "You have R3 billion?" Lakhe: "I don't even have one! Spho stop being unreasonable!" Sands: "That company is worth more than 3 billion Lakhe. Come on." Lakhe: "You are a traitor. Sandile, this is your family business. Your father's legacy. You're supposed to be on my side!!" Sands: "You just called me a traitor so I'm not sure if I want to be on your side. Besides, when your father fucked over Spho's project you were mute as a mouse. Your own wife Lakhe. You left her high and dry then had the audacity to not leave her a cent." Lakhe: "She said she didn't want my money." Sands: "After she heard you gossip with your then girlfriend, ONIKA, that you didn't want to fight about money nobody helped you earn." Lakhe: "You told him that?" He asked me. Sands: "Direct the questions to me sir. Dad is gonna have to find means or probably ask Spho for a job. But he's not getting that company back. No." Sibuh: "Here's what is going to happen. Tata Robert made a mistake. We all know Spho loves and respects him. She would never hurt him. He needs to admit he was wrong and Spho will further decide how much shares to sell to either you or him. Spho?" Me: "I'll think about it." Lakhe sighed. Sands: "It's the only proposal on the table. We love dad but he needs to know when to stop." Lakhe was frowning and pacing the living room. I got a text on my phone from Jake's mommy. 'Need to be earlier. Plz' I replied her: 'Okay. Same place in 30 minutes?' She agreed. Me: "I have to go." I announce. Lakhe: "Where you going?" Me: "I was married to you, I get that but you honestly need to dial the husband qualities down now." Lakhe: "Spho, I am worried about you. I have to be. We're not married but you're the mother of my kids. I need to know where you're going and with who. Dumi was attacked. Someone tried to kill him. What if that person comes after me too? I'm his only client so obviously they'll try to get rid of me or probably you to get to me." Me: "Trust me. You of all people are safe." If there's anything I know about this baby is that he loves his father to death. Lakhe: "How do you know that?" The

baby kicked in my tummy. Me: "Do you trust me?" Lakhe: "Look, I'm not the best example of trust. But Spheo you've done some shit. Admit it." Me: "Fine, I was wrong for buying your father's company but if I didn't-" Lakhe: "You could have told me-" Me: "We're not doing this again. Nobody is going to hurt you. I made that promise to you long ago and I will keep it." Sands: "Tshesa Queen. Am I in subsection A of this contract?" Me: "All of you are. Every single one of you." Lakhe: "I trust you. But where you going?" Me: "To Jake's mom. Something is going on with her." I gave him the baby. Me: "I'll be back for the parent meeting." Lakhe: "Okay. I'll wait here with Lam." Sands: "And me." Lakhe: "And Sandile." Sibu: "Hello?" Lakhe: "And Sibu." Me: "Okay. Don't wreck my house. I need to talk to you when I'm back. I'm already late now." Lakhe: "About what?" I went to the bedroom to change. I wore a red Adidas tracksuit. It was tight pants almost like leggings. I pulled them up my shin a bit so it looked like an ankle grazer. My white t-shirt was tucked in and the track top I fitted on hung a little off my shoulders. I zipped it up half way. If I wasn't a brand strategist and everything I'd opt for a fashion career. I love clothes. I loved playing with fashion. I tied my wig back in a ponytail and wore all white Adidas sneakers. Red lipstick to match. Lakhe: "You know that Porsche would complete your outfit." He walked in. Me: "Stop trying to buy me, you're not getting that company back." Lakhe: "I'm just saying." He stood by the door of my room. Me: "Why is that whenever you want something from me you have to seduce me or bribe me. Am I that gullible in your eyes?" Lakhe: "I'm not trying to seduce or bribe you Spheo. I just need you to be safe." Me: "I'll buy my own car. I promise it'll be brand new and up to standard." Lakhe: "Just take the Porsche." Me: "So you can dictate me?" I laughed. Lakhe: "I've never done that." Me: "I'm not taking the car. I don't want it." Lakhe: "How well do you trust these guys." Me: "Which guys." Lakhe: "Lukhanyo." Me: "I trust him." Lakhe: "And that bouncing ball that looks like him?" Me: "He can't harm me." Lakhe: "How did he even know where you live?" Me: "Lakhe, come on." Lukhanyo was the same, I never told him, he just appeared. Lakhe: "Fine. What is it you want to talk to me about?" Me: "You're making me late. Nosi is having difficulty at school. They were mocking her and creating rumors that she aborted and wrote articles and such. I think we need to talk to the school HOD about this Lakhe. This is bullying. What if it sends her to being suicidal? You know how cruel school kids are." Lakhe: "You're right. I'll go see him in the morning." I nodded. Lakhe: "Together?" Me: "No. Nosi is your sister. I'm just trying to help her. I don't want her to go through this alone. Your family doesn't pay attention Lakhe, especially you. She needs someone who she relies on to keep an eye on her. Your mom hasn't even tried to call her since Sunday. Is that normal?" Lakhe: "Okay! I guess that's why she and Sandile ran here in the first place. What happened, where did this incident occur?" Me:

"At school. She'll give you the details but Lakhe you need to follow this through." Lakhe: "I will. I promise." I couldn't tell Lakhe about the shooting, he'll go crazy and ban Lukhanyo away from us. Me: "Let me get going." Lakhe: "Spho, please." Me: "I'm not taking that car Lakhe. Leave me be." Lakhe: "You can't rely on Sandile-" Sands: "Why not!" Me: "I already met up with a rep from Mercedes. It won't be long now. Besides, Sandile has been real darling lately. He's even painting the office for me." I walked out to the lounge. Lakhe stared at Sandile. Sands: "Jealous?" Lakhe picked up a ring on the kitchen counter. It was the diamond ring from Sunday. Lakhe: "Forgot something." Me: "Was going to courier it to you." I collected my bag and phone. Lakhe: "It's yours Spho. All of it." I laughed and walked out. Me: "You are sooo predictable. Gosh." I drove to the restaurant where I was meeting Kirsten. Jake's mom. She was wearing a scarf and shades. If that's not a disguise, I don't know what is. Me: "Kirsty?" Kirst: "Hi. How are you?" I sat down and answered then ordered some juice. Me: "So what's up with the..." Kirst: "Spho. I don't even know you but... I feel like I can talk to you." Me: "Of course you can." Kirst: "When you called. Something said to me I needed to see you." I remember I was carrying Lam at the time and he was screaming like a madman. Me: "What's going on?" Kirst: "I've been married for 15 years." Jesus, Mary and Joseph. She seemed so young. I couldn't even hide my shock. Kirsten was undoubtedly gorgeous. Even with her disguise I could tell. She looked like she was around my age. Kirst: "I'm 29." She confirmed. I nodded. I knew it just slightly older than me but still that's young. So she married when she was 14? I was already enraged. Me: "Kirsten. How did you marry at that age." Kirst: "My parents. My husband's family was offering alot and my family didn't have much. So they took the opportunity and I was married off to him. He's 20 years older than me." I nodded. The waitress brought my juice and left us again. Kirst: "I fell pregnant at 16. Had my first child then. Thomas." She looked away then. Me: "What happened to Thomas." I couldn't shake the anger out my voice. Kirst: "He drowned and died." Something was scratching at my throat. Kirst: "Then I had Thierry." Me: "And him?" Kirst: "Car accident. Was riding his bike and someone drove into him." My heart was torn apart. Kirst: "Then I had Jake. I just couldn't.. I couldn't attach to him. Sooner or later, something will snatch him from me and I can't go through it again." I held her hand as she cried. Kirst: "Then my little girl, Karmen. She's so young and pretty but I can't Spho." I didn't even know what to say. Me: "Take off your shades." She took off the sunglasses and her right eye was swollen but covered with make up. Kirst: "An allergy." Me: "He did this?" Kirst: "It's just an allergy." Me: "He's hurting your kids. Jake is going through pain at school Kirsten. He's terrified. Isolates himself and wets himself. It's not okay." She cried into her hands. Me: "Where is Karmen? She at home?" She nodded. Me: "He beats

you and the kids?" Kirst: "Not the kids." Me: "But they watch. You think it's okay for them to see that? Jake is going to grow up with anger and hate, you want him to do that to his wife?" She shook her head sobbing. Me: "What about your daughter? She's supposed to go through this and stay strong when she's a wife?" Kirst: "I can't leave him. He'll take everything away. From the things he gave to my parents to my daily living expenses. All of it." I don't want to know where he lives. I can't. Me: "What do you want me to do?" Kirst: "I need you to pray for me." "No." A voice responded. She couldn't hear it. Only I could. Me: "Baby please don't." Kirst: "Huh?" Me: "You need to leave him Kirst. You need to leave him tonight." Kirst: "I need a few more days to clear my things. Please?" Me: "Tonight." Kirst: "I promise I'll do everything you say. Just a few more days." Me: "Fine but I'm taking the kids. I'll pick them up after the parent meeting tonight. I'm giving you two days to sort yourself out." She nodded. Me: "I was thinking of collecting all the moms and having a society where we can advise and help each other out." Kirst: "That sounds wonderful." Me: "I want you to be safe. We'll figure something out." ...

Lukhanyo walked in his house later that day from work dropping the keys on the counter. Lubby was in the lounge with their daughters. Luks: "What on earth are you wearing?" Lubb: "We're having high tea. Care to join us?" Luks: "My babies." Luhle: "Hi daddy." Buhle: "Join us." Luks: "I'm gonna get dinner started." Lubb: "I already ordered." He flipped the pink scarf over his shoulder while standing up. Lubb: "It's a ballet tutu." Luks: "Why is it on your waist?" Lubb: "That's where it's worn-" Luks: "No. Why are you wearing it!" Lubb: "We're having high tea. I told you. Besides. The girls need to practice their ballet recital." Luks: "You are so extra." Lubb: "Thank you. Tea?" Luks: "Is it real tea?" Lubb: "Of course it is. We're not a bunch of hippies." He sat down. Lukhanyo laughed and sat down. Lubb: "Girls, it's time for practice. Let's show daddy what you got." Babalo: "Are you gonna join us daddy?" Luks: "I'll just watch. Where are the boys?" Lubb: "Outside with Thulani." They stood in a line, Lubby in the middle the three girls by his side and they all did their dance routine. Luks: "Thulani!!" Thulz: "What?" He walked in and fell down laughing. Thulz: "Lubby come on!!" Lubb: "So you can wear a soccer kit to play with the boys and I can't wear a ballet tutu for the girls?" His arms on top of his head, twirling his body around in a circle. Luks: "He's right. In a way. My only concern is where did he get a tutu his size." Lubby lifted a leg and hopped with his girls. Thulz: "They practiced this all afternoon. Lukhanyo you need to stop him before people think he's gay." Luks: "What would people be doing in my house?" Lubb: "Hey, I saw Lakhe. Honestly? That's who you're scared of? Hayi Ta Luks." Luks: "Where did you meet Lakhe?" Lubby and the girls touched their

toes. Lubb: "At Spho's house obviously." Luks: "You went to Spho's house!!"
Lubb: "Yes. To explain myself." They finished their routine. Luks: "For what!!"
Lubb: "I don't want to come between you. I went to tell her that. And also
introduce myself. Now she knows there's more than one of you and she
knows I'm not Ink Man so she won't be mistaken. Besides, she said something
about my energy being dark and wolf-like. What did you tell her?" Luks: "I
didn't tell her anything. Take that ridiculous thing off, are those tights? God
Lubabalo. Take it off. I cannot talk serious with you like that!" Lulle: "You think
it's ridiculous daddy?" Buhle: "You don't like it?" Her voice quivering. Luks: "I like
it my angels. I like it on you. Not on daddy. He is a grown man." Buhle: "But
he's helping us." Luks: "Okay. I'm sorry girls, how about you go change, we're
going to see Matthew." The girls ran to their rooms. Luks: "Lubabalo, I told you
to stay in this house. Why you gotta do crazy things? What did you say to
him?" Lubb: "Nothing really. He's kinda uptight. The stick he shoved up his bum
is visible when he opens his mouth." Luks: "What did she say?" Lubb: "She said
I'm not the reason you two fighting. What did you do?" Luks: "Nothing. And
take this off." Lubb: "No. I like it." Thulz: "It's gay." Lubb: "There are plenty of
straight male ballet dancers!" Luks: "Lubabalo. I'm not taking you anywhere
dressed like that." Lubb: "Did you like the routine?" Lkhanya sighed and looked
at the ceiling. Thulani took a picture of Lubby. Thulz: "Sending this in the group
email." He clicked on his phone. The boys walked in the house and greeted
Lkhanyo. Junior staring at Lubby. Jun: "That looks awesome. Those are
Balenciaga right? Your tights." Lubb: "Of course." Lkhanyo stared at Thulani
with a tight face. Jun: "Classic." He walked to the kitchen. Luks: "You see what
you did?" Lubb: "I didn't do anyth-" Luks: "These things are rubbing off on
Junior! Take them off." Lubb: "Junior has been like that way before this. You're
making things hard for the child. Sit him down and talk. Staring at him won't
help. The world is already judging him, he's a teenager and he needs his
dads." Chuma: "What are you talking about?" Luks: "Get dressed Chucks, you
and your brothers. Uphi uLubambo." Chu: "Still outside." Luks: "Bring him in.
We're going to the second house." Chuma went to fetch his brother. Junior,
Bambo, Chu and Luyanda went to their rooms. Lubb: "So you have a child
and another on the way but decided to hide it? Hm?" Luks: "Lubabalo. Take
that thing off or I'm bringing scissors." Thulz: "When do we get to meet the
baby Lkhanyo?" Luks: "Say it louder, I want Lubambo to beat you with a
stick." Lubb: "You haven't told him? Shit I'm going back to Cape Town." Luks:
"Spho won't let me touch the child! Says it's too early." Lubb: "That's your
baby! She has no right!" He had his hands on his hips. Luks: "I met Spho last
week." Lubb: "And???" Luks: "I don't want to upset her. I love Spho. I love her
kids. Even the big ones. It's so crazy. I just want to protect them all." Lubb: "Big
ones?" Luks: "Lakhe has a brother and sister. They live with Spho. She's like their

mom. Takes care of them and everything. It is amazing. I can see it in her eyes when she talks about them how proud she is of it. She loves them. So, when I saw that boy taking pictures of Nosi, I fucking lost it. I shot him." Thulz: "Wait... back track a bit. What boy? Who's Nosi?" Lubb: "You shot him?" Luks: "Nosi is Lakhe's sister. She texted Spho, she was upset. We went there and found a mob of people insulting her, mocking her, calling her names and taking pictures. This boy was holding a camera, I shot him for it. He had no right." Lubb: "So that's why Spho is angry. Where is this boy?" Luks: "I got one of the guys to take care of him. Wounds and expenses." Lubb: "Babes you can't be shooting people for no reason. I understand your anger and spirit to protect are overpowering but you're a businessman now. Shareholder of several companies, owner of farms, a father. Lukhanyo, if this got out, the Internet would rip you apart. Social media has too much influence these days. I understand now why Spho is so angry. When I got back from there I decided to do a bit of research on the family. Doesn't Masilakhe have two brothers? There were two guys there. Anyway, her image was dragged for weeks. She lost her job with Rob's company which I think was a good thing considering how it crashed." Luks: "So you didn't get to the other part." Lubb: "No, I had to fetch the kids. What other part?" Luks: "Spho bought the company anonymously when it crashed, fixed it, rebuilt it and owns it. That's why it's doing so well." Lubb: "You are lying!" He took off the tutu. Thulani stared at his phone. Thulz: "No he's not. Shit." Lubby grabbed the phone and read it. Lubb: "Get me some pants." Luks: "You're not getting your hands on that compa-" Lubb: "I need her Lukhanyo!! She is my business soulmate!!" Luks: "Lubabalo!!" Lubb: "I can't hear you!!" He ran to his room. Thulz: "If I were you, I'd go fetch and hide her. He will pester her for that company until she can't breath." Luks: "What is wrong with him." Thulz: "So the investment company worth billions is hers. That girl can negotiate. How did her ex take the news?" Luks: "The last time I spoke to her she says he was pissed." Thulz: "Understandably so. So what's gonna happen now." Luks: "Don't know." Lubby was back, ready and dressed. Luks: "Lubabalo." Lubb: "Lukhanyo. I promise, no shady agenda. I've been wanting to expand my business interests for a while now. That company is listed. I beg of you to love me." Luks: "I said no." Lubb: "You're not the boss of me!" He screamed. Luks: "I'm telling utata." Lubby frowned. Luks: "Seeing that's sorted. I need to fix my mess. If she takes me back, we planned a formal introductory dinner. You're both invited." Lubb: "Oh goody-" Luks: "You're not allowed to speak business on that dinner." Lubby frowned. Luks: "I'll get the kids"..

I got back home in time. I know Lakhe was panicking but he hides it very well. I just needed to pee. Me: "We can go I just need a wee." I went to my bathroom. Sands: "Leave Titty man behind. I'll take care of him." Lakhe: "You'll see him later. I need more time." Sands: "Selfish." Lakhe: "Make your own babies. Where's Liz anyway?" Sands: "She's in Joburg for work." Lakhe: "And why aren't you at work?" Me: "I'm ready. Let's go." I came back. Lakhe: "Did you wash your hands?" Me: "Of course I did." Lakhe: "We're taking one car." Me: "I can drive myse-" Lakhe: "You've been running around all day long. You are sitting still in that passenger seat." Okay? I got in his car and we drove to Chris' school. Lakhe didn't fetch him because we'd be coming for the meeting either way. Lakhe: "So what did she say?" Me: "Her husband is abusing her." Lakhe: "So where do you fit in?" Me: "She wanted me to pray for her." Lakhe: "You go around sending memorandums about your abilities babe?" Me: "No. Obviously not. People are drawn to me. I can't help it." Lakhe: "Just be careful okay? I don't want drama around the kids." I looked out the window. Lakhe: "So I guess you aren't going to tell me that your boyfriend shot a kid." Of course Sandile told him. Me: "You would overreact." Lakhe: "He carries a gun in his car and you're telling ME I'd overreact?" Me: "Lakhe? I spent too much time with you today. You're literally grinding my tits. I don't want to snap. Please." Lakhe: "Is that why you're fighting with him?" Me: "None of your business." Lakhe: "Spho, you're a very set person who likes order. I know that the shooting isn't sitting well with your conscious. Especially because it's a kid." Me: "Maybe that's what turns me on now, ever thought about that?" The car fell silent. Even Lam in his car seat at the back was quiet. Lakhe: "Lukhanyo can't be around my kids if he can't control his temper like that. What if that bullet hit Nosi or you by mistake? What he did was wrong. And you know it. I don't want him near my children." Me: "Masilakhe. Your girlfriend is going to meet my kids just this weekend and you have the big audacity to say Lukhanyo can't meet them? Listen here. Once Lukhanyo and I are settled and ready, the kids will meet him. Andizova ngawe mna." Lakhe: "But Spho, Miya is not a killer!" Me: "What about you?" He stared at the road. Me: "Brave of you not to answer me." He sucked his teeth. After a while on silence. Lakhe: "You don't date thugs." Me: "Say one more thing about Lukhanyo. I dare you." Lakhe: "I'm driving! Our child is in the back!" Me: "Then don't test me." We drove in silence once again. Lakhe: "What you gonna do? About Jake and his family?" Me: "She doesn't want to leave him but I'm taking the kids tonight. I cannot for the life of me let them stay there a second longer." Lakhe: "No Spho. Your house is full already. You cannot adopt the whole world." Me: "So you'd rather I left them there in an abusive home Masilakhe? Children under the age of five watching their mother get beaten senseless?" Lakhe: "No." He sighed. Lakhe: "I'll take them." Me: "What?" I had to

look at him. No, he was serious. Lakhe: "You already do alot. You've got Sandile and Nosi and they don't want to come home to me so I'll take the kids to live with me until things are sorted." Me: "You'd really do that for me?" Lakhe: "You're a pain in the ass but I'm not going to let you suffer. I'll take Jake, his sister and Chris to live with me for a while. I'll also get a nanny to help out." Me: "Thank you Lakhe. Really. I appreciate this." Lakhe: "Sure thing." He parked at the school, I took Lam out his seat and we went in. Kirsten had brought two bags with her to the meeting. One blue and another pink for Jake and Karmen. I'd put them in the boot of Lakhe's car. Kirst: "You and your husband are such a blessing Spho." Me: "Ex husband. We're divorced. He'll be helping though. You trust him?" She nodded. Kirst: "I trust you both." Lakhe walked to us. Me: "Where's the baby?" Lakhe: "With his big brother. Hello." He greeted Kirsten. Kirst: "Hi." Lakhe: "So... we're almost done there." Me: "Okay. Kirsten, you can still come with me." Kirst: "I'll be okay." Lakhe: "You know he's gonna kill you right?" I wanted to kick him. Lakhe: "Where will you say the kids are?" Kirst: "I'll tell him they're with my parents." Lakhe: "Do you have my number?" She shook her head. He pressed his number on her phone. Lakhe: "When you want to speak to the kids, call me. If he tries to hit you, call me. Don't think twice." She nodded and went to say goodbye to her kids. I got Lam in his seat and the three kids beside him. Lakhe drove us home. Me: "Thank you Lakhe." Lakhe: "Does my kindness make you want more of my kids?" He smiled. Me: "Euw. No." Lakhe: "We've still got one on the way, so don't say Euw too quickly." I played some radio and relaxed in the seat. So tired. Jake and his sister were quiet in the back. She was so beautiful. Just like her mom. Big Green eyes just like her brother. When we drove into my street, Lukhanyo was parked outside in my driveway. I knew it was his Bentley. His was black, his brothers' was blue and big. I wonder if the third triplet also had a Bentley. Lakhe: "Mxim. Where am I supposed to park?" Me: "Lakhe please don't start drama." He mumbled something, getting out of the car. I took Lam out his seat and we went inside. Sandile, Sibu and Lukhanyo were seated in the lounge in utter silence. So nobody cooked. Me: "Good evening." Lukha stood up and smiled then stopped when he saw Lakhe. Me: "Bhuti can we order something for dinner." Sibu: "Already done. I'm going to fetch it." He grabbed his keys and left. Why was it so quiet? Me: "What are doing here?" Luks: "Spho, I'm sorry." Lakhe: "hmpf. Spho, I need Chris' things." Me: "He has clothes in your house." Lakhe: "We might need more." Me: "Okay. I'm tired of this. Sandile please take the kids, I need to speak to Lakhe and Lukhanyo." Sands: "I need to hear this." Me: "Sandile please-" Sands: "I always miss out on good gossip." He took the kids out for a walk. Lakhe: "I'm not a child, I don't need talking to." Me: "No you don't. Lukhanyo is my boyfriend. You don't have to like him but at least try to accept him as I accepted Miya. Lukhanyo,

Lakhe is the father of my kids, he will be present in their lives and mine because we are raising children together. Is there a problem?" Lakhe: "Yes. Why did you shoot a kid? For what!! Why would you be traveling with a gun in your car ready to go off any minute!! That's irresponsible! How am I supposed to trust You with my kids!!" Lukhanyo stared at him. Me: "Your tone Lakhe." Lakhe: "Fuck my tone! If I was the one going around shooting people, you'd have my head on a stick!!" Me: "Yes, but we're trying to solve this. Not fight." Lakhe: "I don't trust him Spho. I don't! What if you'd shot my sister? Or the mother of my children?" What was I trying to do bringing them together. Lukhanyo just stood there and stared at him without a word. Me: "Lukhanyo, is there anything you want to say?" Luks: "To you. I'm sorry I was irresponsible Spho. I didn't think. I love you. I love your childr-" Lakhe: "Please!!" Me: "You had your chance to talk Lakhe. Carry on Lukhanyo." Luks: "I love your children. I love your siblings. I'll take care of them and protect them like my own. Spho, what I did was wrong. I shouldn't have shot that boy but when I saw that camera in his hand, mocking Nosi and taking pictures.." he turned away from me and shoved his hands in his pockets. Luks: "He had no right to violate her like that." Lakhe folded his arms. Luks: "I'll remove the gun from the car. I've taken care of that kid and his expenses-" Lakhe: "You killed him?" Luks: "I didn't kill him. I took him to the doctor. Spho, I only answer to you. I only apologize to you. I'd never put you or your kids in danger. Ever. I'll never do something this stupid again." Lakhe: "And the other you? You know be was in here this afternoon, walking around naked?" A flash of pure rage was written all over Lukhanyo's face. Lakhe was trying to provoke him again. He probably Googled the history between them and why am I the only person who never Googled the triplets? Lakhe: "Is that what you do? Swap yourselves around and trick women?" Lukhanyo was ready to attack, I held him back looking into his eyes. Luks: "What did he do." Me: "He came to explain himself. He only took off his shirt and jacket to show me he's not you because I didn't believe him at first. He didn't try anything." He calmed down. Lakhe: "Your temper is a problem." Me: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "What? Are you going to have to hold him back everytime he gets mad?" Me: "Lukhanyo can control himself. He doesn't need anyone to hold him back. Now I'm tired of this bickering. Both of you are going to have to find middle ground. I'm not going to keep putting out fires." Lukhanyo sat down on the couch. Lakhe was standing in the lounge huffing and puffing. Lakhe: "Tell Sandile he must bring back my kids, I'm leaving." Me: "Okay but Lakhe, I'm trying here. I'm not going to keep fighting with you both." Lakhe: "He doesn't even address me!" Me: "Lukhanyo why don't you talk to Lakhe?" Luks: "I'm not here for him." Me: "Please talk to him." Lukhanyo looked at Lakhe. Lakhe stared back. It's like standing between two dragons. Luks: "I apologize." He finally said. Lakhe: "I don't like you-" Me:

"Masilakhe man!!" Lakhe: "Let me finish. I don't like you Lukhanyo. I don't have to but you're not bringing guns near my children. I will fight you. Do you understand me?" Luks: "Do you know how to fight?" Lakhe: "Yambona ke Spho? He's provoking me!" Me: "Why, for once, can't I be happy and stress free? Both of you keep saying you care about me but I'm trying to accommodate everyone and all you do is spit in my face back and forth. Why can't I be happy?" I walked to my bedroom. Lakhe: "Spho is pregnant with our last born-" Luks: "Your last born." Lakhe bit back his anger. Lakhe: "I don't want to upset her." Luks: "I'm sorry. That was uncalled for but I won't hurt Spho. Or your family." Lakhe: "You better fucking not. This is your one and only chance. You hurt any one of them and I'll slit your throat. Do you hear me?" Luks: "I'm the type of cat you'd have to kill three times. And then twice more. Then finally four more times. Ta Luks is what we call a multiplication in this town. You can't come for me and expect the city to let it go. But don't worry. It won't ever come to that." Lakhe: "Bet." Luks: "My life. We done here?" ...

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Lakhe walked in my bedroom. Me: "Lakhe I can't anymore. Please." Lakhe: "I know. I'm not here to fight. I'm sorry Spho. I don't want you to be stressed. I spoke to Lukhanyo." Me: "Threatened him?" Lakhe: "No. Well yes, that's a universal male language. He understands it. I'm not going to fight with you or him. I just want what's best for my children but if he even-" I stared at him. Lakhe: "I'm sorry. It'll take some getting used to I guess. I still don't like him don't force me to." Me: "I won't. Just try and be civil." I breathed in exhaustion. Lakhe: "Spho? You look a little sick." Me: "I think the pregnancy is catching up now. I'm craving stuff." Lakhe: "Can I get you anything?" Me: "No. I'll be okay for now. Thank you." Lakhe: "Sandile is here with the kids. I'll be leaving now. Please call me if you need anything. Don't stress yourself.." Me: "Aren't you angry at me anymore?" Lakhe: "I'm fucking pissed. I'm caught between my dad and him being sick, then you and the pregnancy. I'm trying my best to keep you both. I don't want you to lose the baby. I don't want him to die. So I have to put my feelings aside and fix things." Me: "I'm not giving you the company." Lakhe: "I don't know why you're being difficult. I'll talk to you later okay?" Me: "Bring me Chrissie cakes. I want to say goodbye." Just then he barged in. Me: "Hey baby." Chris: "Hi mummy. Is Jake gonna live with me?" Me: "Yes. I need you to be well behaved and kind to him and his sister. Can you do that for me?" Chris: "Yes mummy." Me: "Okay. Mum is a little tired, so daddy is going to take you to his house for a while. I promise to visit soon." Chris: "Are you sick?" Me: "No my angel. Just tired." Chris: "Okay. I'll video call

you every day." Me: "Thank you baby." He kissed me and fetched his bag. Chris: "I miss you mummy." Me: "I miss you too pumpkin. I love you." They all left with Lakhe. Likhanyo walked into my room with Lam. Me: "Who." Luks: "His dad gave him to me. Relax." I climbed in bed. Me: "So you two are besties now?" Luks: "Hardly. He'll be Lubby's bestie. My brother will have the time of his life making your ex unhappy. That's his super power." I chuckled. Me: "He's a character. Can you believe he pointed at a ceiling to say there's a spider-" Luks: "And he ran out right? When he escapes awkward situations that's his exit. You won't believe when I walked in the house today what he was busy with. Dressed in ballerina clothes and having high tea with our daughters. Imagine." I laughed. Me: "Don't lie." Luks: "Awumazi uLubby wena. He goes over and beyond the required amount of extra. Literally dresses up for everything. Two years ago, he bought a horse and a dog. Calls it our son, Matthew and our daughter, Thulisa. He has outfits he puts on just to go play with the horse." Me: "Probably looks like a horse rider right? With the cap and everything." Luks: "Now you know who you're talking about." I couldn't help laughing. Me: "But you're probably happy, living with that energy." Luks: "Happy and exhausted. There's no pause button there." Sandile knocked on the door. Me: "Come in." He stood at the door. Sands: "Sibu brought dinner." Me: "Okay. I'll be out in a few." Sands: "I'm taking Nosi out for a movie also." Me: "Thank you Sands." Sands: "Can I take Titty man?" Me: "No. Titty man needs to sleep tonight. Plus, babies and cinemas aren't a good match." Sands: "True." Me: "Where's Boogie?" Sands: "I took him to puppy camp." I stifled a laugh. Me: "Puppy camp?" Sands: "Yeah. His mom booked it for him. He'll be back on Thursday." Me: "Sandile what's puppy camp?" Sands: "A camp for puppies Spho. He learns how to jump through hoops, roll around, sit and stuff. His teacher sent me pictures. Look." I stared at his phone trying to figure out what the hell was puppy camp. Me: "Okay. He looks happy." Sands: "With a hint of boredom, he misses his daddy." Me: "Of course he does. You gonna stop feeding him Hennessy shots?" Sands: "He likes it. I mix it with-" Me: "Sandile." Sands: "Fine. Anyway, he's going to day care next week." Me: "Day care?" Sands: "Geez Spho. Yes. I'm busy with work stuff and he gets bored alone at home. So I found a school for him. Why are you looking at me like that?" Me: "No reason. You discussed this school with his mommy?" Sands: "Obviously. He okayed it." Me: "He?" Sands: "Fez. He's Boogie's mom. You know this." Me: "Actually, now this whole conversation is making sense. What does Liz say about this?" Sands: "We co-parent. She loves Boog and she's cool with Fez. My life is sorted." Me: "That's great to hear. I may need your tips." Sands: "Later. Hey, about what we spoke about." He closed the door. Sands: "Did you think about it?" Me: "I did. Sandile, I think you should sell it to Lakhe. He's trying to balance everything. Another hit won't be a good idea." Sands:

"I'll make him the first offer. If he doesn't take it Spho, I'm moving forward." Me: "Your father being the second offer. Then we can talk afterward." Sands: "Fine. So long, I'll send you the contract to look over with Mtharara. I know he's a wizard with those things." Me: "Who is that?" Sands: "Tar. Oh and did you know he and Jan, your assistant, are a thing?" Me: "I didn't. I suspected though." Sands: "Well, it looks serious. Also, bafo, that's what your brother calls you right? What's up with your business partner? Giovanni. Listen here, he better not be trying some shady shit. Fez does not need the stress and if he dare bullies him, I will dig him a personal hole in the ground all the way down to Satan's living room. Please relay this message." Luks: "I will." Sands: "Thanks. Spho, I'll see you tomorrow, I Love you mummy. Oh and Sibuh has a date. Come dress him, I can't watch this." He walked out. Lukhanyo broke into a laugh. Luks: "And I live with crazy? There's a day care for puppies? I need to steal this and suggest it to Lubby. He has the idea that I'm not interested in our fur kids." Me: "You want to take Thulisa to puppy school?" Lukhanyo laughed. Luks: "I have to now. Since it's a thing." Me: "You'll probably get enough brownie points to drive the Green Lantern." Luks: "I wish. So him and Fez?" Me: "They're best friends. Sandile is friendly with unlikely people. He even befriended his ex's husband once. He's a good person, if you dig deep enough." Luks: "Didn't know you could be best friends with a gay nigga. Doesn't he hit on him?" Me: "Not anymore. Fez is now dating Gio." Luks: "So in the beginning, he did." Me: "Well, yes. Sandile doesn't really mind. He's comfortable with himself enough to trust Fez." Luks: "So I'm not comfortable with myself? I don't want gay niggas near me." Me: "Do you have a reason why? They're not attacking you. They're just friendly. All you have to say is, you're not interested and keep it moving. I hate how straight men get all aggro and start beating them for being human. It's disgusting." Luks: "I hear your point. Look, he's sleeping." He showed me Lam. Me: "Damn. I wanted to bath him first." Luks: "You can do it while he's sleeping." Me: "You don't know King Lam." He's exactly his father when it comes to sleeping. He will scream like a madman. Me: "Just let him sleep." Luks: "You're being dramatic. I've done this over million times." Me: "Knock yourself out Tata Luks." He put Lam down on the bed then went to mix his bath water bringing his little tub in the room. I had to see this. Luks started to undress Lam until only his diaper was left. It's about to go down. Luks: "See? He's still asleep. He'll be fine, I'm gentle." Lam opened his eyes. I didn't want to laugh. Luks: "Hey big boy." Lam didn't even try to smile, he started screaming. Instantly. Me: "Good luck I said." I walked out to help Sibuh.

I helped Sibü with his outfit. Me: "So where are you going?" Sibü: "Is that Lam screaming? Is he okay? I can feel the house shake." Me: "Yes. Likhanyo's trying to bath him." Sibü: "Spho." Me: "He was sleeping. I tried to warn Luks but he didn't listen. This is a cute shirt." Sibü: "Uhm.. yeah. I haven't worn it yet." Me: "Looks expensive." Sibü: "It's not." I felt the fabric. Me: "Uhm.. yeah it is. Look at you, cloth man." I laughed at him. Sibü: "Stop it." KK was written on the tag. He took the shirt. Me: "Wear it." Sibü: "I can't." Me: "Come on Sibü. You always trying to dim yourself down. You deserve to look good and get out there." Sibü: "Just..." Me: "What?" Sibü: "You're gonna hate me." Me: "Sibü. That's not gonna happen." Sibü: "Kadir came to me." Me: "When?" Sibü: "When I left the country. After the whole thing with you breaking them off and He almost died." I nodded. Me: "What did he want?" Sibü: "I was struggling. Financially. I didn't even have enough to come home." Me: "Why didn't you call me?" Sibü: "With what Spho? The job I had there wasn't that great." Me: "So what happened." Sibü: "He helped. Gave me a whole lot of money. Gifts including this ridiculously expensive shirt, it's custom made. Hence, KK initials with matching cufflinks." Me: "So... KK being Kadir Komander?" He stared at me. Me: "Sibulelele!" Sibü: "I'm sorry." Me: "You lied to me." He closed his eyes, looking away. Me: "How could you do this?" Sibü: "Spho I love you. You're my baby sis-" Me: "Don't!! Don't even dare. You kept this from me!" Sibü: "I tried to tell you but I couldn't. What was I supposed to do Spho?" I actually don't know. Sibü: "Spho, I could've died. The only thing I wanted was to come back home. I gave him back the majority of the money. I bought the restaurant. I'm working on paying him back. All of it." I was so disappointed. Sibü: "Please don't hate me." Me: "You're working for my opposition. The very person I'm fighting." Sibü: "I'm not working for him." Me: "Connected to hi-" Sibü: "He's our father Spho!! There's no way not to be. I'm sorry. I fucked up okay? Don't you think it's enough pain for me to live with the fact that I'm the Heir of the most ruthless man walking the planet? I don't have anyone to talk to about this. I can't let anyone know. And you hate him just enough that if I even mention his name, you're pissed. I'm sorry. Okay?" Me: "How much do you owe him?" Sibü: "I gave him majority of the money back but I owe him about 80 million now." Me: "Okay. R80 million is doable. I can sell the-" Sibü: "No. It's not! I won't let you." Me: "I won't let YOU be in his debt!" Sibü: "What's the worst he can do to me? He needs me to be alive and well Spho! Stay out of this. I can handle it." Me: "No!!!" Sibü: "SPHO." His eyes warning. Me: "I'm trying to help-" Sibü: "I SAID NO!!!!" He roared. The house went still. He grabbed his keys and stormed out. Likhanyo stood in the passage. His forehead drenched with sweat. Me: "Where's my child." Luks: "Asleep." I went to the nursery and checked up on a sleeping Lam, half dressed. I buttoned him up and let him be. Luks: "He's a man. He has pride. Offering to pay for him is kinda offensive." Me: "You were

eavesdropping in my family drama?" Luks: "You were yelling at each other, so it's public news." I sat down. Me: "I don't want him to be tied to that guy." Luks: "He's genetically tied to him already baby. I don't care if my son and I fall out but if he needs help I'll be right there for him." Me: "Kadir is not the type of person you want help from. He's always ready to collect his debt. If you can't pay him, your soul would be sufficient." Luks: "Can't really steal a Komander soul from a Komander." Me: "Can turn him into a full dark demon though." Luks: "Spho. Leave your brother alone. He can take care of himself. You can't save the whole world. Technically, he doesn't need saving." Me: "bu-" Luks: "Did you hear the last words out his mouth? Or perhaps his tone? Why do you want to probe further? You'll push him right into his arms." I folded my arms. Me: "Fine." I stared over at Lam's crib. Luks: "He's amazing." Me: "You panicked." Luks: "I really did. He couldn't stop screaming and to be honest, I cried a little too." I giggled. Luks: "but he's amazing Spho. All I had to do was stare into his eyes. The most amazing thing happened." Me: "You stopped crying?" Luks: "Well yes... but his eyes, they captured my soul. I became calm and couldn't break contact and then he just stopped. I feel like he trusts me." Me: "He does. You, Sandile and Lakhe are the only people that can calm him down. Not even I can do it to be honest which is why I kind of dumped him on you." Luks: "I refuse to believe it." Me: "Best believe it babe. I just trick him with a titty and that's it. He folds. This is why Sandile calls him Titty man. You did good." He sat next to me. Luks: "Thank you." Me: "Are you hungry?" Luks: "A bit, yes." Me: "Lets ha-" his phone rang, he ignored it without even checking. Me: "You not gonna get that?" Luks: "It's Lubby." Me: "How do you know." Luks: "He assigned himself this ring tone." Me: "Okay. Sibuy ordered some food from his restaurant and it's in the kitchen, they make the best pasta-" the phone rang again. Me: "Please answer him." Luks: "He's disturbing." Me: "Baby, please. Maybe somethings wrong." He answered the phone. Luks: "Bafo." Lubb: "Hi!! For a second I thought you were ignoring me. How are you?" Luks: "Great. You?" Lubb: "I'm wonderful. Listen, are you coming home? I'm making dinner." Luks: "I feel like you're tryna guilt me into something." Lubb: "Don't be ridiculous. I just want to cook you food." Luks: "Okay. I'll be home tomorrow." Lubb: "Lovely! I'll cook tomorrow too. You'll bring Spho right?" Luks: "I knew it. I knew you wanted something. No Lubby. I'm not bringing her." Lubb: "Lukhanyo. I'm trying to know my twin in law. Okay? I want to cook for her. Ask if she likes fish or steak? Oh wait, she can't eat fish, how does she like her steak? I'm having Mike fly them in from Cape Town. It'll be the best in the country." Luks: "Lubabalo Morrison." Lubb: "Yes?" Luks: "NO." Lubb: "Oh come on Lukhanyo. You left me by myself with all the kids. Thulani is out gallivanting and I have to keep everything under control. The LEAST you could do, is bring Spho and her cheese puff over tomorrow for a special dinner. I'll be making

my special meal. The one you said you loved. Remember? Okay thanks bye." He hung up. Lukhanyo frowned at the phone. Me: "Everything okay?" Luks: "No. He's a master manipulator. He wants me to bring you to dinner tomorrow." Me: "Why?" Luks: "He was reading the articles and I kind of told him about the sale of the investment firm. He wants it. Spho, he's not going to stop. You need to resist. He will buy you with everything. If he could, he would actually buy heaven from God himself and put it in your back yard. You need to avoid him at all costs." I laughed. Me: "I don't think Lubby is the kind of man you can simply just avoid. Let's go eat." ..

Wednesday morning was a little stressy. I'd slept but not that much because I kept thinking of Sibuy and where he could be since he didn't come home. I'd hate to think he went to Kadir. Something kept telling me perhaps he's with his lady friend again. I just couldn't keep calm. Luks: "You didn't sleep." Me: "I did baby." Luks: "No you didn't. Don't lie. Is it me? Are you uncomfortable because we're moving too fast?" Me: "We've only just shared each others bed. Nothing more. It's nowhere near fast. I'm okay with us. I'm just stressed about Sibuy. Why can't I have one night drama free for once?" Luks: "You invite drama. Stop thinking about it. Stop thinking about him. Give yourself a minute to relax." Me: "Okay. From now on. I'm only focusing on myself." I jumped up and ran to the bathroom, throwing up in the toilet. Great. Morning sickness hello. Luks: "Baby?" I flushed and brushed my teeth. Luks: "I'll get you something to help ease the symptoms okay?" Me: "It's okay-" Luks: "Spho. Let me." I nodded to make him go away. I took a hot shower and went to my room after. Lam was snoring happily in his crib in the nursery. I wish to be him. I needed some sleep. I took this time to clean a bit and get dressed. Lukhanyo came back in 30 minutes. Luks: "Uyaphi?" Me: "Work." Luks: "You're sick. You're not going anywhere." Me: "I'm not dying. I have a meeting with Tar and-" Luks: "No." Me: "And the Benz rep." Luks: "Spho. I'll take care of that." Now he was annoying me. Me: "I'm going to work Lukhanyo." He sighed. Luks: "Fine. I just wanted to spend the day with you before the dinner." I held his face. Me: "I chose you. I love you. I need you to not worry about anything okay? I'm not leaving you." Luks: "You love me?" Oh shit. I actually said it out loud? Me: "That was supposed to be in my head but now it's out there. Yes." Luks: "I love you more." He kissed my lips. Luks: "And... I want to hold you in my arms all day long but you gotta work so I'll make random drop by's." Me: "And you'll give me my hugs?" Luks: "Lots." Me: "And take your armed generals away from my building?" Luks: "Not happening. I need you to be safe at all times. Spho, this makes my heart rest easier knowing there are people out there trained professionally to look after you." Me: "But lukh-" Luks:

"No. You trusted me when you told me about your family and I trusted you back to protect me. Now I need you to trust me to protect you too. I have no doubt you're amazing with a sword baby but I'd rather you kept your hands clean and pretty like they are now." Me: "Okay. Fine." Luks: "Thank you Ma'Komander wam omhle." I blushed, hugging him. He was always smelling so good. I took a big whiff of him. The good stuff. Me: "Hmm." Luks: "Don't swallow me." Me: "You smell so good." Luks: "Thank you but I haven't taken a bath." Me: "Still." I licked his chocolatey skin under his shirt. Me: "Hmm." Luks: "Baby?" Me: "Just one more." I pressed my cheek against his warm skin. Luks: "Baby, you're turning me on. I don't want to jack off in the shower." Me: "Why not?" Luks: "I'm Saving myself for you." Me: "And if I help you?" He smiled. Luks: "I'm not letting you. Undivimbile wena on Saturday night. It's my turn." Me: "But I want to help you." Luks: "Haha. Didn't I warn you I'm stingy?" Me: "Okay... it's fine... be stingy." I pulled away. My gown slipped to the side flashing him my full breasts. Luks: "Fuck." Me: "Go take your shower stingy man." Luks: "I..." he fumbled. His eyes fixated on my boobs. He took one step closer. Me: "Hmm?" He pulled of his shirt over his head throwing it on the floor. Goodness, his tattoos. I pressed my thighs together. The bulk in his pants very visible. He pulled me to him, kissing my body and gently laying me down on the bed. His mouth went to my nipples, rolling his tongue on each one. Luks: "Fuck." He held my tummy. Luks: "You're so fucking beautiful." He kissed my lips again then stopped. Luks: "I want you so bad but I just don't want to rush us baby. This feels amazing." Me: "Are you serious?" His eyes were hovering all over my body. Luks: "Yes. Your curves. Fuck." He kissed my left ribcage. Then the side of my breast to the nipple and in between my breasts and down. Luks: "Baby." Me: "Hm?" Luks: "I want to marry you." I laughed out loud. Long and hard. He didn't find it amusing at all. Me: "Lukhanyo. We just met. Come on." Luks: "I know that. Obviously I don't mean marrying you tomorrow. Just, eventually. Soon." Me: "Babe." Luks: "Don't answer. I'm not in a rush." He was still staring at my body. Me: "What is it? You're scared of the baby?" Luks: "Not really." His hand was holding my bump firmly rubbing it. Luks: "I don't want to hurt him. He's so peaceful in there and just happy." Me: "Okay. We can wait. Is that okay?" Luks: "Yes." He breathed. Luks: "But you're gorgeous. Your skin feels like silk." He kissed my tummy. He was really fascinated with what he was doing. I haven't had some dick since this baby, I honestly don't know anymore. My pregnancy hormones were a nightmare. I wonder if it's safe to use a dildo? Not too big of course, not a vibrater either. Just a normal rubber dickie. I needed to ask my doctor Paul, I'll call him later. Something needed to give. Luks: "Baby?" Me: "Hm?" Luks: "Do you think in a few years, maybe when the baby is about 2 or 3, we can try?" Me: "Try what?" Luks: "I want twin boys. Like me and Lubby. Identical and adorable." I kissed his nose. Me: "I'm not having

another baby for at least 5 more years and even then, I want a daughter. That's it." Luks: "I'll ask every week until you say yes. Let me set a reminder." He pulled out his phone and set a reminder for every Wednesday morning. I laughed. Me: "Go bath. I need to get dressed and to bath Lam. He'll be awake soon." Luks: "I might be a while." He whispered. My cookie throbbed. This had to be torture. Luks: "What's wrong?" Me: "Nothing baby. Uhm. Okay. Take your time." He held my chin. Luks: "It's cute that you can't lie to me." Me: "I'm... just thinking about work." Luks: "Try again." I swallowed. Suddenly very embarrassed and ashamed. Luks: "Spho you can trust me." Me: "No I'm okay." Luks: "Sure?" Just one finger would suffice. Gosh, the thought drenched me even more. Me: "Yes baby." I couldn't look at his eyes, he would know I'm lying. I opted for his chest, which made things worse. Luks: "My love." My eyes darted to his. He kissed my lips slowly. His hand snaking up to cup my breast. He stopped and looked at me. Just kill me. Get it over with. My son started his morning wail. Finally. My focus picked up and I ran to him tying my gown. Me: "Hey pumpkin." He stopped and smiled. Me: "Good morning my sweet boy. Say hello to your little brother." I picked him up and hugged him. Kanti noo, Lam made a poopoo and it was hella. He needed to be washed. I got his bath water while Lukhanyo hopped in the shower. I washed my baby up and dressed him. Lam: "Dada." Me: "Every morning baby? Really? You're hurting me." Lam: "uhumm.." Me: "Finally. A second word! Say mmm." He giggled. Me: "It's not funny. I need you to say mmmamaa." He chewed on his fist. Me: "I hope your brother is sweeter." "Am I?" My heart jumped. Lam froze. Me: "I love you both. With all my heart." Lam started screaming hysterically trying to breath. Me: "Lukhanyo!!!!" I picked up the baby, praying loudly and crying. "Just kidding." He chuckled. Lukhanyo ran to me with a towel around his waist. Luks: "What is it?" I rubbed Lam's back as he calmed down to lighter sobbing and a little out of breath. Luks: "Spho." I shook my head and prayed some more. My heart was in pieces. Me: "He was here..." I managed to say after a very long while. Luks: "WHO!" He stood up and pulled on his pants. Me: "You can't-" Luks: "Spho, nobody will come here and intimidate you ndikhona, ndingekho!!" He growled. Me: "You can't see him Lukhanyo. Please. He will rip your soul to pieces." I cried. Luks: "Where. Is. He." Me: "He's standing right next to you."

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Lukhanyo walked to me and kneeled down between my legs. Luks: "It's going to be okay Spho." He took the baby from and hugged my tummy. Luks: "Everything will be okay baby." Me: "You don't understand." Luks: "Spho,

there's nobody here baby. It's just us okay? I'm here to take care of you and the babies. Nothing and nobody will hurt you. Look at me. I'm not going anywhere." He wiped my tears. The room was clear again. The shadow was gone. How? Where did he go? Lam had hiccups now but quieter. Me: "I need to dress. Finish your shower." Luks: "I'm done. Get dressed, Lam and I are making breakfast." I nodded and went to look for clothing. I was just stuck and scared. My robe slipped off effortlessly. The first thing I picked out was a nude two piece; long bandage skirt and bandage crop top. I got dressed and sat in front of my mirror for my make-up after making the bed. My phone beeped an email and I checked it quickly. "Press conference today. Introducing you to the world, queen. -Tar." This would be a long day, I had no time to wallow in self pity. I needed to buck up and get moving. As if my life wasn't difficult enough. I did a quick facebeat and wore my long wavy wig. Strapped on silver sandal heels. Lukhanyo was done with breakfast when I walked into the kitchen. As much as I didn't want to eat, my tummy growled and the smell of delicious wafted in the air. We sat down to eat. Luks: "Uphi uSandile?" Me: "Probably in his house." Luks: "He has a house?" Me: "Apartment yes. You look surprised." Luks: "I just assumed he lives here." I shook my head. We ate our breakfast silently. Luks: "And Nosi?" I shrugged. I really didn't know and I was trying to get out of my dull mood but it was difficult to stay positive when your child just tried to kill the other. Especially because they're getting stronger and more uncontrollable than ever. Nobody could understand. Actually, nobody knew. Nobody anticipated this. No wonder Rex was so patient. He knew what he would create. Luks: "Spho, stop it." Me: "Stop what?" Luks: "Overthinking. Come on baby, please." I sighed. Me: "Thank you for breakfast. I need to get going." Luks: "Same. I'll come to your office for lunch." Me: "That might not be a good idea, there will be journalists around me all day long." Luks: "So?" Me: "Baby. I'm trying to fix my mess. I can't drag your name and family in this. Let me settle it first." Luks: "Yandifihla Spho?" (Are you hiding me?) I laughed. You should've seen his face. Me: "Maybe." Luks: "U-sure? Because andiyiyo la type ifihlekayo." (I'm not the type you can hide.) Me: "Oh yeah? Which type are you?" Luks: "I'm a supportive husband that attends to his wife's needs type." Me: "You're married?" Luks: "Soon." Me: "Then ndizok'fihla baby." (I'll hide you) He frowned. I laughed. Me: "Soon." I assured him, kissing his lips. Me: "I have to go now. I need to take Lam to his dad." Luks: "I can take care of him." Me: "I'm sorry love but Lakhe is first choice to the kids. We spoke about this last night." Luks: "I know but I'm jealous." He pulled me on his lap with Lam still on his chest. Luks: "I want everything. I'm a thief kaloku." I laughed. Me: "Stop that. I need to go." Luks: "I miss you now." Me: "Lukhanyo, seriously I'm going to be late." Luks: "You're the boss." Me: "Yeah. I need to set an example." My phone buzzed again. Me: "See?" I kissed his

nose and got up. We tidied up the kitchen and got ready to leave. My airport hire(car) was still here since I extended the hire. It had a few more days till my new car arrived. Lam was safely in his seat in the back. Luks: "I'll call you my love. I'm glad you could smile for a second. You worried me earlier. I don't want you worried. I'm here. For every stage. Okay?" Me: "You do believe me right? That he was there?" Luks: "Who baby?" Me: "The Unborn King. He appears as a shadow. A grown man shadow. I don't know how. He just... he tried to strangle Lammy." Luks: "A grown man shadow?" I nodded. Luks: "Okay." Me: "You believe me right?" He stared at me. Me: "Lukhanyo!" Luks: "It's just that...he's a fetus, love. Perhaps you're not seeing him, perhaps his father. This is a fetus my angel. He can't kill another baby." He held my stomach. Luks: "You had a panic attack. It happens." Me: "But you don't believe me." Luks: "I believe that you saw this but I just don't believe it's the baby." Me: "We'll talk later." Luks: "Spho don't be like that. Come on." Me: "Like what Lukhanyo?" Luks: "Sphosenkosi. I'm trying. I really am baby. What tells you that this is the baby's doing?" Me: "He talks Lukhanyo. He said it." Luks: "The grown man shadow which is actually an Unborn baby talks?" Okay this sounded crazy, I don't blame him. Me: "No need to mock me." Luks: "I'm not mocking. I'm trying to understand. I really am." I got in the car. Me: "We'll talk later." Luks: "I love you Spho." Me: "I love you too." He got in his car. Luks: "One more thing, where can I find Sandile?" Me: "You already know where he is. The hotel." Luks: "That's His hotel?" Me: "Yes." Luks: "Sandile?" Me: "Yes. That's his." He laughed and shook his head. Luks: "Keep him away from Lubabalo Morrison." I smiled and drove off.

I arrived at Lakhe's house. He opened the gate for me then stood on his porch like the first time I came to this house. This time he wasn't dressed in a suit. He was wearing slim fitting jeans and no top on. Slippers on his feet. I took Lam out his seat with his bag and walked to the door of the house. Me: "Euw Masilakhe. Put some clothes on and respect us and your body. My gosh." He laughed. Lakhe: "Mxim. What you doing here so early." Me: "Brought the baby. Got the conference today." Lakhe: "You're really doing this?" Me: "I kind of have to now." Lakhe: "Spho have you no regard for my father and what he's going through?" Me: "Have you no regard for me and what I've been through?" I walked to the nursery with the baby. Me: "Is Chris awake?" The door closed behind me. Lam was falling asleep in my arms. Putting him down would be emotionally difficult for me but it needed to be done. He would be much safer here. To think I almost lost him today. The thought brought tears to my eyes. Me: "I'm so sorry baby." Lakhe: "What DID HE DO." Me: "I can't Lakhe. I can't do it." I sobbed. Me: "I can't let him hurt him again." Lakhe: "Spho.

SPHO. What did that boy do!!!" He roared. Me: "He appeared. I was chatting to Lam and he just appeared. Lam started choking. He couldn't breath."

Lakhe: "Spho. Slow down. Who's he? I need a name! Cuz I swear if you say Lukhanyo-" Me: "The Unborn." He stared at me. Lakhe: "W-what does that mean." Me: "It means, he appears and hurts people. He's a shadow. A grown shadow." Lakhe: "Who else." I swallowed. Me: "Dumi." Lakhe: "Spho! How does this happen? He's not even born!" He paced the room with his hands on his head. Lakhe: "This is bad. Spho, what goes on when this happens? Specifically, how does he just appear?" Me: "I was hurt by what Dumi did. I didn't understand why he'd be more loyal to you but he was my friend first."

Lakhe: "And Lam?" Me: "I was just chatting to Lam, he was saying Dada and I was saying I hope his brother is sweeter." Lakhe: "Oh fuck." He held his mouth. Me: "What." Lakhe: "Does it hurt you? When Lam says Dada?" Me: "Not really." Lakhe: "Yes or no?" Me: "A little, yes." Lakhe: "The Unborn appears everytime you're hurt. It deals with that person accordingly. Spho... this is bad. You can't let him go around killing people." Me: "Do you think I have a choice? He's getting stronger Lakhe. I cannot control him." The realization made my knees weak. Me: "You need to keep Lam. For now. I can't endanger him Lakhe. Please." He enveloped me into his arms. Lakhe: "I'm really sorry Spho. I'll take care of Lammy. All the kids." Me: "Thank you." Lakhe: "Where is Lukhanyo during all this?" Me: "He was in the bathroom." Lakhe: "Does he see or feel anything?" Me: "Weirdly no." Lakhe: "How is that possible? Even as a normal human, the shift in environment is palpable." Me: "Absolutely nothing." Lakhe: "And when he holds you?" Me: "We're not going to have this conversation." I pulled away from him. He smiled. Lakhe: "So I guess that hasn't happened." Me: "I will hit you. Stop talking." Lakhe: "Spho..if you need someone to talk to, I'm here. This isn't easy but let's be honest, who else has experienced this besides you and me. It involves you and me. We need to find a way to make him stop. He can't hurt Lam. I refuse that." I nodded. Me: "What will we do? Lakhe I pray tirelessly. He's not changing." Lakhe: "Spho, he's half pure. That's why he's so powerful. We need to do more." Me: "I'm not letting you be consumed by this again-" Lakhe: "I'm not letting you handle it by yourself either so there's that." I put Lam in his crib. He slept so peacefully. Lakhe: "I won't let him hurt." Me: "And pray Lakhe. Pray diligently." Lakhe: "I will. I swear it. Thank you Spho. For trusting me." He looked at my stomach. Me: "Don't think about it, don't even dare reprimand him. I'm begging you." Lakhe: "I won't. I just want him to know that daddy loves him." He hand rubbing my small bump. Lakhe: "I really do." He whispered, looking into my eyes. A thought crossed my mind. He smiled. Lakhe: "What is it." Me: "Nothing. I have to go. I'll be back later to see the kids. I miss Chrissie cakes so much. How are Jake and Karmen doing?" Lakhe: "Very quiet. They're not up yet. I'm having

interviews all day today for a nanny. I need to screen each and every one thoroughly." Me: "All by yourself?" Lakhe: "You can join if you're not busy. There's about 25 the agency sent me. I'm off from work." Me: "Well, good luck. I'll meet with the shortlisted ones instead. Look at you being all single parent like. It suits you." Lakhe: "Don't be silly. Everything suits me." He laughed. The door opened. Miya stepped in the room. She was only wearing a white shirt. Lakhe's shirt. Miya: "Hi Spho. Didn't know you came by. I was just looking for this man of mine." Me: "Hi Miya. We're done. You'll email me the shortlist Lakhe. I'll be back later to say hi to Chris, Jake and Karmen. If anything changes during the day please call me." Lakhe: "You'll be in front of cameras all day." Me: "I don't care. My kids come first. Call me." Lakhe: "We're gonna have to talk about that. You know that right?" Me: "I told you, R3 billion. And that's it. You are lucky I'm not opening the bid to other buyers because Mr Sobukwe, believe me when I say it would get real." Lakhe: "But 3 ???" Me: "We can make it 5." Lakhe: "Mxim. I'll make a plan." I walked out.

Lakhe covered Lam with his small blanket. Mila: "She looks cute." Lakhe: "Press day for her company." He unpacked the baby bag. Mila: "Really successful huh. Journalists follow her like she's a Kardashian." Lakhe laughed. Lakhe: "Yeah." Miya: "She doesn't like me, does she?" Lakhe: "What are you talking about?" Miya: "Every time I walk in she rushes out like she's on fire." Lakhe: "Mostly because she's only dropping the kids and nothing else. Spho doesn't have a problem with you." Miya: "Whenever I try to ask about her, you kind of shut me out." Lakhe: "Why do you want her to like you, baby?" Miya: "It's not that. I'm a mom, she's a mom. Her kids are here now, so perhaps it wouldn't be a bad idea to know one another better. For the kids." Lakhe: "Do you have a crush on my ex?" She laughed. Miya: "Don't be silly." Lakhe: "Miya, I'm being serious. You follow her on Instagram. What's up with that? Are you insecure?" Miya: "Do I have to be?" Lakhe: "No. Spho is seeing someone anyway. She and I are over. Why then are you interested in her?" Miya: "That four shots guy who keeps commenting on her pics is her boyfriend?" Lakhe: "What the fuck are you talking about? What's four shots?" Miya: "His insta handle. Anyway, Lakhe, you're not always around. Sometimes you're busy. Sometimes I pick Chris up for you when you forget or you're too busy, if Spho and I can work out a schedule as women, we'd be great." Lakhe: "This is weird. I don't like cat fights." Miya: "Seriously, do I look like that type. Talk to her." Lakhe: "Fine." He kissed her lips. Lakhe: "But enough about my ex now. I want to focus on us." He pulled her to the bedroom. Miya: "What about us.." Lakhe: "The things you do to me." He slipped off the shirt and kissed her shoulder. Miya: "I have one more question baby?" Lakhe: "After this." Miya:

"Why don't you ever use the Porsche? It's collecting dust." Lakhe: "Jesus Miya." Miya: "You come to my house and question everything but I can't do the same?" Lakhe: "I bought the Porsche some time ago. It was impulsive. I like driving my Audi. I don't even drive the Benz. I even had an i8 but gave to Sandile. I buy cars okay?" Miya: "That's all you needed to say baby." She pulled him on to the bed. Lakhe: "Kinda turned off now." Miya: "Fine." She walked to the bathroom. Lakhe: "Baby, what is going on with you!" Miya: "Okay Lakhe, I'm a bit out of my league here!!! I've never been this overwhelmed in my life before. It's you, it's her. It's just... I can't breath okay? Look at me! I'm just an ordinary girl, who wears scrubs all day long in a smelly hospital and I don't know what you want from me. I know you still love her. The way you look at her. The way you change when she's been near you! It's visible." Lakhe: "So this is why you stalk her?" Miya: "I don't stalk her!!" Lakhe: "Okay. Miya, you're gorgeous. Look at you." He turned her to face the mirror in her nakedness. Lakhe: "Look at your eyes. An ocean of brown sugar I get lost in. Your clean face, this beautiful curly hair. You have these cute few freckles on your nose. You're beautiful baby. Spheo is a public figure. She needs to look like that daily. Same as I, I have to walk out my house, well dressed and properly groomed. I love your scrubs. You love your job. There's no need to feel overwhelmed." Miya: "easy for you to say." Lakhe: "Thank you for opening up to me." Miya: "I'm sorry-" Lakhe: "No. Look, I also need to be more open with you Miya. You've been trying to get through to me and I keep shutting you out. You're right. No wonder you feel like this. I'll try my best." Miya: "Okay." Lakhe: "No more Spheo talk. She's my past now, I don't like talking about her. You're my present. Okay?" Miya: "Okay. I promise. This is the last time." Lakhe: "Fine. What?" Miya: "Her dad, Khaya. He sent me to you, I told you that." Lakhe: "You did." Miya: "He hangs out with this other guy. Don't get me wrong. This, gorgeous looking creature. Almost unearthly. Who is that?" Lakhe froze. Lakhe: "I don't know baby." Miya: "Oh. It's so weird. He looked at me and my body felt cold." Lakhe: "Uhm. Breakfast?" Miya: "You know him, don't you?" Lakhe: "Nope. Never seen him baby. Why are you entertaining other men, when you have your own tall glass of handsome right here?" Miya: "Lakhe I'm being serious. That guy is weird. When I stared at him, I just couldn't stop-" Lakhe: "Do me a favor and never stare at him again." Miya: "Bu-" Lakhe: "Never Again!!!" He walked out. She followed him to the bedroom. Miya: "Baby, seriously." Lakhe: "I don't want men staring at you Miya. No. I don't want you staring at him." Miya: "Fine. I'll act blind then. You so cute when you mad." She climbed on the bed reaching over to take her phone. He grabbed her waist and pulled her to him. Miya: "I need to get to work." Lakhe: "You're taking the day off." Miya: "Masi..." he kissed her breasts. Miya: "Baby come on." Lakhe: "Hm.." he kissed her stomach. Lakhe: " How

about here?" He kissed her thigh. Miya: "Not there." Lakhe: "Show me." She pointed in between her legs. Lakhe: "Looks like a meal to me." He licked it. Miya: "Ohhh." He placed the flat of his tongue on her clit and tongue-humped it. Then slid the tongue between the labia down to her entrance. Miya: "Lakhe.." he slowly entered his tongue in her rolling it around, and slid back up the path to the clit. His tongue teased a gentle circle on it. He held her thighs apart. The flat of his tongue humped on her again. Miya: "Baby!" She moaned. Miya: "Do it again.. please." He kissed her inner thigh. Miya: "Baby please." She begged, pulling his head back to where it was. Miya: "Please." He licked it again. Miya: "Your tongue baby..please..." he placed it again and humped. Miya: "Oh fuck...oohhhh... Lakhe." She was out of breath. Miya: "Almost...there." He sucked on her while her body shivered in climax. She screamed his name, and her body went to a still. He stopped and crawled up to her, kissing her nipples. Lakhe: "You good?" Miya: "So good. You're amazing." Lakhe: "Thank you. And good morning." Miya: "Good morning baby." Lakhe: "Sounding so well mannered. I like it." Miya: "That tongue..." Lakhe: "What about it?" He pulled on a condom. Miya: "It's just... it's so... I can't deal with this alone." Lakhe: "I'm right here." Miya: "What else can you do?" Lakhe: "I can fuck the attitude out of you." Miya: "Is that so.." he entered her. Lakhe: "Talk to me." He stroked in and out of her slowly. Miya: "I... Lakhe..." he pulled up her legs to his shoulders, laying on top of her. Miya: "Oh my... Lakhe!!" He fucked slower.. looking into her eyes. She was shaking already. Lakhe: "talk to me..." Miya: "Fuck...I can't. Baby...it's...oohhh. please don't stop." Lakhe: "This is yours baby. All of it..." he went deeper. Miya: "Masilakhe!" She cried. He fucked faster. Her legs shivered. Lakhe: "Yes baby.." he groaned. Her breasts bounced in circle, enchanting. Lakhe: "Fucck... Miya.." Miya: "More baby." She moaned. He held on to the sheets and fucked harder. Miya: "YEESSSSS!!!" She held on to him while she had another orgasm and he pushed faster. Deeper. Lakhe: "Shiiiiit." He let go of her legs and held her body, burying his face in her neck. Finally he released, long and hard. Lakhe: "Fuck." He breathed. Miya: "Wooow." Lakhe: "You're crying. Why are you crying baby? Did I hurt you?" Miya: "No. I just... I've never in my life, had such amazing sex." He laughed. Lakhe: "Don't." Miya: "I had orgasm Lakhe. Twice. Two real orgasms from actual sex." Lakhe: "I'm glad I could assist." He kissed her lips. Lakhe: "That was amazing. I could this all day." Miya: "I love you Lakhe." "DAD!!!!!" Chris screamed. Lakhe: "Shit." Chris: "Tata I'm late!!! Tata!!!" Lakhe: "I'm coming Chris! Damn." Miya laughed. Lakhe: "Can you believe him? We're not done lady." He kissed her and got up.

Mid afternoon. Tired. I want to cry. I'd been in front of cameras the entire day and I just wasn't having it anymore. Tar: "We'll be done soon. The media loves you Spho, they are gobbling you up like pie." Me: "Really?" Tar: "Definitely. You have tons of support. Thank God for your social media and your activity on there. You engage with your followers and you're humble. Humans like that. I'm getting you a social media manager to sell you like a fat cake to the world. People love fat cakes." Me: "Are you saying I'm fat?" Tar: "No. I'm saying you're a fat cake. Have you ever met someone who doesn't like fat cakes? That would be a witch. You know that right?" I laughed out loud. Me: "I don't like fat cakes!" Tar: "Then you're a witch Spho!" I laughed again. Okay, so thanks to Tar and making me laugh, I can manage one more interview. Just then, Lukhanyo walked in. He had a small fruit package in his right hand and left hand in his pocket. He did not just walk in here. I felt butterflies of nervous in my stomach. All the journalists and cameramen stared at him. Tar: "Two minutes." He announced. Luks: "You haven't eaten. Lubby has been staring at you all day on his television. He sends this." Me: "Thank you so much. To him and you for bringing it." Luks: "I need you to eat." Tar: "Cameras Down." He warned. This was tense. Me: "We spoke about this." I whispered. Luks: "And I agree but you didn't eat. The baby is hungry Spho." Me: "I had a juice at 1." Luks: "It's 3. Eat." Me: "You're embarrassing me." I hissed. Luks: "I'm not letting you starve the baby." Me: "Okay. I promise. But go now." He turned and walked out. I opened the package. My heart warmed. I ate the yogurt and fruit first. I could hear the chatter from across the room even though they were whispering. It was two journalists, discussing the obvious scene. One: "So, why would the owner of a company that big make the delivery himself? Are they dating?" Two: "If you had a company and a public figure ordered from you on the day of a huge press conference, would you send a regular delivery boy or go there yourself to make an impact? This is a huge deal. The Mzinyathi's are very smart businessmen and know good opportunity when they see one. This is great publicity. I want to interview her on the snacks. Do you think she enjoys it?" One: "Are you serious? You're more focused on her favorite snacks other than her potential new man? Because you know, if Lukhanyo helped her illegally obtain this company, it would be a bigger scoop than her favorite snacks." Two: "I don't think so. I just think he's a sexy hunk Delivering food." She walked off. I called Tar aside once I was done eating. Me: "Get that one to interview me." Tar: "She's a junior." Me: "Bring her to me. She's doing the interview Tar." Tar: "I don't like the energy I'm feeling off you right now." Me: "Just giving her a chance to make her career a success." If she thinks I need a man to "help" me obtain anything, it's clear she needed to know who the fuck she's dealing with.

#208

The conference room was now quiet. My interviewer sat confidently in her seat. Poor thing. "We're live." I noted something on my phone quickly. Me: "Ready for you baby." She smiled, the fake smile. "My name is Portia Standoff, The Regal Magazine. Spho Sobukwe, is it okay I call you with your husband's name?" Me: "Whichever makes you comfortable. Although, Spho is just fine." Portia: "Well, Spho. The country is obviously enamored by your successful career. Do you think it's a possibility you'd be nominated in the Businesswoman of the year category?" Me: "I'm more focused in producing a better working environment for my employees, better investment opportunities for my clients and being a great mom to my kids. If the nomination does happen, that would be great too." Portia: "Speaking of kids, has this company take over from their grandfather caused a rift between you and the Sobukwe family?" Me: "No rift on my part." Portia: "And the Sobukwe's?" Me: "I haven't seen them. However, I have seen Masilakhe Sobukwe a couple of times and he's a solid businessman and of course great father to our kids. No rift whatsoever." Portia: "I have it on record that when the Sobukwe's found out you stole from them, you were kicked out of the house." Me: "What is your real question Portia. And be smart about it." I warned. Portia: "The public wants to know Spho, A; Did you steal this company empire from your father in law, B; Did they kick you out the house?" The nerve. Tar whispered in my ear: "I can cut it now, you don't have to answer this." Me: "Don't worry." I looked at her. Me: "A; SARS was on their way here to tear everything down. It was all over the news as it happened, the minute the company came up for sale, I bought it. That isn't called stealing where I'm from. I can understand how it can be confusing for you. B; Masilakhe asked me to leave, he came back the following day and we spoke. Like adults. As I said before, solid businessman." She didn't look like she was going to back down. Portia: "And your involvement with the Mzinyathi clan? Is that a new business partnership or personal?" Tar: "My client is under no obligation to confirm or deny the status of her business relations, potential clients and personal acquaintances alike. Your last question Portia Standoff." I could see Jan sizzling across the room with excitement. Her man was a beast at his job. Portia: "The appearance of Mr Mzinyathi in this period of your life is questionable. We all know what he is. Association with him, can put your investors at risk. He's a self-confessed thug. Do you think not confirming or denying relations would be the best business decision for you right now? Considering how the Sobukwe's aren't really pleased with you." Me: "Mr Mzinyathi brought me fruit and his confessions have nothing to do with his

success. Why are you so obsessed with him?" Portia: "I'm more obsessed with you. What is it that you're hiding?" Tar: "Portia." Me: "Leave her." I stared into her eyes. Portia: "Spho, are you hiding your personal flaws by pretending to be a business guru? Is this why your personal life is off limits? You've managed to evade all questions relating to it. Is it a possibility that the incredible businesswoman the country is so enchanted by is not as perfect as it seems? How are your kids? Living with their dad." The Unborn was stirring. Me: "My kids are doing great. They're with their father since he's their father. I don't need to explain that. My personal life has already been a public spectacle months before. By now I'm sure everyone already knows that area in my life Portia. The reason I'm focusing on business and strictly that is because I deserve it. I deserve recognition for my work ethic and not who I'm fucking at the moment." Tar closed his eyes in embarrassment. Me: "I've done so well thus far. I've provided opportunities for many young people, and still going at it. That is what you should now be focused on Portia, not my vaginal receipts aka my kids. We're good, love. Are we done?" Tar: "YES!! That's it for the day. Thank you ladies and gentlemen." He stood up. Tar: "Lets go." My security came up and escorted me to the car. I held Jan's hand all the way and we climbed in. Tar in the passenger, Jan and me in the back. One of the bodyguards drove. Tar: "Wow. You never cease to surprise me." Jan: "That was so bomb. You handled her Spho!" Me: "I didn't have a choice. Journalists have no heart. They think we're just meat they can peck apart." Tar: "True. Now that's done, we can resume work." Jan: "You're trending again." Me: "I trend every two days Jan. Did you draft up an advert for a social media manager? I don't want to overwhelm you." Jan: "Yes, I'll post it tomorrow. I didn't mention your name." Me: "Thank you. Tar I'm thinking of a new user-friendly website we can create for the company." Tar: "That is perfect but for tomorrow. Now you rest. You'll be with Danger. He'll drive and protect you. I'll see you in the morning." Me: "Thank you Tar. Bye guys." We dropped them off. I directed Danger to Lakhe's house. At least today was over... oh wait it wasn't. I still had dinner with Lubby and Lukhanyo. I climbed out the car once we arrived at the estate and I walked in the house. Lakhe was sitting in the lounge with his iPad. Me: "Hi." Lakhe: "You called my kids vaginal receipts on live television?" Me: "Lakhe please. She was trying to ruin me." He shook his head. Lakhe: "Chris is in the garden. Jake and Karmen too." Me: "How is Lam doing?" Lakhe: "Your vaginal receipt is doing amazing." Me: "Stop it." He laughed. Lakhe: "You're the one that said it." Me: "I got angry Lakhe." Lakhe: "Do you see why I don't want the media near me? They're garbage. And also thank you for mentioning me as a solid businessman. I have two potentials lined up." Me: "Good for you. I have a dinner later with Luks and Lubby. I just came to spend an hour with the kids." Lakhe stared at me. Lakhe: "SPHO."

Me: "Yuh Lakhe. What now." Lakhe: "Don't tell me you're selling to that fool!!"
Me: "Who are you talking about?!" Lakhe: "Lubabalo Morrison! You know he's a billionaire. You can't do this to my family Sphosenkosi!!" Me: "I'm just having dinner with them. Geez!" Lakhe: "Spho I am begging you." Me: "Lakhe, nobody is getting that company. Not you, not him, not anyo- Wait... how do you now he's a billionaire?" Lakhe: "I Googled him as soon as that girl mentioned Mzinyathi. I had to wonder too Spho. Their sudden appearance in your life. It's questionable." Me: "I bought the company with the money you gave me as settlement for our divorce!" Lakhe: "Oh Thank God. Is that way you didn't have money to buy a proper car?" Me: "Yes." Lakhe: "Thank God. Now it makes sense." Me: "Wait, you also think I'm not capable of making any good business decisions on my own?" Lakhe: "You're very capable Spho but you've always been cautious. This was a very risky decision you took and unlike you. It's a little hard to swallow." Me: "You don't believe in me. You never will." Lakhe: "Come on Spho." Me: "No. You don't have to lie to me. When you need me to consult for you, it's all good but the minute I do something for myself it's a shock." Lakhe: "Spho-" Me: "I don't want to talk to you right now." I walked out the back to look for Chris. He was kneeling next to Karmen. Chris: "Mama!! Karmie cakes is hurt. She fell." Me: "Don't touch the wound Chris. You don't have gloves on. Go fetch the first aid kit from your dad. Don't run." He went to the house. I took Karmen on lap and checked her wound. Me: "Jake. Come here sweetie." He ran to me. Me: "How are you? Did you sleep well?" He nodded. Jake: "I did. I like it here." Me: "That's great. Did you get to talk to your mommy?" Jake: "Yeah, she called in the morning to check if we're okay." Me: "That's good. If you need anything, you'll tell me or Uncle Lakhe okay? Don't be shy. This is your home." He nodded. Me: "What did you eat?" Jake: "I had breakfast, then my lunch at school plus snacks. Kinderjoy. I had apple juice and a banana too." Me: "That's good. Look, sometimes me or Uncle Lakhe will be working so we won't be here to look after you but there's going to be a nanny okay. I need you to give her the same respect as us. And I need you take care of your little sister. She shouldn't be falling and hurting herself often, okay?" Jake: "Okay." Me: "Alright boy. Go play." Chris gave me the kit and they both ran off. Luckily the swimming pool was covered and secured plus the one inside was locked. As always. They'd be safe. I cleaned the wound and plastered her neatly. Chris: "Mama. We want to go on the Go-Karts." Oh hell no. Me: "Mommy is in her work clothes baby." Chris ran to the house screaming for his dad. In a minute he came running back with a pair of sweatpants, waving it in the air. Chris: "Lets go mama!!" Christian Sobukwe guys. Me: "Fine." I took the pants and went to change in the bathroom. When I came back outside. Lakhe was standing with Chris having a debate. Lakhe: "Christian, I saw you leave my room with

something in your hand. What was it." Chris: "It was your pants Tata." Lakhe: "My pants don't fit you. Why would you take my pants." Chris pointed at me. Me: "I thought you asked first." Chris: "He was on the phone mama, he said yes and I took it. Now come." Lakhe: "Spho." Me: "I don't have a choice-" Lakhe: "I don't care about that, you're supposed to be resting. You had a long day at work and you're still going to a dinner." Me: "I'm not tired. Racing with the kids will clear my head." Lakhe: "Okay. When you feel tired please let me know." I went to the race course. Lakhe picked up Karmen. I strapped up the boys in their cars. I got in mine. Lakhe: "Ready?" Chris: "Wait Tata, what does the winner get?" Lakhe: "Anything but money." Chris: "But Tata that's not fair." Lakhe: "No money prizes. The winner gets to choose tonight's dinner and movie." Chris: "Okay. I'm caving." Lakhe: "Ready, Set, GO!" I let the boys start ahead. The race was pretty intense between them even if I had put in effort I doubt I'd win. I know Sandile taught them this very well when it was Chris' birthday. All the boys learnt how to go-kart. It was cute but for Jake not to bump any corners? That was creepy. Chris was right on his tail but lost balance and bumped into the rubber walls. It slowed him for a while but he quickly took off again. Jake came first, hands in the air. Jake: "I win!" He took off his helmet. Listen, I was dizzy. Chris: "Only because I hit that corner." Jake: "Come on, I won." Chris: "I want a rematch." Me: "Yoh boys, mommy is dizzy. You go ahead." Chris: "Sorry mommy. Losing doesn't look good on you." I was so defeated, I laughed. Lakhe: "I'll be the third competitor then. Hold Karmie." I took the little girl and he took my kart. Me: "Ready, Set, GO!" They raced off. I turned around to cover our faces from the dust. Miya was walking toward us wearing her navy doctors clothes, hair tied up in a bun. She looked so pretty. Miya: "Hey. Been looking everywhere for them." Me: "They boys decided they wanted to race today." Miya: "Seems cool. You too?" Me: "I lost the first round. Got kicked off." She smiled. I wonder where I left my phone, I needed to call Lukhanyo and Kirsten as well to check on her. Miya: "Spho? I'm not sure if Lakhe mentioned it but I wanted to talk to you." Me: "No he didn't. What about?" Miya: "Well... we don't have to be friends, but I think some sort of acquaintance would be okay. For the kids. For instance if Lakhe is unavailable, I'm happy to help, same as I, I'd like to know if you're okay with helping." So Miya was naturally nice. Which is rare in my experience. Oddly comforting though. I'd rest easy knowing my kids are with a kind lady, not a haterous woman. Me: "I don't mind at all. You're welcome to call me anytime." Miya: "I know this seems weird-" Me: "It's not. I actually think it's great. I feel better knowing my kids are safe with a kind person. The best part is she's a doctor too." I smiled. Miya: "Thank you Spho." Karmen was falling asleep on my shoulder. Miya: "So how was the day?" Me: "Mad hectic." Miya: "You're like a celebrity now." Me: "Crazy enough, no. I'm just today's meal.

Tomorrow they'll be running after someone else." She laughed. Me: "What do you do? Well I know you're a doctor but ..." Miya: "Nothing special. Just a medical doctor." Me: "That's something special. Not sleeping at times to take care of patients. Healing them back to life. Some of those illnesses are difficult to see but people like you soldier on." Miya: "Thank you Spho." Lakhe walked to us. Me: "You lost too?" Lakhe: "Jake is a formula one racer. I didn't stand a chance." I laughed. Me: "Losing isn't a good look on you." Lakhe: "Mxim." He laughed. I walked to the house in search for Lam. Robert was in the lounge holding him. Me: "Molweni Tata." I didn't get a response. That stung. Me: "Tata, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you." Lakhe and Miya walked in with the boys. Miya: "Good evening sir." Rob: "Hi sweetheart, how are you?" WOW. Miya: "I'm okay... and you?" Rob: "So great. It's lovely seeing you again." I gave Karmen to Miya. A part of me wanted to snatch my baby from him but I controlled myself. Me: "So you're going to ignore me?" Silence again. Miya walked to the bedroom with the kids. Lakhe: "What's going on." Me: "I'm trying to talk to your father and he's ignoring me Masilakhe." I wish I could control my anger. Lakhe: "Tata, Spho is trying to talk to you." Rob: "And?" Me: "Give me my child." Lakhe: "Spho please." Me: "No, what your father did to me months back, I forgave. I was trying to save his company from scum bags. I rebuilt it. Look at it today. It has never performed this way since the beginning. I was ready to hand it back but he still sees the need to do this. Tell him to give me back my child." Lakhe: "That is unnecessary." Me: "Isn't it Lakhe? Because if he doesn't want to talk to me or be civil, why is he holding my child? What could he even do to my child in my absence? I don't trust him." I took my phone. Lakhe: "Spho, please. We can sort this out." Me: "Sort it out then." Lakhe: "Tata. Spho didn't steal from you. Stop listening to the media. You know Spho more than anyone. What was that party about then? Were you faking it? You were the one who admitted you did wrong. This is getting boring. You're a businessman Tata, you are the thief here. You stole Spho's project from her and kicked her out your company now you have the audacity to get mad?? Do you even deserve that company? What kind of investors did you have in that company? The members of your board? Come the fuck on man." Rob: "You're taking her side? The demon queen?" Lakhe: "Yes I'm taking her side! And she's not a demon! Get the fuck out of my house!!!!!" He roared. Even I got fright. Me: "Lakhe, calm down." He took his child and walked to the bedroom. Robert walked out the house. What the hell just happened.

I finally got home after 5pm and took a shower. While I dried up and got dressed I texted Lukhanyo. He called immediately. Of course he did. He doesn't really like texting. Luks: "Baby? I think we should postpone today." Me:

"Why?" Luks: "You haven't rested. You've been working all day." Me: "Lukhanyo it's just a simple dinner. We'll be eating and relaxing. I need to eat." Luks: "Okay. I'm coming." He hung up. I need to teach him phone etiquette. My outfit choices were skinny jeans and a loose white t-shirt. It seemed too casual. I had the white slim-fit mini dress with long sleeves. The length was appropriate also not formal and paired with a baggy denim jacket. My last outfit choice was a curtain because I felt like a whale with nothing nice to wear. Where was Sibulele when I needed him? I called him but it hit straight voice-mail. Sensational. Lukhanyo knocked on the front door. I went to unlock and let him in. Luks: "What's wrong?" Me: "I don't have anything to wear. And I'm so hungry. The last time this happened, my brother was around. He got me a gherkin sandwich which sounds so appealing right now and chose me a cute dress. Now he's gone and I don't think he's coming back." I cried. Luks: "Heee ubaby." He hugged me. Luks: "Yintoni gherkin sandwich?" Me: "A sandwich with gherkins Lukhanyo!" Luks: "Okay! Let's first see what you can wear." He pulled me to the bedroom. Luks: "This white dress and denim looks like a nice outfit." Me: "Is it not too much? I am going to do a full facebeat so I don't want it to clash." Luks: "What is a facebeat?" Me: "Lukhanyo it's make up!" Luks: "Alright, just get dressed. Uhm... don't do a full face beat. Do a half beat. So that it blends with your cute outfit." Me: "You mean a natural face beat but it's going to be too neutral. I want to glow." Luks: "uhmm." He typed quickly on his phone. Luks: "You want to glow baby?" Me: "Yeah." Luks: "Why... don't you use the...illuminator?" He put his hands behind his back. Me: "That could work, but I don't want a heavy face." He texted again. Luks: "Highlighter?" Me: "I think the champagne Highlighter." I held up my pallet. Luks: "Definitely. Let me make your sandwich. Shout if you need help." Me: "Thank you baby." I hugged him. Luks: "You're welcome." He walked to the kitchen and video called Lubby. Lubb: "Don't you dare cancel on me. Not today!!" Luks: "Lower your voice. Look, I know alot of things but what the fuck is a gherkin?" Lubby fell down laughing. Luks: "Lubabalo." Lubb: "It's like a pickle." Luks opened the fridge. Luks: "Okay, so it's in a jar full of water too right?" Lubb: "Yes. Can you find it?" Luks: "No, unfortunately. She doesn't have any. I need to get to the shop quick. My baby almost had a meltdown. Let me get moving." Lubb: "Awww, such a respo-" Lukhanyo hung up and locked the house driving to Pick n Pay. In the bedroom, I got dressed and did my face. I managed a light look that made me glow. It happened. At least today my baby wasn't here so I could put some lipstick. Lam smudges it off my lips with his mouth and little hand. Lukhanyo came back with a sandwich and gave it to me. I didn't want to laugh but it wasn't what I had in mind. I ate it though not to discourage him. Me: "Delicious." Luks: "It's horrible

baby, don't fake it." I laughed. After my snack, he helped me with my black Tom Ford block heel and we left for his brother's house.

With Lukhanyo's driving that house was two minutes away. I managed to tell him about my day at work when he finally stopped in front of a gate with a security booth. So his brother lives in a complex? Nice. I would have thought billionaires wanted their own yards but... Lukhanyo drove in. Nope. Billionaires want their own yards alright and apparently an entire complex too. Me: "How many houses are in here?" Luks: "6. Yes, they all belong to him. No, he only lives in one. Don't worry, we all asked the same questions when we first saw it." Me: "That is golf course." Luks: "With a lake." Me: "And there?" Luks: "That's the stable for Mathew and his exercise path. Lubby doesn't want him on the lawn, or anyone else for that matter. Madly obsessed with it." This is fucking extreme. Me: "Why would he buy an entire complex?" Luks: "He couldn't find a house with a helipad." Me: "That's the sound I'm hearing." Luks: "I wonder who's home." He finally parked the car. How rich does one need to be to ask "I wonder who's home" When the helicopter lands? Us normal humans travel in cars and bicycles. This was so sickening. We got out the car and walked to the door. From the porch step to the actual door there's a red carpet. I was almost scared to step on it in case a mob of photographers approach. The door opened. Lubby dressed in a white shirt and blue jeans identical to Lukhanyo. I was already dizzy. Lubb: "Welcome Spho!! Come on in!" We walked in the house. To my left, I kid you the fuck not, was a glass room with a single ATM. Who? Who gets an ATM in their own house!! Me: "How." See this is what people mean when they say filthy rich. This is filthy and greedy. Lubb: "This was initially going to be a small golf complex. This would've been the club house of course. So I had an atm installed but what do you know. When I'm done building all this monstrosity. My family decides they don't want to live with me. All these houses. Empty. So I converted this one into mine. Renovated it and everything. Didn't take out the machine. If there's one thing I asked God in my wealth for, is to never stand in another queue in Jesus name, Amen." Luks: "I lived here for two weeks. Lubby would wake me up at 3am with the helicopter hovering on the top of my house Spho. He's crazy." Lubb: "I was practicing my night lessons." Luks: "On top of my house? At 3am?" Lubb: "I focus better when I'm closer to the love of my life." Luks: "Mxim. Who's home? The helicopter is on." Lubb: "Me. I was landing just before you arrived. I guess I didn't turn it off." Luks: "What the fuck Lubabalo!! Where is it!!" He ran out the back yard. Lubby smiled and turned to me. Lubb: "My brother is smarter than me but I'm stupid and calculating. I'd risk it all just for five minutes in this conversation." Me: "WOW." Lubb: "You know by now, I'm an investor. I'm

looking to expand my business interests. I've been following you. Tommy hired you. I'm looking to partner with you." Me: "I'm not selling shares at the moment. For neither company." Lubb: "I understand that. I do. Although, I really don't. Sphe, I'm more interested in the youth program. That needs investors and a good name behind it. I have no doubt in my mind you're doing well but also do wish to help more young adults. That's where I come in. I'm offering space in my own company, if I can partner with you." Me: "They told me to watch out for you. That you're dangerous. It's all true." Lubb: "I'm a teddy bear Sphe. I just know good investments when I see them. Think about it." Lukhanyo walked back in. Lubb: "Dinner is ready!!" He bounced to the kitchen. Luks: "He propositioned you, didn't he?" Me: "He did. Don't worry. I'm not selling." He laughed. Luks: "You do not know my brother." He led me to the lounge where a flat screen covered 3 quarters of the wall. I cuddled into Lukha. He still smells amazing. As usual. Luks: "What?" Me: "Nothing." Luks: "Yathanda ke wena undenza lento. I don't know if I can get through the night without a bathroom break." I smiled. Me: "You're not going to the bathroom at all." Lubb: "Dinner!" We walked to his dining room and I swore I walked in a president's dining room. I've seen this table. Many months ago I wanted to trick Lakhe into buying it. It was made from pure Slab Caro walnut wood. The Slab Table. Luks: "Yoh. We've never used this one before." Lubb: "We have a guest Lukhanyo. Don't be rude." We sat down. Luks: "Where is everyone else?" Lubb: "I don't know." Luks: "Lubabalo, where are my children?" Lubb: "They're doing homework with Thulani." Luks: "Did they eat?" Lubb: "I gave them a big biscuit to share. Let's pray." A giggle slipped out my mouth. Luks: "Nx.." He walked down the passage to the kids. Lubby slid me a white A4 envelope with his initials printed on it. Me: "I told you I'm not selling." Lubb: "I'm not buying." I opened the envelope and looked at the neat crafty folder. Me: "Lubabalo Morrison, PhD. The dad CV." Dear God, I'm dealing with a lunatic. I paged the first, and found information about him. How he was born, where he lived, his life before Lukha. The next double page was pictures of him and Lukhanyo together, first page being them, second page being parents; changing diapers, feeding babies etc. The next page was a letter written by kid. Buhle was on top of the page. Why I like daddy. Each line had a reason, my heart was floating. "My daddy is the best. He teach me how to swim. He makes the best sandwich. He comes to my tea party. He help me dance baley." (Ballet). My eyes were flooding with tears. This was so sweet. Luks: "The kids said they've eaten but - What's that?" Me: "His dad CV. It's so sweet!" Luks: "What the hell is a dad CV?" The next letter was from Lubambo. "Love my daddy. He sings me to sleep. He's big like a mowtain. His chest is my sit. He come home with Magikbean truff from Joose enjoy. Yay." That 'yay' tugged at my heart. Luks: "You manipulated the kids to write recommendation

letters?" Lubb: "Nope. They offered." Luks: "You're insane. You know that?" He sat down. Me: "This is beautiful Lubby." Lubb: "Thank you." His phone beeped. He checked the message. The expression on his face unreadable but not good. Lubb: "So let's pray and then you two love birds can eat." Luks: "You're not joining us?" Lubb: "Oh no. I have a big butt load of work." Luks: "It can't wait?" Lubb: "Fine." He wasn't fine at all. Something on that phone bothered him. We closed our eyes. Lubb: "Dear Lord we ask that You bless the food we are about to eat. I ask that you bless our family. I pray that you bless those that are less fortunate and I pray You assist us in opening our hearts and extending a hand where we can. In Jesus' name, Amen." We opened our eyes and he just stared at the food. Me: "Tell whoever texted you to bring back your mood. Right now." He smiled. Lubb: "I'm fine Spho. It's just work. I made a great juicy lamb leg. It was caressed with love and cooked appropriately and respectfully. I have no doubt in my mind, you'll enjoy. The chicken, slapped and massaged with a chilly Thai sauce, stuffed and suffered with the best of everything. Lukhanyo made it for you. He's a great cook." Luks: "Why is your food made with love and mine with violence?" Lubb: "You were watching Spho's last interview and you were quite mad so you took it o-" Luks: "I was not mad." Lubb: "Upset then. You slapped the chicken silly Lukhanyo. If she was alive, she would've cried." I giggled. Luks: "Mxim." Lubb: "Am I lying? I don't lie mna." Luks: "I didn't slap the chicken." Me: "You were upset? Why?" Luks: "I wasn't." Me: "Lukhanyo." Luks: "It's just... you denied me on live television Spho. Like I embarrass you. You paraded Lakhe's name but, turned cold when they mentioned me." My heart broke immediately. Me: "I didn't turn cold, baby. I thought I was protecting your reputation. I thought we spoke about this. I don't want you or your kids to be chased by cameras like I was. I thought today was not the day for that. It's big news Lukhanyo. I'm sorry baby. I didn't realize it would hurt you." Luks: "It's fine." Lubb: "No its not. Spho, Lukhanyo bottles up his big boy feelings." Luks: "Shut up." Me: "Lukhanyo? I don't parade Lakhe. I had to mention him harmoniously to let my investors rest easy because of his family name. If I showed immaturity how would they trust me? I am not ashamed of you. You know that I love you." Luks: "I understand Spho." Me: "Lukhanyo please. Don't shut me out." Luks: "Okay. It hurt, yes. But I got over it." Me: "Is that why you wanted to cancel?" He looked away. Me: "Lukhanyo. I'm sorry. I fucked up. There's no excuse. Please forgive me." Luks: "First be honest, Do I embarrass you?" Me: "Not at all." Luks: "Spho." Me: "Okay. A bit, yes. It's just... I'm scared baby. People don't know what went on in my previous marriage. As much as its done, they're still convinced Lakhe dumped me for cheating or whatever. Then you come along.. with your, thug way. It's just gonna be another big deal." Luks: "Thug way?" Me: "You walked in there and everyone shut their

mouth like they're scared of you. I kind of panicked a little too." Lubb: "To be honest, Me too. Bafo can be a little unhinged." Luks: "So what was I supposed to do? You needed to eat. I'm sorry I went in there like that. So after the interview, what did you do?" Me: "I went to see the kids." Lubb: "At Lakhe's house?" Me: "Yes. Jake and Karmen are living there, I needed to make sure they're okay. They were in an abusive home. I can't just dump them there and never come check. So that's what I did. I also met with Lakhe's new girlfriend, we spoke. She's so sweet." Luks: "How's Lammy?" Me: "He's okay. I got to spend a while with him too after Lakhe and his dad got into it." Lubb: "Family gossip. My favorite. Tell me everything." Me: "It's not gossip. Rob's not talking to me ever since the reveal and has the audacity to hold my child. So I tried to apologize but he was ignoring me. Lakhe tried to mediate between us but I got mad. I wanted my child. Lakhe got mad and gave his dad some deets." Lubb: "About?" Me: "About how I didn't steal the company but bought it, and how he was the one to kick me out my project and steal it. Then told him to leave." I didn't mention the shady former investors. Lubb: "Yikes." Me: "I kind of feel bad now." Lubb: "My God. You're nicer than Bafo described. This man took everything from you Spho!! Everything and left you out to dry like biltong! It is a good thing Lakhe isn't as stuck up as I originally thought. You deserve to be where you are! You worked hard for it! Let Robert drag his bottom lip until he runs out of lip gloss. He is canceled!" Lukhanyo laughed. Lubb: "So, how was the press today? I heard you say the F word on live TV." Luks: "He started dancing all over the living room." Lubb: "Portia had it coming. You handled her, sister." Me: "Portia was gossiping about how you helped me illegally obtain the company." Luks: "What?" Me: "I heard her. She said it to her friend when you left." Luks: "Hmm..." he looked at his brother. Lubb: "mhh. This lamb smells nice." My phone rang. I answered. Me: "Sandile. Where did you disappear to? Where's Nosi? Did she even go to school today?" Sands: "uhm, Mummy." Me: "No Sandile. Not mummy. Where are you?" Sands: "So.. we kind of drove to Durban." Me: "Sandile Sobukwe. Get back in this city right this second! Nosiphiwo is supposed to be at school. I'm telling your brother!" Sands: "Yeah, that's the thing Spho. You can't tell him." Me: "Why?" Sands: "He kind of sent the police to fetch us." Me: "Tell me you didn't do anything illegal with that child." Sands: "by illega-" Me: "SANDILE." Sands: "He's really angry Spho. He's not listening. I tried to explain. I just wanted to take Nosi out the city to relax." Me: "Where is he?" Sands: "Who?" Me: "uSibulele. I know for fact he's there with you. You all disappeared together." Sands: "uhmm..." Me: "Tell Sibu to call Lakhe and explain. He will listen to him better. You're being irresponsible Sandile. You have a whole hotel to take care of but you just disappear off the face of the earth. What if there was a crisis? I don't care that you want to sell it but damn it, be an adult

and face your problems HEAD ON. You can't run everytime shit hits the fan. You're not a child. I am not going to keep protecting you from your brother Sandile. I love you but you need to stand on your own two feet as well. You said you want to be independent then stop acting like a child! Sibulele isn't even supposed to be encouraging you, I don't even know why he ran. But he has a restaurant waiting on him too! Masilakhe, has his own children. Why do you provoke him like this when you know fully well his temper goes to the shits! I am no longer in his house, so it can't be my problem anymore. Where's Nosi! Put me on speaker. Nosiphiwo? You're a grown lady with tits. Shit is going to happen to you. EVERY SINGLE DAY. That's what being a woman is. You saw how they dragged my name through sewerage months ago but I still got out the house and did grown woman shit and carried on with my life! There is no way, you can be successful if you think hiding after humiliation does the trick. You need to get your ass back here and go to school. Masilakhe booked an appointment to speak to your school HOD because he cares about you! Again, he has his own kids!! You two know the kind of home you grew up in, your parents might not care but Masilakhe bends his back fixing your shit. Both of you, are gonna get your shit together, starting today. You're no longer babies now. Sibulele, I know you can hear me. Call Masilakhe right now and talk to him. I want to see all three of you, the minute you get here. Actually no, the minute I'm available because right now, I am trying to have some dinner. Did I made myself clear?" Sands: "Yes ma'am." I hung up. Me: "Grown kids bring trouble, am I right?" Lukhanyo smiled. Lubb: "Wow. Lukhanyo is it okay if I borrowed her to yell at my staff?" Luks: "I'm proud of you but check on them. Make sure they're okay Spho." Me: "They're with Sibulele. They'll be very okay." Luks: "That's what I'm worried about Spho. He left pretty angry after your fight. Next thing he's in Durban with your siblings. Why?" Me: "Baby. This was Sandile and Nosi. Sibulele went along because he's mad at me. Sandile himself says that he wanted to take Nosi out the city but I do feel bad yelling at them." I received a message. "Sorry Spho. I didn't mean to disappoint you." Sandile would be the one person who knows how to play with your heart strings. Luks: "Oh hayi Spho." I replied to him: "Please be more responsible Sandile. You can't do this to me again." Me: "There, now can we eat." Lubb: "You're not gonna call Lakhe? I really want to know why he's mad. I can't be the only one." Me: "I'm not involving myself again." Luks: "Yep. Let's eat. Lubby likes juicy gossip. Don't feed him because he's stingy." I laughed. Me: "You can't be!" Lubb: "I don't gossip, but I listen." Me: "The whole point of gossip is to exchange info." Lubb: "That would be extremely suspicious of me Spho. I'm a man." Luks: "I thought you were a teddy bear." Lubb: "That too. I keep secrets." Me: "I'm never telling him anything ever again." Luks: "Don't baby." Lubb: "Spho is my best friend. She'll tell me everything.. like how Sandile wants

to sell his hotel to Lubby." Luks: "My goodness. You're like a python." Lubb: "Spho..." Me: "Since you won't exchange gossip I'm not telling you anything." Lubb: "Hmm." Me: "Besides, Sandile changed his mind. He's keeping it. And you'll no longer be my best friend if you go after him." Luks: "Good shot. What's it gonna be Lubby? How much does Spho's friendship mean to you?" Lubb: "Fine! I guess I'll just stick to being a regular hobo then!" Me: "Sana if you're a hobo, what am I?" We laughed. Lubb: "Anyway, let me tell you about my day having to bribe a hobo. So I wake up this morning and get ready. Your son," He pointed at Lukhanyo. Lubb: "Decided to make me a smoothie since I was running late." Luks: "He's my son only when something goes wrong." He whispered to me. Lubb: "So I get propped up and dapper. I'm wearing my favorite suit. Which is fit over function. Now that means, my dear Spho, it fits me better than I can function with it on otherwise lifting my hands. So I drive to the office, taking a sip or few. Something leafy is in there but I'm a sucker for healthy things so I'm cool with it. I get to my office and Jamie is already on me about a meeting. This is initially the first time my tummy jiggles. What a surprise. I ignore it. So I sit down and make myself comfortable whilst still sipping. Hey. I feel another jiggle. By now I'm about 10 minutes to the meeting. No pressure. I gather my things and as soon as I get up, a disrespectful "brrrip" comes out my butt. What the fuck right? I don't usually have uncontrollable farts. Okay. I take my things and two steps to my door another "brip'brip". So I stand still right? Like what in the fuck ? I have two options by now. 1; I make a run for the toilet. 2; I make a run for my car. Now; if you've been to my office, you'll know the car is closer than the bathroom. The decision is simple. I'm gonn run to the car, drive myself home while I shit my pants, get home to wash up and cancel the day from the calendar. Great. So I run for my car, I get there and pat my pants for keys. Oh Sweet Joseph, what fresh hell is this? It's only registering now that when I got out the car earlier, the keys were in the same hand as the cup, so as I put down the smoothie on my desk, I did the keys as well. So that's it, Lubby is about to shit his pants. It was like a volcano was stirring in my stomach, ready to fucking erupt out my butt hole. By God's grace. Thulani pulls up. I literally wrestle him aside and hijack the car driving home. By now my butt cheeks are turning to biltong the way I'm holding them together. The closest house is Lukha's house. I park at the gate buzzing him like a psychopath. "You just missed him" the neighbor yells. Satan put on his lace panties for me today. I'm about to actually mud my pants. Right here. So I hold it together for minute more. I drive to the next best house. I knew for a fact, I wouldn't make it so I started taking off my pants. This is it. The final moments. I could see the headlines. My last bet was to open the dashboard. Again, grace of God. A roll of tissue. I lost my mind. Literally. Stopped the car, grabbed the fissue and ran to the

bushes like I'm high on drugs. That's me, a formal shirt and underwear, middle of nowhere, running into a bush. Now here's the gist. I didn't want a regular bush, I had to look for the best looking bush. Right when I find it-" Luks: "Stooooop." He breathed. I couldn't. The air was out my lungs because of laughing. All I did silently choke-laugh. Lubb: "listen. Right now when I find my bush, my thumbs have hooked the top of my underwear, I'm about to slip off. A hobo comes along. 'The fuck you think you're doing in my bush!' He says. I looked him right in the eye, pulled down my underwear and let it erupt in his bush. BHADABRRUUUBHAAAA!" Lukhanyo fell down laughing. Lubb: "So that's how I ended up bribing a hobo. This is why I don't tell you things Lukhanyo." Luks: "Sorry bafo. You had a bad day." Lubb: "Just laugh." I wiped my tears and breathed. Lubb: "Can we eat now?" Luks: "Okay. Okay." We started on our dinner...

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Dinner was amazing. I'd enjoyed both the lamb and the chicken, but especially the chicken. It was so succulent. It was definitely a favorite of mine now that I had no doubt would turn into a craving soon. I cuddled up on Lukha's arm on the couch as Lubby served us dessert then disappeared. Me: "That chicken was amazing baby. I enjoyed it so much. You're an amazing chef." He smiled. Luks: "I'm glad you love it." He kissed my lips. Me: "Thank you. For all of this and your support." Luks: "You're welcome." Me: "And I'm sorry again. For earlier. The intervi-" Luks: "Don't worry about it baby. It's done now. You were trying to keep me safe. I understand it now." I cuddled further into him. He was amazing. Always so understanding and supportive. A dream. Lubb: "Come on buggies, say hi." I lifted my head and sat up straight. Shock was an understatement. A young photocopy of Luks and Lubby stood before me. This was their son for sure. Probably around 8 years of age. Then another one appeared. A little younger. Another photocopy. This one had the exact same eyes as Lukhanyo but his mouth was definitely Lubby. That big smile. And another photocopy, they looked the same age. Then three girls. Oh. My. God. How is it possible? Two of the girls looked similar to each other and the third one as well, she was about an inch taller than them though. Then a teenager. Big brown eyes, a questioning but pleased look on his face. Then finally I saw him. My heart stopped. Me: "Oh God." I stood up slowly and stared. He stared back with eager eyes. Almost searching. I swallowed a lump. He was a second teenager in this group. His eyes glittered like gold. He looked angelic. Unearthly. Just like, I almost shivered at the realization, just like Kadir. My heart hammered in my chest. I had to protect him. I had to. With

every might of my being. This kid was exactly what he would want, eager, attractive and luring. It would be a deadly combination paired with a powerful Demon. Lubb: "First born is Chumani Mzinyathi," He picked up the first teen. Chuma: "Daddy please!! You're embarrassing me." Lubby put him down. Lubb: "Fine. Next is Thulani Junior. Hey, come here." Junior was stuck at the same place still staring at me with his beautiful face. This was rather awkward. He walked to me then held my waist. Jun: "This is a beautiful fabric. You're pregnant?" I nodded, resisting the instant urge to stroke his head and hug him. Luks: "In case you were wondering, only women get pregnant Junior. Not men." Jun: "I know. Maybe one day I'll have my own child. I've always admired pregnant women. Giving life is a unique gift." Luks: "You want kids?" Jun: "Plenty." Luks: "That's the best news I've heard all day." Lubb: "Alright, the next is Third born. Luthando Mzinyathi, the crazy one." The first photocopy. Lutha: "I'm not crazy dad." An argumentative voice squealed back. So cute. Lubb: "Right. The fourth is our first girl Luhle. The angel. Lutha's twin sister." Luhle: "Thank you daddy. Nice to meet you sisi." She was so sweet. I smiled in response. Lubb: "We then have the second set of twins. Our girls. Buhle and Babalo Morrison-Mzinyathi. Short for Destroy and Hide." They giggled. Lubb: "Then we have our sweetest boy. So shy and loving. Luyanda Morrison-Mzinyathi." Luyanda had a sweet dimple on the side of his face. Very kind soul. Lubb: "Lastly. We have Lubambo Morrison-Mzinyathi. Our musician and commentator." He stared proudly at him. They shared the same big smile but the young boy's smile evaporated once he noticed Junior still standing next to me. Bambo: "Why are you pregnant? Pregnant means ready for baby, right daddy?" Lubb: "I think I heard the gate greeting me from outside." Luks: "You don't get to leave. Stand there. Lubambo, we love you. We love all of you. Yes, Spho is having a baby but none of you are going to be sidelined or ignored. You are still all my children-" Bambo: "Tata, I asked why is she pregnant." Luks: "Lubabalo?" Lubb: "I think the swimming pool is thirsty." He peeked out the window. Luks: "Lubambo. Women get pregnant so that they have babies. Spho wanted a baby." Bambo: "Is it your baby?" Lukhanyo looked at me for help. Luks: "No Bambi, but I'm going to take care of it too. The baby has his own daddy." Bambo: "Oh okay. That's nice." Luks: "There's also another baby, Spho's baby." Bambo: "Like a twin? Like Bubu and Bubbles?" That's so cute. Luks: "No my boy, the other baby already is on earth. He's with his daddy now but I care for him too. Like I do for all of you." Bambo: "Oh yeah. Like Remy does. He's my other daddy too. I have three daddies." This was directed to me. Lubb: "Remy is NOT your daddy! Not in any way, shape or form!!" He bellowed and stormed off. I was taken aback. Lukhanyo just stared after his brother quietly. The kids all stared at him. It's clear he wasn't moving. I took the plunge and followed Lubby. I found him in one of

the rooms. It was huge with only one piece of furniture. A chair. The walls were decorated with expensive paintings. No windows. Me: "Lubby?" I stepped in. Almost like I'm intruding. He just stood there, back facing me staring into nothingness. I went to stand before him. Boy was he pissed. Cold and dark. Wolf-like. Here it was. He lowered his gaze to me. His eyes bored into mine with madness. His brown eyes turning slightly ink black. Me: "What's going on?" I whispered. He didn't respond. I knew he wouldn't. I had to make him trust me so I didn't break eye contact. Me: "That was uncalled for Lubby. What happened in there?" No response. It was like a shell was staring back at me. Nothing else. No heart. No soul. Nothing. Why did he harbor so much anger? It was nothing I've ever seen before. It wasn't demonic at all but it could surely fight just as ugly. I would've felt it if he were one. It would've been too obvious. Although this dark side made it very comforting for something like demons to chill at. I touched his arm and almost choked with the impact. So much pain in memories. Too much I couldn't take it. I let go of him and he almost snapped back to reality. Lubb: "What?" Almost like he wasn't even here. Me: "Nothing. You're strong. Your spirit." He smiled. Lubb: "I'm a teddy bear." Finally, he's back. For a second, I'd panicked. Me: "Who hurt you Lubabalo? Why are you so unhappy?" Lubb: "I don't know what you're on about young lady but you're in my scream room and it's off limits. Everyone knows this. Choo-choo now." Me: "I'm not leaving until you tell me." Lubb: "Fine then, you can be my second piece of furniture. I need a juice." Me: "I'm here if you need to talk. We can find healing for you. You cannot carry on like this any longer Lubabalo, your son will inherit this anger." Lubb: "I have 6 sons, which one are you-" Me: "Don't ever scream at him like that. Ever again." A flash of undisclosed anger swept from head to toe. I had to calm down. Me: "He's just a child." I walked out.

Back in the living room, the kids had settled into what I would think is their normal spots. They all looked so comfortable. Luthando with his brothers. Luhle on her father's lap and the other two girls playing with Luyanda. Lubby walked in and swept Lubambo up in his arms and they left the house together. Nobody looked or even asked. Luks: "They do that often. The walk to the lake calms them down." He confirmed. Luks: "He's okay?" Me: "No. He's not." I could see panic in Luhle's face. She knows something. Me: "Where's Junior?" Luks: "Probably drawing. He loves it." Me: "But where." Just then Junior walked in carrying a paper. It was a drawing made from pastels. The colors he used were bright and bold. They made me shiver. The drawing itself did. It was just a quick outline sketch from my shoulders, arms and my belly. Both my hands holding it. I looked up at him. Me: "You drew this in 15 minutes?" He

nodded proudly. Luks: "He's pretty great at it but this is a first. You never draw people Juni." Jun: "I couldn't help it. My hand just couldn't stop." The bright smile on his face was evident. Jun: "It was so amazing. This is just a rough draft. May you please let me take a picture sisi?" This I don't like. Jun: "I need this." I nodded reluctantly. We position the picture in their back yard. The lighting is glorious. Luthando takes the picture with his father's phone. At such an angle, you would swear he were a professional photographer. They analyzed the picture, Lutha Chuma and Juni. They talk about it. Discuss the lighting, the angle. I was in awe. Me: "Every one of your kids has an artistic ability?" Incredible. I instantly wanted Chrissie cakes, Lammy and the Unborn on this bandwagon. Luks: "Yes. Luthando, photography. Chuma loves everything digital so he usually edits, Junior draws and paints, Buhle and Bubbles are dancers, Lukha Junior (Stuja's child) is also in the photography but prefers sketching as well as writing, Luhle sings like an angel and Luyanda is a king on the panio." Me: "And what about Lubambo?" Luks: "I told you this before baby. He's all of them combined. Although he's not much interested in anything. He'd rather just help." I nodded. The picture discussion was done finally. Jun: "We like this one. We think the lighting caught your skin perfectly. There's a glimmer in your eyes, uncertainty but strength. It's beautiful." Me: "Thank you." He nods. Jun: "I need to go. It was lovely meeting you sisi." Me: "It was lovely meeting every one of you." They all said their thank you and left for their rooms I think. Luks: "They love you." He smiled. Me: "They're just polite." Luks: "Trust me, they love you. Oh and friendly reminder, you're now Junior's muse. He will call you to listen to the sound of your voice as he sketches." I laughed. Me: "Your kids are so well mannered. It's amazing. You're a good dad." Luks: "Thank you. Speaking of being a good dad, I need to go make sure they're done with homework, washing up and tucked in. Do you mind giving me a minute?" Me: "How about I go home and you take your time then come over later once you're done." Luks: "You're not going home in the dark alone with some Uber stranger." Me: "I'm taking your car." Luks: "I'm not letting you drive in the dark alone Spho. No. There's Lubby, he'll take you home." Lubb: "I heard my name." Luks: "You're driving Spho home and coming back without stepping out of that car. I need to wash up the kids." Lubb: "I will do as I please, thank you-" Luks: "I'm expecting you back here in 20 minutes Lubabalo. Don't try me." He kissed my lips. Luks: "I love you." I saw a painful glitter in his eyes. Me: "You don't have to worry about anything. I love you more." I whispered in his ear. He swallowed. Luks: "Okay." He kissed my tummy. Luks: "Behave my little King. Stop stressing your mommy." Bambo: "MY Little King?" Lubb: "Oh-oh. I'm going upstairs to sweep the roof." Luks: "oh. Lubambo nkosi yam." Me: "Good luck baby." I walked out after Lubby. He drove me home with Lukhanyo's Bentley. The drive was rather quiet. Me:

"Lubby?" Lubb: "Yes pumpkin?" Me: "Why are you in that much pain? Why aren't you letting it go? What happened to you?" Lubb: "Nothing. I'm absolutely fine." Me: "You're not. Your soul is bleeding." Lubb: "Girl.." he chuckled. Me: "It's a woman." Lubb: "No." Me: "I'm not asking. She hurt you." Lubb: "This is my least favorite conversation of all time Spho. Matter of fact, I don't like it at all." Me: "This anger isn't safe. I could see Lulle panic when I came to the lounge. Then the way you scream at Lubambo? You want him to grow up like you?" Lubb: "No. He can't. Spho, I'm doing everything to make sure my son never gets hurt. He can't turn into me. Miserable and alone." Me: "Why don't you talk to her?" Lubb: "She doesn't want me near her." He whispered. Lubb: "She's scared. Fuck it, I'm scared." Me: "So you'd rather be hurt and alone?" Lubb: "I can't let the kids go through that. I'm grown, I can take it. Hey listen, is there any chance you thought about our partnership? Spho, I really want to help. You need to expand your base. If you want your investors to feel safe, you need to stretch out and connect to other big companies. Like mine." Me: "I'll think about it. For now, I'm focusing on mine only." Lubb: "I can accept that." He parked in my driveway. Me: "If you need anything. To talk, or someone to pray for you for a change, come straight to me. I can make it hurt less Lubabalo." Lubb: "Spho...I'm flattered but I'm not into-" Me: "You're going to come back. And I'm going to pray for you. That's all I'm saying." Lubb: "Pumpkin, I can pray for myself. Thank you-" Me: "Yes. But you'll need me." I got out the car and walked into my house. Lubby drove home and walked into the house. Lubb: "Baffles? Bafo, I'm home!" Luks: "Bedroom." Lubby climbed up the stairs to him. Lukha was carrying Babalo in his left arm, tucking in Luthando. Lubb: "Hey." He whispered, taking his daughter. Luks: "The others are in bed. Junior still drawing." Lubby went to Junior's room. Lubb: "Baby boy." Jun: "Dad." He focused on the phone in his hand. Lubb: "What's that." Jun: "Trying to capture her eyes. Just something that warms my heart and makes me emotional when I look at them. Daddy, I want to cry. She's so beautiful." Lubb: "Indeed but you got to get to bed. You got school tomorrow." Jun: "One more hour please?" Lubb: "Just one but I'm taking this." He walked out to put Babalo in bed next to Buhle in their own room. Lubby walked back out looking at the picture in the phone. Luks: "I'm in here." He was in his room. Lubb: "Hey." Luks: "Why do you have that look on your face? What did you do?" Lubb: "Spho.. is she.. a psychic?" Lukhanyo laughed. Luks: "No." Lubb: "Then what's her deal?" Luks: "She's just nice." Lubb: "You're lying. You can't lie to me." Luks: "Why do you think she's a psychic?" Lubb: "Because this." He gave him the phone. Lukhanyo stared at the picture and swallowed. Luks: "You know Chuma and his editing. He's a genius." Lubb: "Lukhanyo." Luks: "I don't know what you want me to tell you." Lubb: "Tell me." Luks: "Spho is good woman. That's it. Nothing else. Why are you nervous."

Lubabalo come on bra." Lubb: "She said I should tell her if I need someone to talk to and that she can make it hurt less. At first I thought she meant... you know. But she said she wanted to pray for me. Something about the way she said it scares me Lukhanyo. I don't feel okay at all." Luks: "Then let her pray for you. You always wanting someone to pray for you, here's your chance." Lubb: "I can't." He sat down. Lubb: "I'm scared." Luks: "Haibo. Since when?" Lubb: "Lukhanyo. Since now." Luks: "I'm confused. You're scared of Spho?" Lubb: "Yes. And I think I made it clear when I almost peed myself when she appeared in front of me in my scream room." Luks: "She walked in after you. She didn't just appear." Lubb: "Did she? I feel like I would remember. I only saw her when she touched my arm." Luks: "You're just a little tired. Did you take your pills?" Lubb: "I don't need pills. Maybe I do. I mean it's ridiculous even thinking she has super powers right?" He laughed. Lubb: "Oh my beautiful brain with a wild imagination." He shook his head. Lubb: "She is gorgeous though. Where did you find her?" Luks: "I told you already. At the club. Sitting with her friend. She had this glow." He sat down. Lubb: "You're in love." Luks: "I am." Lubb: "You asked her, didn't you." Luks: "Khayeke bra."(Leave me alone.) Lubb: "You're barely dating a month and you already ask for marriage? Lukhanyo you're my boyfriend. You can't be shooting your shots out there." Lukhanyo pushed him. Luks: "I'll be back tomorrow. Will you need help with the kids?" Lubb: "I never need help with my kids. Don't worry." Luks: "You sure you're okay? Just generally." Lubb: "I'm fine." Lukhanyo took his keys and walked out, driving to his girlfriend. Lubabalo sat on the bed and stared at the phone left behind. The picture still on. Her eyes staring at him. His heart hammered in his chest painfully. He took his phone and dialed a number. Lubby: "Biggie?" Soma: "Lubabalo Morrison." Lubb: "Can you come over? I don't think I want to be alone." Soma: "I'm on my way." He hung up.

After a shower, I just had on a silk robe and sitting on my bed. I took my Bible and read a few verses and prayed. Me: "Thank you Jesus for your love. Thank you for the growth, for keeping me and my family safe. Thank you for the love that is surrounding me. I'm so grateful to You, my Lord. I pray for your protection at all times, let no evil harm my loved ones. May the angels bind Lukhanyo's family with love and security. Burn and break down every force that tries to destroy them. Hold them to You, God." I walked around my house. Me: "The blessings You have given me amaze me Father. I pray to You for my Children. Cleanse them with the blood of Jesus Christ Lord. Hold our hand in the quest of stepping closer to You my Lord. I trust in You my God. Ndithemba kuwe Bawo." I walked in the lounge. Me: "In all times.. You are with me. In all times, you're looking after me. Ignite my hands with the fire to

touch the hearts of Your children. Those who have lost all hope and faith. Those who are in pain. Physically, mentally, emotionally. Hold them to Your heart my God. Break the chains of depression in your children. Wipe their tears God. Open their hearts. While they have no one else looking after them Father, You are the only one there. Make them feel your presence." I kneeled down. Me: "Hold their hearts Father. Lead them to light. They will put down the pills, they put down the rope, they will kneel to You and you will accept them as they are God. Nothing they go through is bigger than you. Enlighten their spirits Jesus. Strengthen them at all times. Look after our children Father. These are the times that are bringing us close to the end. Protect our children from these monsters. I command on your word. Bring down Your angels. Shake the foundations of our souls. Let Your word seep into our hearts and touch the deepest scar that can't heal. You're our deliverer. Our healer. Father.." I called out. Me: "Do you hear me... do you hear me crying out to you God? I continue to trust in you God. You are the only one I have left. Please hear our cries. Hear your children's cries. Wipe their tears father.. Ngena Lukhanyo." He walked in and kneeled next to me holding my hand. Me: "The chains are broken. The pain is gone. It is leaving you with peace. With happiness. You will look in the mirror and see success. You will look in the mirror and see a good parent to your children. A good child to your parents. God has lifted Your burdens. You are not a disgrace. We love you. You're loved by God. His angels sit and cry with you. His angels breath with you. You have survived this far because they're holding on to you. Do not let go. Do not embarrass God. You are his creation. The apple of his eye. You are loved. I lift my hands in Praise. I lift my voice to Your Holy name. I lift my hands in Praise. I lift my voice to Your Holy Name. Amen.... "

Admin Note: I'm sorry I couldn't carry on for a longer chapter or write another one for you. I'm going through something at the moment. The prayer in there is mostly for me, and mostly for you all that are suffering in silence. Once I'm fine again, I'll continue. Please be patient. Thank you.

#210

The next morning I woke up to Lukhanyo staring at me. For once I'd had a peaceful sleep. Luks: "Hey you." Me: "How long have you been staring at me?" Luks: "Two hours and 12 minutes now." I laughed. And rolled out of bed. A sudden flash came into my thoughts. I stopped for a second and focused. Graham. I needed to see and talk to him. "Do you really want to do that?"

The Unborn spoke. I was not even shocked by now. I just brushed my teeth and used the toilet. Me: "Baby. I think I need some few things from the shop." Luks: "I'll get them baby. What do you need." I wrote him down a list and he left immediately. Me: "King." Unborn: "My queen." Me: "Why are you doing this." Unborn: "Doing what? Protecting you?" Me: "You're supposed to be a baby in my stomach!! Not gallivanting in the world hurting people!" Unborn: "I can be whatever I want. Mother, I am the Unborn King of the full dark army. You know that." Me: "Why don't you want Graham?" He: "I didn't say I don't want him, just that are you ready to find out who he really is." I breathed, trying to collect my patience. Me: "Why did you hurt your brother!" He: "If I don't hurt him, the world will. He needs to be strong. Only one King Komander can survive-" Me: "He's a baby!" He: "So am I. But He almost crippled Father Kadir." Me: "How do you know that!" He: "The dark world knows a lot mama. That's where I reside. Until I come out of you, to rule." Me: "King, I love you my son-" He: "I know. But I'm not turning Pure. I choose my father." Me: "The dark army is defeated. It will be wiped out." He: "I don't make the rules Mother." Me: "Can you just... can you not harm anyone?" He: "I only harm those that hurt my queen. You are my mother. The different sides we're on do not dictate my loyalty to you." Me: "And him...?" I pointed on the empty bed where Lukhanyo was laying just 30 minutes ago. He: "I do not mind his presence." Me: "You need a source, don't you?" He: "Of course I do. But he's not the one." Me: "This family is off limits!!!" The shadow appeared right in my face I almost jumped back with shock. He: "No it's not but I'm not here for them. I have a duty to fulfill, which is to protect you Mother. The way you protect me. Once I'm born, I answer to my father. Your new family won't be affected." Me: "You... like him?" He disappeared. Great. I showered and made my bed. Have you ever felt so helpless? That's how I felt. And tired. I felt very tired. After making the bed, Lukhanyo came in. Luks: "My angel." He gave me the plastic. Luks: "We kind of need to talk." We sat down. Luks: "No need to freak out." I nodded as he held my hand. Luks: "So... I spoke to Lubby when he came back he told me that you asked to pray for him." Me: "I did." Luks: "What happened in the scream room?" Me: "I walked in and tried to talk to him but he was in a daze. When I touched his arm I almost vibrated with the shock. He's in pain Lukhanyo. A lot of it. He's tried killing himself more than once. I could feel it with a mere touch on his skin. Lubabalo has been suffering for a very long time." Luks: "oh." He looked at the floor. Me: "He's on medication?" He nodded. Me: "Why?" He let go of my hand. I could see the tears threatening his eyes and his jaw tighten. Luks: "So if you pray for him, is he gonna be okay?" Me: "I can't say Lukhanyo. That type of pain....I don't know." He shook his head. Luks: "So what's gonna happen?" Me: "What do you mean?" Luks: "In the future. You can see future right? Visions. What's

gonna happen?" Me: "I don't see the future. I see the present-" Luks: "But you can try!!" I got a fright. Me: "I'll try but I can't promise. Why do you wanna see the future?" Luks: "I can't lose my brother Spho. He's the only thing so close to me that it's actually me. He's me. If he dies...." he held his head. Luks: "I can't take it... please." Me: "Okay." I held his shoulders. Me: "You won't lose your brother. Not yet. Not if I can help it." He turned and hugged me. Luks: "Thank you." Me: "What else did he say." Luks: "He asked if you're a psychic. Says you appeared in front of him suddenly." My heart stopped. Luks: "Told him he was hallucinating. Lubabalo has a wild imagination." Me: "Yeah." What the hell? Luks: "You have nothing to worry about baby. Lubby is on medication, he sees things that aren't there regularly." I nodded. Me: "Okay." My phone rang. Luks: "Yuh hayi kodwa uMasilakhe. Yuh!!" He sulked. Me: "It's not even him, une crush gqithi kuye." He laughed. I picked up my phone. Me: "Spho speaking?" Kirst: "Hi Spho. How are you?" Me: "I'm well thanks. You?" Kirst: "I'm fine. So I'm leaving him.." Me: "That's great Kirst. I'm happy for you. Where are you?" Kirst: "Still packing. Lakhe offered me an apartment but I said I'd ask you first. I don't want to step on your toes." Me: "No its fine Kirsten. You need a place to stay. Look, let's meet up today, I need to see you." Kirst: "Sure thing." We hung up. Luks: "Breakfast?" Me: "Yes please my love." My phone rang as I was about to dial this exact number. Me: "Masil-" Lakhe: "SPHO. COME FETCH HIM!! NOW." I could hear screaming in the background but I wasn't panicking because that was Lammy's happy scream. Yes, he has a happy scream. Me: "What happened?" Lakhe: "It's been an hour of this madness!! Not to mention he didn't sleep!! He doesn't sleep Spho!! Your child doesn't sleep!!!!" He screamed. I fell down laughing. Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi!!!" I hung up and laughed even harder. I couldn't breath. Luks: "Babe?" He peeped in. Luks: "And now?" Me: "Lam is driving his father crazy. Let's make breakfast love." Luks: "Ambom'landa baby." Me: "No, he must get used to it. Lammy is not distressed, he's expressing his happiness." Luks: "I would cry mna. Knowing Lam can scream his lungs out making the whole house shake." I sat in the dining table as he made breakfast for me. His phone rang. Luks: "Hayi ke ningandiqheli mna." He mumbled. Me: "It might be important." Luks: "Do we ever have relaxed mornings?" Me: "Answer it and we might." He answered his phone. Luks: "Ja." Again, phone etiquette. Luks: "Uphi utatakho Chumani?" He listened. Luks: "Utatakho uLubabalo." He dropped the spatula. Luks: "Give him the phone." He waited. Luks: "Chuma has this thing for school, I wasn't notified." Lubb: "He said he told one of....oh it was me. I was half asleep. I'll take care of it." Lukhanyo hung up. Me: "Do you know how to be polite on the phone and on the road?" He laughed. Luks: "No but everyone knows how I am." Me: "No they don't. You drive like a maniac Lukhanyo and answer the phone like one too." He smiled while looking at me. I instantly melted in my

seat. Why won't he give me some dick please? Luks: "I'm always in a rush baby. That's why. But I'll be polite from now on. Lubby is gonna host a party for it, watch." I laughed. Luks: "Speaking of him, are we still going to do a family dinner? With your brothers? I want to get to know them too." Me: "You want Sibulele on your side." He smiled. Luks: "No.." Me: "Sibulele is not into the whole Komander thing. He's the Heir and hates it. Using him for it can only bring you trouble my love. I'm just saying." Luks: "I don't want to use Sibulele. I want to get to know him. I'm dating his sister. I don't want trouble." Me: "You said brothers. So... who else." Luks: "Sandile obviously. You're close with him. I don't want to come between you two. So let's all link up and get to know one another." Me: "Okay. I'll let them know once they get here and we'll plan it. You tell your brothers too." Luks: "Yuh baby. I'm only telling Lubby, Stu and Thulz. The others gonna have to wait. Yuh." Me: "Okay baby." We had our breakfast while he spoke about his day and where he will be, doing what. I had a website to create, and meeting Kirsten. But before all that I need to go sort out Lam's chaos. Lakhe's anger yesterday was really out of place. Oh fuck... it can't be.. Luks: "What?" Me: "It's him." I jumped up and ran to get dressed. Luks: "Him who?" I pulled on jeans. Me: "I spoke to the Unborn. He needs a source to feed off. For him to be able to show up whenever he likes. I thought he would be using you since you're close to me but..." Luks: "But?" Me: "He's using his father." Luks: "Is it dangerous?" Me: "He kills people Lukhanyo." Luks: "Lakhe or the Unborn?" Me: "The Unborn!" I pulled on a loose white t-shirt. Luks: "Okay. Be careful Spho. What are you going to do?" He kneeled in front of me and helped me put on sneakers. Me: "I need to warn Lakhe not to get angry. He's a little... troubled." Luks: "Troubled how?" Me: "It doesn't matter. He just needs to be warned." Luks: "Okay." Me: "You're mad." Luks: "Nah. Do your thing." Me: "Baby come on. The kids live with him. The last thing I need is him getting into motion without realizing it. At least he's trained enough to resist it if he knows." Luks: "Ok." I was really tempted to show him. I just didn't want to scare him but he didn't believe me. Me: "Lukhanyo. You told me you'd understand." Luks: "I do." He stood up putting his hands in his pockets. Me: "Give me your hands." He gave me his hands. Me: "Close your eyes." He did. I too him to the scene of Dumi's house from start to finish. Then took him slowly to Rex Komander changing form into everything he wants... Lukhanyo's breathing escalated, his hands shaking. Then the last scene. In the forest. He screamed. I let go of him. He held his chest. Luks: "What the fuck was that!!" Me: "That is what we're dealing with Lukhanyo." He sat down, trying to breath. His whole body was shaking. Me: "Baby?" Luks: "Don't touch me." He stared at the floor. Luks: "That's what... that's your father?" Me: "Yes." Luks: "He's ...real?" Me: "Baby? You thought I made this whole thing up?" Luks: "I don't know what I just saw Sphosenkosi!!" He tried to stand and sat again, his

knees wobbly. Luks: "It can't... he can't do that Spho! How will you stop him!? You're pregnant! You're a..." Me: "A woman? Pure Queens are more powerful than any Komander. The problem is, I can't fight them alone. He overpowered me when I least expected it. He plays dirty. That's why he turned Lakhe into a demon because he wanted this." I pointed at my tummy. Luks: "No.. no.. the baby is ... going to be fine. He's just a baby." I needed to let him process this. Me: "Are you going to be okay?" He nodded. Luks: "Is it going to happen again when I touch you?" Me: "No baby. I just accessed my memories. It won't happen again. I promise I'll never do that to you again." His shaky hand touched mine and he sighed. Luks: "Don't ever do that again." He pulled me into his chest, hugging me tight. Luks: "I'm so sorry Spho." Me: "Are you okay though?" Luks: "I'm fine baby. I'm good." He looked at my face searching my eyes. Luks: "What should I do?" Me: "Just this. Support." He kissed my lips. Luks: "Okay. That I can do but don't ever show me that again." I smiled. Me: "I won't..but... if we're to be long term... There's a training procedure you'll need to go through. Like initiation. To protect you and make you stronger. No weird shit." Luks: "Does it involve demons?" Me: "Not at all." Luks: "Then okay. We'll talk about it when we arrive at that stage. When you think I'm ready." Me: "I have to go now." Luks: "Yes baby. Sure." I kissed him, taking my bags. He followed me to the kitchen. Me: "Will you lock up?" Luks: "Yes sthandwa Sam. I'll bring the keys to your office." I kissed him again and drove off. Likhanyo took out his phone and dialed a number. Luks: "Wenzani." Lubb: "Eating. Nanku Soma. Say hi." Luks: "Lubby if you couldn't sleep alone why didn't you tell me?" Lubb: "Who said I didn't sleep alone?" Luks: "Why is Soma there at this hour! He is married Lubabalo, you can't keep dragging him out of bed to keep you company. I asked you before I left if you're okay!" Lubb: "Don't yell at me!" Luks: "Why did you lie to me?" Lubb: "You have a girlfriend Likhanyo I can't be keeping you here. What I do in my spare time and with whom is none of your business!" He hung up.

I parked my car in front of Lakhe's house. Yep. He was angry alright. Me: "Masilakhe." I walked into the house. Lam was holding on the table screaming his lungs out banging the remote. Lam: "DADADADADADADAAAAADAAADADA!!!" It was piercing my ears. Un-fucking-believable. Me: "Khayalam!" He stopped and stared at me then smiled, crawling to me hurriedly. Me: "Hayi baby, what were you doing?" I picked him up from the floor then searched for his father. He was standing in the middle of the passage, breathing. Oh shit. Me: "Hello Dada." Lakhe: "He. Won't. Stop." Me: "He stopped now. How are you?" His eyes were ablaze with anger and probably fatigue. Lakhe: "I didn't sleep Spho." Me: "He was

chatting all night, wasn't he? He does that sometimes. Especially if he took a nap too late." Lakhe turned and walked to his room shutting the door closed. Nice. Me: "Did you eat baby?" Lam just stared at me with the biggest smile on his face. Me: "But you're silly baby. Don't do that." Lakhe came back out wearing a shirt. Me: "Where do you think you're going?" Lakhe: "I have work to get to." Me: "Nope. Not like that. Look at you. You didn't sleep. Where are the kids?" Lakhe: "Miya took them to school. Spho, why is Lam acting so crazy? Why?" Me: "Lakhe, I gave you Lam's journal but you didn't follow his routine. He shouldn't take a nap after 6pm. And what did you feed him?" He looked at the floor embarrassed. Me: "What did you feed him Lakhe?" Lakhe: "I bought lollipops for the kids and one for Lam too. He liked it." I laughed. Me: "You brought this on yourself Masilakhe. I don't feel sorry for you at all. Anyway, we need to talk about your anger sir. Come sit with me." We went to the lounge to sit. Me: "First off, our kids. I spoke to the Unborn." Lakhe: "Really? How? Can you summon him?" Me: "NO! Lakhe it's not a cute conversation. It never is. I asked him why he hurt Lam and he said if he doesn't hurt him the world will. That only one King Komander can survive." Lakhe: "What does that mean?" Me: "I don't know. But also... we spoke about him. He needs a source to be able to appear on earth. His source could be you." Lakhe: "That's ridiculous. You cleared the demons out of me. You took them out Spho. Every single one!! I felt it detach from my soul." Me: "I know. But it's complicated. Your anger Lakhe, it's a big problem. It attracts them very quickly. The more you get angry, the closer they come and the harder it is to resist. Look, it's hard. I know this because I'm pregnant with YOU. Every time I get pissed, this kid goes out there to teach that person a lesson. Demon or not, Lakhe that is your personality trait. You need to tone it down." He nodded. Me: "Kirsten told me you offered her an apartment?" Lakhe: "Yeah. The other house we had. It's empty and she needs a place." Me: "It's fine. And Sandile?" Lakhe: "Don't even talk to me about those two!! Sandile and Nosi are irresponsible!!" Me: "Okay. Calm down but why call the cops on them?" Lakhe: "Because they don't listen! They broke into my house!" Me: "It's their home!" Lakhe: "No. Their home is right here!" Me: "Lakhe. You need to calm down. I'll speak to them but stop going crazy. Look at you growing Grey hairs now. No man." Lakhe: "Spho, Sandile does not listen to me." Me: "I said I will talk to him." I gave him a sleeping Lam. Me: "Do not mess up his routine again. No lollipops no matter how cute his sulky face is, don't give in!" Lakhe: "But have you seen how his bottom lip quivers and his eyes get all big and glossy?" Me: "I know that look. I said don't give in. I mean it." Lakhe: "Spho, Sandile only listens to you. He doesn't care about anyone else. You need to call him to order." Me: "He's older than me! I can't tell him what to do. He's your brother." Lakhe: "He calls you Mummy. Runs straight to you when you call. LIVES with you. You are the

only person he listens to. Please." Me: "But Lakhe how will Sandile listen to you if you're always screaming at him?" Lakhe: "That's why I'm giving him to you to talk to. And please don't breastfeed him this time." Me: "I don't breastfeed him!" Lakhe: "Explain then why he's running around acting like a lunatic like this one over here?" A giggle slipped out of my mouth. Me: "Mxim." Lakhe: "Your kids are insane Spho. All of them. You fixed this one, now put Sandile into routine. I beg this of you. I need to get some sleep." Me: "Alright. I'll fetch the kids from school later." Lakhe: "Thanks." Me: "Do you have Kristen's current address?" Lakhe: "Yeah." He sent it immediately. Me: "Thank you. She might need help moving." Lakhe: "Send my regards." I walked out to my car and drove to Kristen's house.

The house was a double storey in a beautiful suburb. The last house on the left side on the street. Big beautiful yard. I could feel my stomach unsettling. Unborn appeared next to me. He: "Shall I?" Me: "I'll take care of it." I walked to the house, hearing her screaming painfully from inside just before I knocked. Unborn was already inside. I kicked the door and walked in. Kirsten was naked on the floor, her husband standing above her yelling. I couldn't even hear what he was saying. He looked at me and spoke. Angry. Charging toward me. I smiled. Me: "Don't do that." I warned. Him: "Don't tell me what to do in my fucking hou-" Me: "Volare." A force blew him right across the room banging him on the wall. He fell down with a thud. Him: "What the hell..." Me: "surge spirituum." Unborn: "I want him." Me: "You wait." I bent down to Kirsten. Me: "You okay?" She nodded. Me: "Get dressed. I'm here to take you." She went to her room. The husband attempted to get up, crawling to his phone. Me: "Impetus." He screamed and shriveled on the floor. I let him burn until his screams turn silent. Me: "King." The shadow grabbed his ankles and lifted him up into the air. Him: "Please!!" He cried. Him: "Please stop!!! Please!" He brought him closer to me. I held the husband's neck. Me: "They will ask you what happened here today. You will tell them it was time. The queen was here. They will ask who is the queen. You will tell them it was Queen Komander of the Pure blood. The one that brings evil to its knees. They will ask what happened to your family. You will tell them the queen took them home. God will always protect His children. And you will spend the rest of your life bowing to His knees." Kirsten appeared again, dressed. My shadow let go of him and he fell to the floor. She stared at me, the oxygen leaving her body. Me: "Catch her." She went down, fainting. Unborn to grab her before she hit the floor. Me: "By the grace of God and all His servants, All His Angels, I command you a new life of repentance. It is in your choosing whether you obey or perish." I went to pick up Kirsten from the floor and walked out to my

car. The Unborn stared at the husband laying on the floor. He looked up and finally saw the demon standing before him. All smoke the shape of a human body floating above him. The dark smoke reached out to his neck, holding it firm. He opened his mouth breathed smoke into it, choking him internally until he fell limp on the kitchen floor....

#211

I was with Kirsten at Lakhe's house. He was still asleep with Lam. Nobody else was here. I needed her to wake up in a safe place surrounded by love. Imagine waking up alone after a bothering nightmare. Lakhe walked into the lounge rubbing his eyes. Lakhe: "And then?" Me: "I just need her to wake up and be around people." Lakhe: "What people Spho? I'm sleeping." Me: "Well, can't you get your assistant here to just look after her for a bit?" Lakhe: "Why don't you do it?" Me: "I need to go to work." Lakhe: "What happened to her?" Me: "I found him beating her." Lakhe: "Where is he." Me: "I told you to calm down. I took care of it. Call your PA please." Lakhe: "Spho, Kirsten is gonna need you here when she wakes up, not a stranger." Me: "Then you'll call me." Just then she woke up. Me: "Hey Kirst." She stared at me and jumped up running behind Lakhe. Great. Lakhe lifted an eyebrow. Lakhe: "Somebody want to explain to me what is going on? Spho?" Kirst: "She...she... she's..." She stuttered. Lakhe tried to look at her but she was stuck on his back. Kirst: "She's demonic! I saw her! She had him flying in the air. Her eyes. She had blue eyes!! There was a shadow around her!!" Lakhe: "Kirsten... Spho is not demonic. She was trying to protect you." Kirst: "But..." She breathed. Lakhe: "That's why you were drawn to her. She prays for you. She protects people like you. That's why she went there to fetch you from him. He could've killed you." She kept quiet. I understood she was still shocked. Who wouldn't be. Your husband hanging in mid air is scary as shit. Kirst: "She's not gonna hurt me?" Lakhe: "No. Tell her Spho." Me: "I'm not going to hurt you Kirsten. He's not going to hurt you. Ever." She finally stepped out of her hiding. Kirst: "How did..." Me: "Get some rest and eat. We'll talk about this later okay?" Kirst: "Ok." She shivered. Lakhe: "I'll call the agency and check if they have Emotional support assistants." He walked to his room. Kirsten stayed right where she was across the room. I couldn't force her to be comfortable. She just stared at me. Kirst: "What are you?" Me: "Queen Komander of the Pure blood." Kirst: "What is that?" Me: "We'll talk about it later Kirsten. Now is not the time. You need to calm down." Kirst: "Is Lakhe also?" Me: "No. Not anymore." He walked back in talking on the phone. Lakhe: "Sure thing." He hung up. Lakhe: "They'll send someone who has experience in Psychology. She'll be here in in an hour.

Who's hungry? There's the kitchen straight through there. Make yourselves at home. I need to sleep. Try and be as quiet as possible please." He walked to his room, shutting his door. Kirst: "Is he always like-" Me: "Yep. You don't disturb Lakhe and his sleep. Or Lam for that matter. It will be a cold wintery day. What you wanna eat?" Kirst: "I'm fine." So we sat in silence for a while. Uncomfortable silence because she kept glancing at me. Kirst: "Is he gonna be okay? My ..husband..." Me: "He should be fine. In pain, but fine." Kirst: "What is gonna happen?" Me: "If he listened to my message, he will be a better person, continue with his life as expected. I can't kill so he's not gonna die or anything." Kirst: "Oh." Silence again. Kirst: "I've never seen...supernatural powers before. I thought they were... lies." Me: "Are you glad they're not?" She looked to the floor. Kirst: "Now I owe a debt.. to you for saving me. You want my soul?" Her voice shaky. Me: "No, I just want you to give your life to God. Not me. I'm just his servant." Kirst: "Oh." Finally. The psychologist arrived. I showed them around to Kristen's room. Then went to look for Lakhe. Lakhe: "Spho what did I say?" He grumbled. Me: "I know I just dumped this on you last minute so I feel like I need to explain to Miya what is going on. What's her number?" Lakhe: "Leave it. I'll explain later." Me: "Lakhe, I don't want your girlfriend to hate me. Give me her number-" Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi. Get out of my bedroom unless you want to get into this bed. This is MY house. I'll tell Miya myself LATER." Yoh. I turned and walked out the house.

Lakhe can be a dragon when he hasn't slept. I went straight to my office and found Sibü sitting inside. Me: "How." My office is always locked and Jan isn't here. Sibü: "Good morning Spho." Jan was probably at the investment firm, I told her to start there. I needed a new assistant for here. Me: "Good morning Bhufi." Sibü: "I'm sorry. About getting upset and leaving without talking to you. I hate not talking to you." Me: "You shouldn't have freaked out like that, I wasn't trying to disrespect you. I know you're capable of handling your things but I don't want you indebted to him." Sibü: "Like you said, I'm capable. You are Queen but I'm still your older brother." And I knew that was the end of that topic. Me: "Okay." Sibü: "He is getting out of control Spho. Kadir told me to tell you that." Me: "I know." Sibü: "Do you know what he did to that man this morning?" Me: "He didn't do anything. He disappeared before I walked out. Right after he put her gently down." Sibü: "He didn't. He hid from you until you walked out. You'll find out soon enough." I sighed. I was fucking helpless. Sibü: "How far along?" Me: "6 months." He nodded. Sibü: "We need a plan for when he's here. Soon." Me: "What is the plan." Sibü: "Only one King Komander can survive-" Me: "Don't you think I know that!!" Sibü: "I'm sorry. Let me get you something to eat." He walked out. I sat in my office and started on my work.

Tommy was arriving tomorrow and we had a meeting. I didn't even have a team for him yet, the work was half done. Shit was about to get real. I'd totally forgotten. Tar was also busy with the other company's press release and Jan was overwhelmed. The last thing I needed was to disappoint Tommy. Lukhanyo walked in as I went through my things. Luks: "Love of my life." Me: "Baby, I can't. I'm stressed. I totally forgot about my meeting tomorrow." Luks: "What meeting?" Me: "Thomas Dewardo." He looked at my calendar. Luks: "On what date did he give you?" Me: "The 14th." Luks: "The 14th is on Monday baby. Today is the 10th." I double checked my email and the date then breathed a sigh of relief. Me: "But I'm still in shit. I need a team." I quickly briefed him. Luks: "I thought you spoke to Lubby about this." Me: "No. Lubby is interested in the investment company." Luks: "Why don't you use him then? He has a team of marketing consultants and brand strategists. He wouldn't mind borrowing you a few. He would do anything to please you right now." Me: "I don't want to take advantage of your brother." Luks: "I'm not asking you to. Spho, if you need help you need to learn to ask people." I sighed. What choice do I have. Luks: "But put him on loudspeaker. I need to hear him cry." I took the number and called. Lubb: "Dr Lubabalo Morrison speaking." Lukhanyo held his mouth, laughing. Me: "Hi Dr Morrison, you're speaking to Spho-" Lubb: "Oh my God!!! PUMPKIN?" Me: "Yes. It's me. How are you?" Lubb: "I am doing amazing. How are you?" Me: "I'm good. Lubby, I need your help and I want you to know it's okay if you say no-" Lubb: "YES!!! I'm going to the helicopter right now. Where are you!!!!" I was dealing with a lunatic here. Me: "Calm down. You don't need a helicopter. Look, I just need a few brand strategists and marketing personnel. There's something I'm trying to put toge-" Lubb: "Yes!! Of course!!" Me: "Thank you Lubby. Should I sen-" He screamed. Lukhanyo dissolved to the floor laughing. Lubb: "Is Bafo there? That's his helpless laugh!! I'm coming baby!" Me: "No! That's not him. Not at all. Uhm. Please send the team either today or tomorrow morning Lubby. Thank you very much." Lubb: "You're welcome pumpkin, enjoy your day." I hung up. Speaking to that guy was exhausting. Me: "Dr?" Luks: "PhD." He sat up again. Me: "Your brother is a lunatic Lukhanyo, he needs to be stopped." Luks: "He's still functional until I can exchange him for a newer version, don't worry." He laughed. Me: "Not funny." I kissed his lips. Me: "Now I work. This was half done, I need to finish it off before they get here so that we have something to work around." Luks: "Okay. But after we-" Sibu walked in. Sibu: "Ta Luks." Luks: "Sho bhuda." Sibu: "This is from Kamva, new recipe." He opened the box and dug in. Me: "Was that not for me?" Sibu: "Proof tasting. I die if you die." Luks laughed. I took my food from Sibu and ate. Me: "Where's Sandile?" Sibu: "In his hotel. He had to pick Boogie up from Puppy camp, said he missed his baby or something." Me: "Nosiphiwo?" Sibu: "Hiding in your house." Me: "Hiding? In

my house?" Sibú: "We arrived about two hours ago. You were gone already." I nodded. Luks: "There's somewhere I need to rush off to real quick. Baby, I'll see you tonight?" Me: "Saturday. You need to spend time with your kids now. You've been with me the whole week, your kids need you, they'll be with their mom during the weekend." Luks: "Fine. I'll see you on the weekend but I'm stalking you though. Until you let me back in." I blushed. Me: "Go." He winked, flashing a dangerous smile and walked out. Sibú: "So the Unborn hasn't unleashed on him yet." Me: "I asked him if he likes him and he didn't respond." Sibú: "He doesn't have feelings. He's King of the dark army. He is not going to respond to that." Me: "But he hasn't hurt him, I'm grateful for it but...it's weird. I thought maybe he needed Lukhanyo as a source but.." Sibú: "His father only is allowed to be his source. Nobody else. He probably doesn't hurt Lukhanyo because Lukhanyo hasn't hurt you. God forbid when he does. Your baby will burn him alive."

Sandile walked out his bedroom carrying Boogie in his arm. Sands: "You want to tell me about camp? Got you some bitches? No? I'm telling your mom-" Luks: "That's creepy." Sands: "What the fuck!!" He jumped. Sands: "How did you get into my house!!" Luks: "I walked in. First bribed your receptionist though. Told her you're my brother in law." Sands: "Sir, what do you want in my house again?" Luks: "I want us to talk. Put the dog down." Sands: "It's not okay man. This is not okay. I'm telling Spho." Luks: "Yeah? And tell her that you're still shipping off illegal merch? Burying people alive and all. Oh and of course what you did in Durban with your bestie just last night. Hijack Sandile? With your sister around. That's what you resort to now? Exposing Nosi to illegal shit?" Sands: "I'm an adrenaline junkie and I did not expose my sister to anything, she was in the house, Sibú and I were playing around for old times' sake before shit got real okay! We just needed some normalcy! That's what normal was to us!" Luks: "before the demons?" Sands: "How the fuck do you know about that!!" Luks: "Is that why you're attached to her?" Sands: "You don't get to ask me that shit!!" Luks: "Oh but I do now. If I let you stick around, I need to know why and how." Sands: "What is How?" Luks: "How to control them and make it hurt less. You're with that right? Making it hurt less for Spho? You love her like your mom. She's everything to you. I was in here...just after you disappeared yesterday. I saw her pictures in your drawer. Talk." Sands: "I'm not attached to Spho. She's just my sister." Luks: "That's a lie Sandile." Sands: "I have pictures of everyone in my family man, what the fucks your problem!!" Luks: "My problem is; you are the only one who can tell me what the hell we're dealing with and how to fucking avoid it Sandile. Your brother was a demon right? Will he tell me? No. Her brother, the fucking Heir of the entire

bloodline so he's not gonna tell me either, so you are my last fucking bet!!! He appears, did you know that? Spho says, the baby in her stomach, appears on earth as a shadow and it TALKS Sandile. An Unborn baby roaming the earth as a grown man talking. That's not creepy right? No!! Not after the shit she showed me in her memory portal!! Sandile. I'm out of my element here. I have access to everything I want on this planet. Spho, is the first woman I cannot understand and I want to. Please." Sands: "Fine." He got up and pulled out a bible and tossed it to him. Sands: "If you feel the building start to shake, you pray. No looking around or acting macho about this. Demons are better thugs than you are. Have Spho on speed dial in case things get out of control and tell her it's your fault." He pulled out another bible. Sands: "I have to stay close to her. Her father made me promise." Luks: "The doctor?" Sands: "The Komander." Luks: "I thought we weren't supposed to say it out loud." Sands: "We're holding bibles, so we get a pass. Kidding, he might rock up here, did you put a speed dial?" Luks: "You're serious?" Sands: "Spho is the only one that can make it stop Lukhanyo, don't forget that it's your fault. I can't afford her mad at me more than now." Luks: "Fine." He pressed on his phone. Sands: "It all started as a prank gone wrong. Spho and Lakhe fought about some shit and this time she was tired so she took off. I knew where she went but I kept my mouth shut, I mean I love Lakhe but he's a nutcase. Proving me right, he decides to eat the take away he's allergic to so that he gets sick enough for Spho to come back. Oh and by the way don't try that; it actually broke her heart. So Lakhe gets sick and is admitted to hospital, throat closes up and all. Spho comes back immediately to take care of him unbeknownst to her he did it on purpose. This was the day they met Chris. You know Dr Ngudla already. He was carrying Chris and examining Lakhe. Spho got attached and wanted to borrow him after hearing his mom was in a car accident. They managed to foster the kid for the weekend. I don't know what the hell but they kind of figured out it might be an illegal adoption or some shit so they went back to the hospital where they finally bumped into K-man. That's where everything spiraled." Luks: "So what does this all mean." Sands: "K-man does illegal adoptions. Snatches kids from parents and ships them all over the world for other families. Better families. So Spho started to dig some more. She and Sibuh wanted to find out who their dad was, Spho managed to find a connection between her parents and him and her old boyfriend Siya, also a doctor. One fateful dinner. She confronted them and He confessed." Luks: "Who?" Sands: "K. He confessed to being her father and showed her his skin drawings. It was crazy. At that time..." he looked at the floor. Sands: "We didn't calculate how powerful his demons were. I got so angry, after she collapsed. She was heavily pregnant with Lam. He had no right to dump this on her. So I fired up the chainsaw and went for his head. Khaya pushed him

out the way and took the hit." Luks: "You were about to saw the man's head off?" Sands: "Yes." Luks: "Continue." Sands: "The saw switched off and I didn't think nothing of it. Anyway. We got our life back soon enough and Spho, she has a good heart, wants to welcome him again, a fresh start. Lakhe and I couldn't let it happen so we faked a possession." Luks: "A demon possession? You're crazier than I thought." Sands: "Don't judge me. Problem is... when you summon his name I think three times... you unleash some sort of spell. It sends you into a suicidal rage. The grandfather drags souls around. He sends the angel of death. One look at him, and you want to hang yourself. He changes form-" Luks: "I saw that." Sands: "Yeah. He visited me as Siyanda. Cast the spell and left me to die. I actually did die." Luks: "How?" Sands: "Ta Luks, I mean I fucking died that night. I was declared dead. They carried my body out to the mortuary. That was the night where he would snatch me up and my body would never be found. K came to help." Luks: "That's what confuses me." Sands: "He was half demon, half pure blood. Spho is his weakness. She asked him for me and he brought me back." Luks: "K?" Sands: "Yes. You already know Spho is the queen right?" Luks: "She told me." Sands: "There hasn't been a queen in her bloodline before. She's the first." The building shook. Sandile stood up. Sands: "That's it for the day. They're coming. Get out." Luks: "No. What about you?" Sands: "I thought I told you not to act like a macho. We'll continue this another time. You have to go." Lukhanyo stared at him. Sands: "You want to see the man? Lukhanyo you will have excruciating nightmares, with screams that break windows if you do. Spho will never forgive me. I'm begging you." Luks: "Fine. I'll be back. You still haven't told me what the fuck happened in that house and how Lakhe turned." Sands: "You have a fetish for danger?" Luks: "Like you wouldn't believe." He walked out.

Late afternoon, after dropping the kids at Lakhe after school, I finally walked in my house. I was so tired. Sandile was sitting on the couch eating chips. Sands: "Hey girl." Me: "What did you do." Sands: "He forced me Spho! Was I supposed to say no? You know how scary your man is when he does his big eyes out. He's a known thug." Me: "What are you talking about?" Sands: "Uhm.." Me: "Don't you dare lie. What did Lukhanyo force you to do?" Sands: "I'm not a snitch." Me: "Sandile Sobukwe!!" Sands: "Hayi mummy. Ask him. I'm not saying nothing." Me: "Fine. You and I need to talk anyway. Sandile, you know how much I love you?" He sat up and looked at me. I sat next to him. Me: "I'm asking." Sands: "No." Me: "I love you more than the water in all the oceans. Double the size of the sky, you're a star. A special star." Sands: "You do know I'm not 5?" Me: "You're not. But I need you to act like it too. Why can't you talk to us when you're going through something? Don't just run off.

Lakhe freaks out everytime you disappear Sandile that's why he gets so angry at you. It's not because he's mad, it's because he loves you and doesn't want to lose you, Bubs. I know this because the last time you left, he was so frustrated, spent the whole night looking for you. Honey what is wrong? I'm here, why can't you talk to me?" He looked away. Sands: "Nothing to talk about." Me: "Is it about the hotel? Is it stressing you?" Sands: "No its not. I just don't want it. I took it because I wanted to make Lakhe proud but he doesn't even show up there to see how it's doing. It's a waste of time and I don't enjoy it." Me: "Have you tried to talk to him?" Sands: "We don't talk in my family Spho." Me: "How about you try?" Sands: "And say what? He's just going to accuse me of being ungrateful and troublesome again!" Me: "Okay, what does Sandile want?" Sands: "I want to work with you." Me: "Sweetheart, doing what?" Sands: "I don't know. Running errands." I giggled. Me: "Tell you what, we'll talk to Lakhe about the hotel. Then you can partner up with me and help me run my second company." He smiled. Me: "Do you even know what I do?" Sands: "Not really." Me: "We'll try this out for one week. You will then see where you fit in and take it from there but you're not an errand boy." He hugged me. Sands: "Thank you. You're the only person who really listens to me." Sibü: "Whatever that is, I want some too. Bad day." He walked in. Sandile hugged him. Sands: "It's okay. Talk to Spho. I cooked." Sibü: "Nothing much going on, I'm just tired." Me: "I'm getting you a tablet, eat your dinner. Where is Nosi?" Sands: "her room." He lounged on the sofa. I went to the room, knocking a bit and walked in. She was reading a book. Nosi: "I'm so sorry Spho." I sighed. Me: "It's okay. Are you ready for school tomorrow?" She nodded. Me: "You remember what I said?" Nosi: "I do. And I decided." Me: "Yeah?" Nosi: "Bhuti asked me to move back home. I like staying here with you but I think I should go to him, he's lonely." Lonely? Masilakhe? Me: "That's a good idea baby." Nosi: "I'll visit you every weekend." Me: "I'd love that." I hugged her. Me: "Just don't disappear on us like that. Tell your brother No next time okay? And call me immediately." Nosi: "I promise." ...

We almost had a drama free evening, all four of us just eating and talking. Sands: "I need to go fetch my son. Uhm.. Spho?" Me: "Tell me what Lukhanyo forced you to do first." Sands: "Nosi." She got up and walked to her room. Sands: "He wants to know more about it. The... demons." Me: "And you told him?" Sands: "Half of it, yes. The building started shaking. The same way it does when Lammy is angry." Me: "Don't tell him more Sandile. It's enough now." Sibü: "He'll obsess over it Spho. Let Sandile finish it. You told him the light version right? Not the gory details." Sands: "Yeah." Me: "Why didn't he ask me." Sands: "He wants to know how to make it hurt less for you." Sibü: "And he just

chose you to tell him..." Sandile stared at him. Sands: "Maybe because I'm good looking." Sibulele: "Where is it." Me: "Where is what?" Sibulele: "He gave it you!!" He grabbed his arm. Sands: "What the fuck man!!" Sibulele: "I Am her brother! I should have it!" Sands: "Sibulele let go of me!" Me: "What is going on!!" I pulled Sibulele. Me: "What is this about?" Sibulele: "Sandile is the source for the Unborn King." Me: "That's impossible! You said it can only be his father. And Sandile is not the father." Sibulele: "Sandile may not be the father, but he is the protector. That is why he's so attached to you. You brought him back to life in that hospital when he was not supposed to live. Sandile acts like your child, because he is your child. He is hosting King."

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I just stared at Sandile in bewilderment. He laughed it off and carried on eating. Sibulele was still staring at him. Me: "Sandile, is this true?" Sands: "No its not." Me: "Sandile." I held his face and looked into his eyes. Sands: "I'm not a demon Spho. You've got to believe me." Me: "I know you're not but you need to tell me the truth. About everything." Sands: "This is the only truth." Sibulele: "He swore a Komander promise, he'll never say anything." He walked to his room. Me: "Sweetheart." Sands: "I'm not a demon." Me: "I know, I'm holding your skin and you're not a demon but Sandile are you his source?" He didn't respond. It wasn't even his fault. Me: "Stay here." I went to Sibulele in the bedroom and closed the door behind me. Me: "What do we do?" Sibulele: "I'm going to him." Me: "And then what?" Sibulele: "Confront him Spho! How could he do this to Sandile knowing how weak he is!" Sands: "I can hear you!!" He yelled. Sibulele: "Sandile has been taken twice by him. He killed him Spho. What is he trying to do now?" He wore his jacket. Me: "I'm coming with you." Sibulele: "No." Me: "Yes. There's some other things I want to clarify with him." We walked out to the lounge. Sands: "Why are you guys making a big deal out of this?" Me: "It is a big deal Sandile. He is not allowed to do this. Stay here, don't move." I followed Sibulele to the car and he drove to the house. The nerve Komander has to not even change his residential address. Sibulele: "You're too lenient on him." Me: "Who? Komander?" Sibulele: "Sandile. You let him get away with murder and that's why it was so easy for the Unborn to use him." Me: "I do not!" Sibulele: "Oh yeah?" Me: "Yes. Sandile is grown. I don't let him get away with anything!" Sibulele: "What does Luks think about it?" Me: "He's fine with it." Sibulele: "Is that why he breaks into Sandile's house?" Me: "What are you talking about?" Sibulele: "Nothing." He parked the car at Komander's residence. Sibulele: "Walk in after me." He walked to the door and entered the house. Komander: "My first born." Sibulele: "I'm not here to chill." Komander: "Of course not. You look fired up. You want to

scream at me. Who did you bring?" I walked in. Kom: "My complete offspring." He smiled. I can't say it didn't feel good to see him. He looked as dashing as ever. I was near a meltdown. Why did he make me have intense daddy issues, when I don't! Kom: "Pregnancy agrees with you." Me: "Sandile told me everything." Kom: "No he didn't. He swore to me, so he naturally can't tell anyone even if he wanted to." He poured himself a red liquid. Kom: "Ask." Me: "What did you make him promise?" Kom: "To protect you. He keeps you safe and helps when things get out of hand. You don't want Babalo near you, so Sandile was the safest bet." Sibulele: "What about me!?" Kom: "You left." He took a sip still staring at me. Me: "What did I tell you if you ever hurt him again?" Kom: "I didn't hurt Sandile. He's fine." Me: "You're turning him into your slave!?" Kom: "He's nobody's slave. He just needs to be near you or Lam to be okay. Your presence pulls him away from the danger and the Unborn swallowing him whole." Me: "Make it stop!" Kom: "I really can't. Spho, this is the safest way to do this. The Unborn needs an outlet or else he'll make it very hurtful for you. He will rupture you from the inside. Let him out every once in a while. Sandile isn't getting hurt at all." Me: "Yes but other people are!" Kom: "People who deserve it. Remember Spho, whilst the Unborn King is in your stomach, he obeys your hearts command. Not your mind, your heart. Whatever you feel in your heart, he does it. Can't really blame him. Only once he's born, he belongs to me." "You?" Sibulele and I said simultaneously. Kom: "Yes me. You can't raise a full dark King as a Pure Queen. He is mine." He leaned on the sofa's arm rest and took another sip of his beverage. Me: "He is not yours. The Unborn King is my son and will stay my son." Kom: "Not your rules Spho. You may be queen but it's not allowed, unless you want to sacrifice Lam." My heart stopped. Me: "You're making me choose between my children!?" My voice piqued. Kom: "No. I'm letting you know how it works. You know two different Kings cannot both survive in the same place. I take the Dark King, you keep Lam." Me: "So that you can go do your evil deeds with him!?" Kom: "But what did you expect? I have a better chance to reason with him than you." Sibulele: "Where is the book?" Kom: "Sandile has it and you're not gonna take it from him." Sibulele: "Don't you think it's gonna clash that he protects Spho and is also the source for the Unborn King?" Kom: "Has it clashed?" Sibulele: "You didn't think this through!?" Kom: "Well... I did." Sibulele: "But?" Kom: "But it's never been done, it's not like I had a manual for this. Your grandfather and I aren't on speaking terms." Sibulele: "You're careless. You know that?" Kom: "Don't speak to me like that!" Sibulele: "Like what? You are careless. You're just ... I can't believe ..." he paced the living room. Sibulele: "You're doing to Spho's kids like you did with us! What if I'd met Spho and we'd had a child? Do you realize how much damage that would have done!" Kom: "It's not damage Sibulele. In breeding is not a foreign concept in our family but I get

your point. The only thing on my mind then was to protect you." Sibulele: "By separating us?" Kom: "I thought we were over this-" Sibulele: "But you're doing it AGAIN!!" Kom: "Both these kids are male, they won't fall in love. They won't even meet. They'll be worlds apart." Me: "I can't do this." I walked out. Actually, no. I walked back in. Me: "Who is Graham?" Kom: "Hm?" Me: "I know you heard me." Kom: "I don't know who Graham is, isn't he your friend? Why are you asking me?" Me: "Fine. You will stay away from my children. That includes Sandile." Kom: "Done. Does it include Lukhanyo?" Me: "How the.." Of course he knew. Kom: "So it's really done with Lakhe?" Me: "You were the one to ruin it!!" Kom: "I did what I thought was best at the time. I'm sorry. It was wrong of me." That I didn't expect. Me: "I keep warning you, the next time it won't come out of my mouth." I walked out to the car. Kom: "She doesn't like me anymore." Sibulele: "What the fuck do you expect!" Kom: "I didn't choose to be like this Sibulele." Sibulele: "Oh? And you didn't have a choice right?" Kom: "What was I supposed to do? Choose the Pure side when I didn't even know if it exists or what it was? You can hate me all you want Sibulele. But you know this as much as I do, I'm the only one you've got." Sibulele walked out.

Sandile was washing the dishes when Fez walked in. Sands: "Hello." Fez: "Where's Spho." Sands: "I said hello." Fez: "Now is not the time Sandile." Sands: "What did he do." He wiped his hands. Fez: "Nothing." Sands: "For the sake of our friendship and Co parenting I need you to tell me what's going on. Is it Gio?" Fez: "You over react Sandile." Sands: "Am I not supposed to, when someone threatens you?" Fez: "This is just relationship problems. Something you obviously don't know." Sands: "Of course I don't know what relationship problems is because I am dating someone who understands me, respects and loves the shit out of me like I do her." Fez: "What?" Sands: "What?" Fez: "You just said you love her." Sands: "Fuck it, yes. I do love her. But I care about you as well. You're my best friend and I need to know you're okay. Tell me." Fez: "I can't." Sands: "Is he hitting you?" Fez: "Where's Spho?" Sandile stormed to the door. Fez grabbed him pulling him back. Sands: "He has no right to touch you!! Why the fuck are you covering for him!" Fez: "You're making everything worse Sandile!" Sands: "HOW!!" Fez: "People are going to talk! You can't keep fighting my battles! Let me deal with this alone okay?" Sands: "I see him just once, I'm cutting his head off." Fez: "Please don't. I promise I'm okay. I just need Spho. Promise me Sandile." Sands: "Fine." He hugged him. Sands: "If you change your mind, I'm here." Fez: "Thank you. Here's Spho." I walked in. Me: "Hey." Sandile walked out. Me: "Where you goin-" Sands: "I need a drink!!" He drove off. Me: "What did you say to him?" Fez: "He's just being a baby. How have you been? Hi Sibbles." Sibulele: "Hey. Let me go after

him." He followed Sandile. Me: "What is going on?" Fez: "He hates Gio." Me: "Why?" Fez: "He thinks Gio is abusing me." Me: "Is he?" Fez: "No! Spho I'm a man okay? I can handle my business." Me: "Doesn't mean you can't get abused. It's still wrong Fezile. Get me my coat!" Fez: "Can everybody just relax!! I'm figuring a wa-" Me: "For him to kill you!?" Fez: "He is not going to kill me. Can you just listen?" Me: "2 minutes, and I'm off." Fez: "Fine. Spho, I love Gio, I haven't had a man ever. Every dude I like locks me in a secret wardrobe, for once I have someone who flaunts me out there, has good taste and money. Have you seen the dating pool for us as guys?" Me: "That's it?" Fez: "He's moved on Spho. I don't have any other choice." Me: "I'm confused. You're with him but he's moved on?" Fez: "No. I mean, Him." I looked around. Me: "Fezile, use your big boy words." Fez: "I've waited months for Sandile. He's just not gay. I thought maybe he liked me. Not just tolerated me but liked me. We share a baby together but... that's it. He doesn't even try." Me: "Babe." I hugged him. Fez: "I told him how I feel, you know. After we took Boogie for his puppy school registration." I had to keep serious but the puppy parenting gets me everytime. Boogie is not even a puppy anymore, he's more like a furry toddler. Fez: "He said to me, 'These things happen and you'll get over it.' Imagine." I opened my bottom cupboard and pulled out a bottle of wine from the back. Fez: "You stash alcohol? You're pregnant!" Me: "It's for emergencies like these. Keep talking." Fez: "That's it. He just told me I'll be fine. Like my feelings are just imaginary, something I can forget." I poured him a glass. Me: "So he didn't freak out on you?" Fez: "No. I'm the mother of his child, he wouldn't hurt me. But I really thought I stood a chance because of that. We bond with Boogie. We take him together to the doctors appointments. He lets the Dr call me Mrs Sobukwe." I fell down laughing. Me: "I'm so sorry. I've been keeping that in since puppy school registration." Fez: "It's not funny Spho. Don't you ever feel the urge to, you know, get back with Lakhe?" Me: "We are not talking about this." Fez: "So yes?" Me: "No! At first, yes. I just felt like falling back into that comfortable life. But I met Lukhanyo, and... wow. It's a different adventure every single day. I kind of forget Lakhe every now and again. So find someone, not an abuser, just someone who respects you. Grow into love with them. If Gio hurts you, it's really not worth it. There are many men around here who would love the chance to date you. You're wonderful." Fez: "So I should give up? On Sandile?" Me: "I can't be the one to tell you that Fez. I'm not him. I don't know what he's thinking. Drink up." I poured him another glass. Fez: "I shouldn't." Me: "Going somewhere?" Fez: "Gio wanted a date night." Me: "Okay. But no more of this hitting you shit. Seriously Fez, I will stomp his face!" Fez: "I know you will mama bear. Thank you." He kissed my cheek and walked out. Where was Nosi? I knocked on her bedroom door and peeped inside. Empty. So for the first time in a while I was

alone. I missed Chrissie cakes and Lammy bear. Tonight could have been a movie and cuddle night but it's already late and they're probably already in bed. My door bell rang. What the? I had a door bell? Nobody ever uses my door bell. Black people knock. "Pumpkin!! Open! It's me!" Oh No. God, No. Lubb: "I know you're in there! I have a surprise for you!! Pumpkin!!" He's not gonna stop. I opened the door. Me: "Dr Lubabalo Morrison." Lubb: "Pumpkin. Look who I brought." The beautiful brown eyed teenage boy stood next to him with a large art bag. Me: "Junior right?" Jun: "Hi Sisi." Me: "Lubby?" I smiled. Lubb: "Oh, Junior wanted to see you, get more features of your face or something. I'm sorry. For just showing up." He looked around and then the floor." Me: "Come in. Sit." They sat down. Junior got out his equipment. Lubby was staring at his hands. Me: "You okay?" Lubb: "Phenomenal." Me: "What is it?" Lubb: "Just... I don't want you Spho. You're beautiful but I don't feel anything. I need you to know that. My brother doesn't trust me and it kind of hurts a bit." Me: "I'm not worried." Lubb: "Yeah but he's going to be mad. Junior needed this and I promised." Me: "It's okay, don't worry Lubby. Would you like something to drink?" Lubb: "Just warm milk please." I went to warm up some milk. Sandile walked in. Sands: "Mummy." Me: "You're okay now?" Sands: "I'm fine." Me: "What did you do?" Sands: "I went for a drink." Me: "No. To Gio." Sands: "Cut off his brakes." Me: "Why would you do that!" I took my phone to call Fez. It was going straight to voice-mail. Me: "You realize Fez is with him right?" Sands: "Fez will be fine. He's nowhere near Gio's car." Me: "What the fuck is going on?" Sands: "Do you trust me?" Me: "Not if someone might die." Sands: "Don't worry. Okay? Trust your Sandcastles." I cut a slice of cake for Lubby. These kids are going to give me a stroke. Sands: "This for me?" Me: "No. We have a guest." He followed me to the lounge. Me: "Here you go Lubby, and a slice of cake." Sands: "MY slice of cake?" Me: "Sandile. I will cut you your own slice of cake. Lubby and Junior are our guests. Say hi." Sands: "Hi." I went back to the kitchen and cut Junior and Sandile their slices bringing them to the lounge again. Sands: "Sit down mummy." Me: "Do you not want milk?" Sands: "I'll get milk. Sit." I sat down while he went to fetch two glasses of milk. Me: "Lubby?" He was staring at the floor quietly. Lubb: "Yes pumpkin?" He smiled. Me: "Don't. I know you're not okay. Don't even bother to lie." He smiled faintly. Lubb: "This is some good cake, lady. Tastes like Mary The Virgin herself baked it." Me: "It's from Woolworths. You've met Sandile right?" Lubb: "Nope." Sands: "Are you kidding?" Lubb: "Oh, hold on... I think I... nah. Don't know who he is, pumpkin." Me: "Fine. Lubby this is Sandile Sobz. Sandile, this is Lubby, Lukhanyo's brother." Lubb: "Who's brother is he?" Sands: "Masilakhe Sobukwe." Lubb: "Oh yeah. Of course. My type." As if on cue, Lakhe knocked on the door. I know it was him because I heard Chris' voice. Chris: "Open Tata!" Lakhe: "This is not my house!" Chris: "It's Mummy's house Tata. You must go in."

Me: "Come in." The door flew open and Chris barged in. Chris: "Mummy!" Me: "Chrissie cakes wam." I hugged him. Me: "You missed me baby? You're supposed to be sleeping." I looked at Lakhe. Lakhe: "He blatantly refused to get into bed and you weren't answering your phone." He whispered. Lam was sleeping in his arms. Me: "How did you drive?" Lakhe: "God and his miracles." He gave me the baby and looked at Lubby then Junior. Lakhe: "What's going on?" Me: "Greeting?" Lakhe: "Hi." Lubby didn't even bother to look at him. Me: "Lubabalo." Lubb: "Hm?" I nodded to Lakhe. Lubb: "Oh my bad. I'm a little distracted today, Bill is in town. We're launching our fin-" He stood up. Lubb: "Look at me, rambling about things you're not interested in. Good evening, Lubby Morrison." He shook his hand. Lakhe: "Lakhe Sobukwe. Bill Sangane? Been trying to meet him for months." Lubb: "Yeah. We're kinda friends." Lakhe: "Oh. That's nice." Sands: "Oh for fucks sake, ask!" Lubb: "Ask what?" Lakhe: "Nothing. Chris you want to sleep with your mom?" Chris: "No, I wanted a hug. We can go now." Lakhe: "So I drove for over 30 minutes just for a hug." Chris: "You want one?" Lakhe: "Spho, your kids." I giggled. Lakhe looked at Lubby again and then me. Sands: "Lubabalo, Bafo right? My brother wants you to hook him up with a meeting with Bill Sanguine or whoever but he's too shy to ask because he convinced himself he doesn't like you. He's stubborn." Lakhe: "What the fuck are you on about!!" Sands: "Am I lying?" Lakhe: "I didn't say anything of that nature!!" Sands: "Good. Lubby?" Lubb: "I'll squeeze you in with Bill if Spho agrees to partner with me." Lakhe: "You've got to be fucking kidding me. She's dating your brother!" Lubb: "Yeah but I want to work with her. The youth development project. I shake every time I think about it, I want to be part of something good. And of course affiliated with the...." Lakhe: "My father's company, say it." Lubb: "Actually Spho's company now, she bought it right?" Lakhe: "So that's what you want. My father's legacy?" Lubb: "Nope. I've no interest in that company, just the youth project. Spho knows." Sands: "This one didn't want me working with her either, got jealous every time." Me: "I don't have a say in this?" Lakhe: "Of course you do Spho! Say no." Me: "Why?" He sighed. Lakhe: "Fuck." Lubb: "Why Lakhe?" Lakhe: "I don't know. Spho, this is your choice okay? Do what you feel is right for you." Me: "You really want to meet him?" Lakhe: "Not even my dad can get to him." Me: "Okay." Lubb: "Okay? Okay what?" Me: "I'll think about partnering with you if we come up with favorable conditions, and you give Lakhe his meeting. Not just a meeting, an actual Listen and Talk conversational meeting." Lubb: "Done." He smiled. Lubb: "If I knew it was this easy, I would've lured you days ago." Lakhe: "You did this on purpose, you knew I wanted to meet him?" Lubb: "Oh yes. He asked me if I knew you and I said no because well I don't. Now, I do. Isn't that nice?" Lakhe: "You fuckin-" Me: "Wait.. Lubby you knew Lakhe would be here?" Lubb: "Nope. I met Bill earlier telling me about the brief he got from his

assistant. Bill is an old man, he needs me to keep him hype. So he asked me if I'd heard about you and what you do. I said no. When I saw you walk in, my brain clicked. That's why I name dropped." Lakhe: "I don't know whether to be pissed you tricked me or glad you didn't bother lying about it." Lubb: "I can't lie babes. How does tomorrow sound?" Lakhe: "Tomorrow is good." Lubb: "Perfect. You come to my office, we chill for a minute and I take you to him." Lakhe: "I don't want to chill with you." Lubb: "You don't have a choice now. Bill trusts my opinion and business associations. For me to chill with you, I'm giving you some street cred. People will like you from now on. Bill will be more interested to pay attention to you because you know Lubby Morrison. Don't worry we're not gonna be friends, this is just a business relationship." Lakhe: "What do I need to do?" Lubb: "Oh you know, appear with me. Smile a bit. Walk like a president. The media will follow us like crazy. You're my sister in law's ex husband. Everybody will want to know what we're talking about. More exposure. Of course Bafo will be mad at me, huffing and puffing like a dragon but it'll be worth it." Lakhe: "Why are you going through so much trouble to help me?" Lubb: "I like drama. Sizzling hot drama." Lakhe: "You're cool with this?" He asked me. I nodded. Lakhe: "Thank you. Chris?" Chris: "Wait." He was still hugging me. Chris: "I miss mommy." Lakhe: "You'll be here tomorrow." Chris: "Did you tell mommy?" Lakhe: "Tell her what?" Chris: "I need to know you're joking daddy." Lakhe: "What are you talking about?" Chris: "Mummy, I asked daddy if I can do a special fair and he said yes. He said you're gonna bake me cookies and I can sell them." Lakhe: "I didn't say that!" Chris took out Lakhe's phone and pressed on the screen until a recording came on. "Yes my boy. That's a good idea. I'll tell your mommy, she can bake you cookies." Sandile laughed. Lakhe: "Where is this happening?" Chris: "At your job Tata." Lakhe: "No!" Chris pressed on the screen again. "Of course mntanam, my employees must see I'm raising a 5 year old CEO. We'll do it on Friday at the office my son." The voice in the phone said. Everybody in the house laughed. Lakhe: "I was half asleep Christian! This is not viable." Chris: "Do I have to call my lawyer on you Tata?" Lakhe: "On what grounds? You don't have a lawyer!" Chris: "That's the attitude you want to keep Tata?" Lakhe: "Who's your lawyer?" Chris: "Mama, can I borrow your phone?" Me: "Go fetch it mntanam." He ran to the room. Sands: "Bhuti, agree now." Lakhe: "I can't let Chris sell cookies in the office Sandile." Chris came back and dialed a number. Lakhe: "Who you calling?" "Hello?" Chris: "Mr Tar, can I sue my dad for making a promise to me and then changing his mind? We had a verbal contract, I have the recording." Tar: "Yes, you can." Chris: "How much do I get paid?" Tar: "Depending on the venture he promised you, we'll have to do calculations." Chris: "Thank you Mr Tar. I'll call you in the morning." He hung up and stared at his father. Lubby was clutching his stomach laughing.

Lakhe: "Tar is your lawyer?" Chris: "He gave me a family discount. Are we doing this?" Lakhe: "Fine. If Spho is able to do the cookies then yes." Chris: "Mummy?" Me: "Yes baby, I'll wake up super early." Chris: "Thank you mummy. Please send this to your phone Uncle Sandile, I need my leverage." He gave him Lakhe's phone. Lubb: "So... since you're using Lakhe's offices to sell your product, are you going to pay him a percentage for rent?" Chris: "I'm not renting the building, I'll be a vendor." Lubb: "Disrupting his employees at work, which means less production for him. Is he gonna be compensated?" Chris sucked his teeth. Chris: "Mummy who's this?" Lubb: "Dr Lubby Morrison. CEO and founder of-" Chris: "Sir, This is a family business and the terms of which my father agreed to was me selling and not him benefitting. If that was the case, he could have added it in our verbal contract, of which he did not. So your point is invalid." Lubb: "My point may be invalid today but you will setting your business reputation alight if you're known to con people. Nobody will want to work with you." Chris: "But he's my dad!" He whined. The 5 year old was back. Lubb: "Yeah, and he's the only one giving you a chance. Will he do it again if he knows his son doesn't appreciate him?" Chris: "But I do!" He sobbed. Lakhe: "Don't you dare make my child cry! Izapha boy." He hugged him. Lubb: "So what's it gonna be?" Chris: "Daddy I'm going to think about this. Okay? We will talk at home. Let's go home." Lakhe: "Okay mntanam. Say goodbye to your mom. Ndimnkile." He took Lam and walked out. Chris: "Bye mama. Love you. Bye Uncle Sandile. Uhm... bye." He said to Junior. Jun: "Goodbye." Chris walked to Lubby and wiped the tears off his face. Chris: "This is not over. You may think you're smart because you're bigger than me but sadly for you, I'm smarter. You think you're giving me hardships but you're actually making me stronger. I do not give up Dr Lubby Morrison. You're not the first to try me and fail." He looked at his uncle. Chris: "Love you uncle Sands." He ran out. Sands: "Kwedin!!"

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Friday morning I did wake up early. Not that I wanted to. Chris had called me to remind me. I went to shower and straight to the kitchen in my clean pajamas to start baking. I'd start with cookies. A lot of cookies. Chocolate Chip ones and ginger ones. They would be done quicker. Then I started with cupcakes while they're in the oven. Red velvet, chocolate, and vanilla. I did the icing and set it aside. Once the cookies were done, I put in the cuppies. Chocolate brownies sound so appealing. I started on it immediately. Chris would be here soon and I needed to show progress. Never have kids guys. Especially smart ones. It's not worth it. I packed the cookies into a nice big

container after they cooled off then went to get dressed. I'd be meeting my new marketing execs today. It was a Friday so I could tone down a bit. An oversized grey t-shirt that still hugged my tummy and white sneakers. Minimum make up and a Bob wig on. I tidied up the house until my timer went off. In about an hour Lakhe and Chris arrived. Me: "Hi bunny." Chris: "It smells so lovely mama!" Me: "Thank you my angel. You're gonna make me proud today okay?" Chris: "Thank you mummy." I finished off the brownies. Me: "How's Lammy?" Lakhe: "Good. Nanny is getting used to him." Me: "Okay. Trouble sleeping?" Lakhe: "Not at all, he was an angel last night." Me: "That's good." Lakhe: "Do you think this is a good idea? Me being associated with Lubabalo? It's kind of weird. I don't like it at all but I need to expand my business and make acquaintances with influential people." Me: "Lakhe if there was another way, you would have found it. This is just business. You don't have to be friends or like Lubby. Just be a civil human being to him." Lakhe: "He's exhausting Spho." Me: "I know but he's pleasant. One of the nicest people I know and funny as hell. Let go of everything for once and stop taking so much responsibility on your shoulders and have fun. You need to be relatable in order to make acquaintances like this." Lakhe: "I hear you but it doesn't make it less weird." Me: "Sorry about that but you need to tough it out sir. Here." I gave him a cupcake. Chris: "R9!!!" He yelled. Lakhe: "Family discount?" Chris: "That is the discount Tata! Those are quality cupcakes made by a queen! Pay please." Lakhe: "I'll send you an EFT." Me: "I also wanted to ask you why don't you visit Sandile's hotel." Lakhe: "I have a house Spho. I don't need to be in a hotel." Me: "I mean showing interest in it. In what he does or runs things. You know he took that hotel to please you right? He thought you'd cut him out of your life and didn't have a choice. He wanted your approval which you've failed to give him. He's done so well but he's so unhappy Lakhe. He wants to sell it and invest his money." Lakhe: "That hotel is a better investment. Tell him not to be stupid." Me: "He wants something of his own. Why can't you pay attention to him for once?" Lakhe: "I'm kinda busy Spho. I have a whole company to run, my own investments and I'm a single dad-" Me: "Sorry, a single what?" He laughed. Lakhe: "I'm a single dad. The mother of my kids left me." Me: "Is that so?" Lakhe: "Isn't that what women always say?" Me: "No. Single parenting means only one parent contributing to the child's wellbeing while the other is absent." Lakhe: "Uh-huh. Okay then. Not a single parent. But a dad, who's not married. Talk to him Spho. You have a good business head." He ate his cuppie. Me: "I tried. He wants YOU." Lakhe: "Jesus Christ. Fine. I'll talk to him." Me: "How did Nosi's school meeting go?" Lakhe: "Postponed. For next week Monday since she went AWOL this week." Me: "Great." Lakhe: "Where's Sibulele? Isn't he supposed to be here?" Me: "He has a new girlfriend." Lakhe: "Oh? Who?" Me: "She's from his work. He seems to

really like her. They spend a lot of time together." Lakhe: "That's good. So you're okay with being alone at night?" Me: "Yes I'm fine. I'm not a baby." Lakhe: "Good. So all the kids sorted out. Nothing else right?" Me: "Yes. How's Kirsten? The kids?" Lakhe: "They're doing well, she wanted to spend a little more time with them, I'll pick them up after this and take them to school. I spoke to Stacy, they'll come out at 11 am then come set up for Chris' function in my office and sell. Are you coming?" Me: "Chris is gonna charge me." Lakhe: "Like the rest of us. I'm raising him wealthy." He smiled. Lakhe: "I have a meeting with Lubby and Bill. So I have to get going." Me: "I'll bring the rest of this later to your office." Lakhe: "Thanks." He picked up the bucket of cookies carrying it out to the car. Chris was at the table writing something down. Me: "Who taught this kid how to write?" Lakhe: "Julie. Who else? She taught the whole class. Of course the others are slower to grasp it than them but nonetheless, they're doing alphabets now. Not creepy at all." He looked at his son. Lakhe: "We're raising an actual genius Spho. Not just in a complimentary way, a highly intellect human. Do you know how rare that is?" Me: "Yeah. I don't think I knew how to do all he does at that age. What do you think we should do, I don't want to overwhelm him. What if he starts getting depressed because he doesn't get the challenge he needs?" Lakhe: "That's why he pushes. He's got a Spho quality. The one that finds a loophole in difficult situations." Me: "Thank you but we need a bigger solution to keep him motivated and also balanced." Lakhe: "Think we should take him to a psychologist?" Me: "There's nothing wrong with him though." Lakhe: "He is writing words, sentences, business proposals at the age of 5. His grammar challenges my own. He has an indescribable energy when he does something, look at how he's so focused. He told me last night he wants a PA. Sooner or later, this will be beyond us Spho. We need a professional opinion." Me: "Okay but we need to sit him down and explain to him that there's nothing wrong with him. We just want to keep up. I don't want him feeling different." Lakhe: "Okay. Speak to Julie's dads too." I nodded. Lakhe: "Christian. Time for school boy. Let's go." Chris collected his notebook and pencil. Chris: "Are we done?" Me: "I'll bring the others later today sweetie. I promise." Chris: "Thank you mummy. You're the best mummy in the universe. I love you." He kissed me and walked to the car. Lakhe: "We'll talk later." He followed his son out.

I get to work on time. My investment firm. I can fully call it mine without feeling guilty now. I went inside the huge building and straight to my office. Everyone here is crazy serious about their work. I liked that but I didn't want unhappy employees. That never ends well. I called Jan. Me: "Sweets, do you have any

candidates for the SM manager post?" Jan: "3 interviews lined up for next week Spho." Me: "Great. Do we have an Events Co-ordinator here?" Jan: "Kind of. She has the qualification just her job is not to do it here. She's in accounts here." Me: "Good. Get me a meeting in a few minutes with her and Tar." Jan: "Done." I hung up. She was on the other side of the building but the walk was mentally fizzy to me. In minutes, Tar appeared with his beast face, Valencia right behind him looking like a scared deer. Tar: "What happened?" Me: "Nothing. Can we sit? I was thinking of doing a staff party or sports day some time soon. Something everyone can look forward to. Have a few prizes and such." Tar smiled. Tar: "Valencia have you done something like that in the company?" Valencia: "Never. It sounds great." Me: "For now, let's keep it in this room only. You'll organize the main event, that's why I called you. I understand you have a qualification in Events Management?" Vale: "Yes." Me: "Cool. I'll pay you individually. Do you have a registered company?" Vale: "Not yet." Me: "Do it. As in now. Once we start marketing this, I want your registered company name on the flyer. We'll speak more in detail next week." Vale: "Thank you Spho." She walked out beaming. Tar: "Doing the Lords work." Me: "My life goals. Hey, I was thinking if we formed sports teams within the organization and perhaps involve another company to play against?" Tar: "Who were you thinking?" Me: "Lubby Morrison's company. He wants to partner up with the Youth project and I think this event can rake up some serious exposure and positivity around our partnership." Tar: "Sounds phenomenal. I'm on it." I nodded. Tar: "Spho, does anyone ever tell you how super human you are? Smart, and making a real difference in this world? Inspirational as fuck." I laughed. Me: "Thank you Tar." He walked out. My phone rang. Me: "Sir." Lakhe: "Spho, I need you to do me a favor please." Me: "What's up?" Lakhe: "I might be a little tied up. I knew Lubby will go extravagant for no reason. The press is going wild. We're taking the helicopter to Jeffrey's. I need you to pick up Chris, Jake and Karmie then take them to my office. I'll tell Sarah to help with the sale and everything." Me: "It's not a problem. It's at 11:30 right?" Lakhe: "Yes. Thank you Spho." He hung up. My phone rang again. Me: "Baby." Luks: "Mrs Luks. Am I still banned?" Me: "No baby. Not at all." Luks: "Good. I'm coming." He hung up then called again. Luks: "Sorry, goodbye baby." I laughed. Me: "Goodbye sweetheart. See you soon." Wait does he know where I am? But of course he does he's probably been stalking me since morning. Within a few minutes he walked in carrying a lunch box on top of another. Luks: "My beautiful woman." He kissed my lips. Luks: "I missed you. I made you breakfast." Me: "This looks appetizing." Luks: "Fruit salad in the first box, real greasy pancakes, eggs, bacon and all the stuff you like in the second. But fruit first." He didn't have to tell me twice, I dug in immediately. Me: "So, please don't get mad." Luks: "I'll try not to be." Me:

"Lubby came by last night." Luks: "For what." Me: "Well, he brought Junior to finish my drawing. I'm sorry I didn't call. He was upset. He says it hurts him that you don't trust him." Luks: "Oh. Is that all?" Me: "No.. uhm, I made a deal with him. I am going to partner with him in order for him to introduce Lakhe to Bill." He stared at me. That big eye look Sandile spoke of was real. It was scary. Me: "Say something." Luks: "Like what." Me: "Anything." Luks: "When you were making business decisions to favor your ex husband, did you think about my feelings at all?" Me: "Lukhanyo it's not about that." Luks: "What is it about?" Me: "I don't control how the meeting is going to go." Luks: "I cannot believe this Sphosenkosi." Me: "Lukhanyo, it's not like you haven't made a business deal that favors the mother of your kids. She caters at your race track!" Luks: "That's what it's about?" Me: "No. I didn't think you'd have a problem with this." Luks: "Not only do you deny me on TV and high light your ex, you also make favorable business decisions for him behind my back with my brother and I'm supposed to be just okay with that? Mxim." He got up and walked out. Me: "Lukhanyo!!" I got up and followed him as naturally as possible to not raise suspicion. When I stepped outside he was already in his car. Me: "Babe." The car drove off. He was really hurt. I turned and walked back to my office. If I were in his position how would I feel? Obviously betrayed. I didn't think about it last night. I just thought it was great opportunity for the two companies, not only because of Lakhe but Lubby's company is a great organization to partner with. This was bad. I couldn't really chase him right now either because I had a meeting with the new execs and after that I need to go help Chris. I was failing as a girlfriend, badly. Literally the one thing I can't get right and it kind of hurts me too. I can't seem to find a balance between being a great mom, great boss and great wife/girlfriend. I can only handle two. Now I wanted to cry. Quickly took my phone and dialed a number, waiting as the ringing tone beeped in my ear. Khaya: "Baby." Me: "Daddy." Khaya: "Hey, what's wrong?" Me: "I fail. I want to be better at this and I can't... it's the one thing I can't get right!" Khaya: "What is that?" Me: "Being a girlfriend Tata. I don't even have friends to talk to. My only friend, Fez, is a gay man who's also dealing with his own problems and Sandile is Sandile. Sibuy is my big brother. I love them but I can't share this with them. They all think the world of me, and I can't let them see me like this. A failure. You're literally the only person I can't possibly be embarrassed in front of." Khaya: "Okay, calm down. You're not a failure in anything Spho. Everyone has obstacles and you try your best to overcome them. You never give up! That's the spirit of a winner. A success. You need to understand that not everything will go smoothly all the time, okay? What happened now?" Me: "I'm the worst person to Lukhanyo. He doesn't even deserve me. Without me even thinking it, I always put Lakhe first and disregard or actually don't think about how

Lukhanyo will feel. It's happened twice in less than three days. I don't wanna lose him dad." Khaya: "Spho you were married to Masilakhe, in love with him. You won't just forget him instantly when you have a new boyfriend. Your break up with him was severe and unnatural. Something that will take time to heal. You are still blaming yourself for it. Which is why you over compensate on his part because you feel guilty for what happened. It was never your fault, Princess, well Queen now. It's gonna take some time for you. Don't be too hard on yourself and explain to your partner properly. Apologize to him, include him in your decisions if you're this serious about him. But you are not a failure, okay?" Me: "Okay." Khaya: "Great. You want to tell me about your day?" Me: "Yeah. I have a meeting in about 30 minutes then I have to go fetch Chris. We're having a cookie and cupcake sale at Lakhe's office." Khaya: "Oh?" Me: "He won't be there though. He's in Jeffrey's." Khaya: "Good. That's wonderful." Me: "Okay dad. I have to go. Thank you for listening." Khaya: "You're welcome my angel." Me: "Love you." Khaya: "Love you too." He ended the call and looked up. Kom: "Still close, I see." Khaya: "Yes sir. She's going through something." Kom: "Does she know about her mother, well...aunt." Khaya: "Haven't found the right time." Kom: "Oh Komodity. The last thing you want to do is anger the queen while she's pregnant with the King of the Full Dark army." ...

When I was finally done with my meetings, on my way to fetch Chris, Jake, Karmen and Julie; I tried to call Lukhanyo. It rang to voice-mail. I had the option of being hysterical and act like something was wrong just to get his attention but that was crazy as hell. Definitely not me. I picked the rest of the delicacies up and the kids from the day care then drove to Lakhe's office. I left a message for Lukhanyo about where I was and doing what. I can only go look for him after this. Right now, my focus had to be my kiddies. I helped them set up inside the boardroom Lakhe had booked for this specifically. Julie: "Mummy, this is the price list for everything. I made a calculation for how much we can make if we sold everything. This is our target. My problem is, this was last minute and nobody knows we're here. What do we do?" Me: "We market our products. Let's put two cuppies, two cookies and a brownie on this tray. Walk into the office and tell everyone what they are, also direct them to here, where I will be waiting." She did exactly that and walked out. Chris was drawing on a paper. Kupcakes = R12. Biskits = R5. Browns = R7. He walked out and waved it around. Chris: "Fresh Cupcakes! Crispy Biscuits!" He yelled. Lakhe would be livid. I couldn't stop laughing. The brownies finished first. Then the Biscuits. I had only one more containers of each in Lakhe's office. We needed to push the cupcakes now. In the meanwhile, I tried

calling Lukha again. Not available. I opted for a text. "Hey. I hope you're safe. Look, I'm sorry. I know I'm fucking up alot and say sorry alot but I mean it. I'm trying my best to balance everything and being a good woman to you. I don't want to lose you. I make mistakes but it doesn't mean I don't love you because I do. I want to be with you only. Chris is having a cupcake sale here." Send. I waited a few minutes. He replied: "Is he doing well with his sales? I didn't know, I'd have come bought a few." So he's only interested in my child's entrepreneurial activities. Not me. Equally frustrating as it is sexy. Me: "He's doing great. Walking around with a board, advertising his business. Few containers left. If you hurry, you might make it in time." Luks: "be there in 12 minutes. Still not talking to you though." I blushed. At least you're coming. "Lucky guy." I almost jumped out my skin with shock. What the FUCK was he doing here!! He flashed an axis-stopping smile. Kom: "My queen." He bowed. Me: "What are you doing here." I hissed. He placed a R200 note on the table. Kom: "Supporting my first grandchild. He has an excellent mind for business. Such a smart boy." Me: "I told you, you're not allowed near my children!!!" The table shook. Kom: "Calm down. This building is filled with innocent human beings. If you attack me, they all die. I'm not here to fight." How did he even find me!?! He had to go. I had to make him leave! Lukhanyo would be here soon and I cannot risk them meeting. Lakhe could come back any minute and I cannot risk him collapsing again. Me: "You need to leave." Kom: "The cupcakes look nice." Me: "I don't care if everyone in here burns alive, you are not going anywhere near him. I will tear you apart before I let you set eyes on him!!!" He stared at me. Chris ran in. Chris: "Grandpa!" Kom: "Hey buddy. How are you?" He picked him up. Chris: "Good. Do you want to buy a cupcake?" Kom: "Yes. Give me four." Chris: "R12 times 4 cupcakes mama?" Me: "R48. Change is R152." Chris: "Okay. The purple one and the pink one and the R2 coin." He sorted the change and gave it to him. Chris put plastic on his hands and place four cupcakes on tissues. Chris: "There you go grandpa." Kom: "Thank you baby boy. I have to go now. Behave okay?" Chris: "Okay." He ran off again. Me: "I will remove you with an unshakeable force from my presence. You better leave." He took his cupcakes and walked out. I breathed a sigh of relief and sat down. At least they didn't spot him. The only problem with Komander is eye contact, letting those soulless orbs drag your soul silently without you even realizing it. Next thing, nightmares. Then it gets worse. I'm glad it doesn't affect my children. Chris is always in a hurry or busy with something. Lukhanyo walked in, arm dragged by Christian. Chris: "The Brownies were our best seller. They're finished. We only have cupcakes left. Soft and tasty, like flavored clouds. Red Velvet or Chocolate?" Luks: "Red velvet please." Me: "There is a last container with brownies in your dad's office Chris." Chris: "When we get home, I'll get Dr Lubby Morrison a piece for effort."

Me: "This is his twin brother, Lukhanyo. Remember I told you about him?" Chris: "No you did not." Me: "We had a conversation Chris, about how he's my new friend?" Chris: "Oh, when you said he's-" Me: "Yes. That." Chris: "So, is he now?" Me: "Is he what?" Chris: "Your boyfriend mama." Me: "Yes baby." Chris: "Oh. He has a twin? You sure It's not him? I am certain this is the same person I saw yesterday mummy." Me: "I'm sure baby. It was his twin." Chris: "Crazy." He took out a tissue and a cupcake. Chris: "So why are you quiet Dr twin?" Luks: "My twin is Dr. I'm a Mr." Chris: "So what do I call you?" Luks: "Anything is okay." Chris: "Alright Anything. So-" Me: "Christian." Chris: "What is his name then mama." He whispered. Me: "Mr Luks." Chris: "Okay Mr Luks." He gave him the cupcake. Chris: "First one free for mommy's friend." Me: "You charged your grandpa." Chris: "He hasn't come to visit and he missed my birthday party. I did not have a choice but to charge him." I laughed. Luks: "Grandpa?" Chris: "Yes. The one you held the door open for." My heart raced. Me: "What?" Luks: "That's your grandpa? Black poloneck jersey and pants. Long black jacket?" Chris: "Yep." Luks: "He's so nice. That's Lakhe's dad? I was not expecting him to be like that honestly." Me: "What did he say?" Luks: "Nothing much. Just hello and a joke about needing an extra hand. So I held the door for him, he said thank you and walked out." Fuck. How would I even tell him...

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Chris laughed. Chris: "That's not my daddy's daddy. That's mommy's daddy, silly. Gosh." He walked out. Luks: "What." Me: "How you doing?" Luks: "No. Your father? Which" Me: "Uhm.." Luks: "You're gonna lie to me again?" Me: "No. That's Komander." He stared at me. Luks: "WHAT." Me: "I didn't know he'd be here." Luks: "That's HIM? I thought he was a demon!" Me: "He is. That's his body in human form." Luks: "So what does this mean for me?" Me: "Did you look at him?" Luks: "For like a second. I just opened the door, looked at him and looked for you." Me: "Nothing is going to happen to you." Luks: "Okay." Me: "Why did you break into Sandile's house?" Luks: "Spho, we're not on speaking terms. I came here for your kid." Me: "And that's not childish?" Luks: "I broke into his house trying to figure out where he could be. I went back when he was home and spoke to him about the things you hide from me." Me: "I told you everything you needed to know!!!" Luks: "No, you're trying to protect me. I want to protect you! I'm trying to figure out a wa-" Me: "You freaked out when I showed a fraction of my life through a memory portal. How the fuck do you think you can protect me!!!" As soon as I said it, I regretted it. I could see the hurt in his eyes. He turned around and walked out. Sands: "Uncalled for. That was really shitty of you Spho. I'm sorry to say." He stood by the door.

Me: "Fuck." I went after him and bumped into Lakhe. He stood in front of me like a brick wall holding my arms. Me: "MOVE!!" Lakhe: "Let him go." Me: "Lakhe, get out of my fucking way!" Lakhe: "Spho, you need to calm down and give him some breathing space. You're bound to make more mistakes if you talk to him in this state. Both of you." I could see Lukhanyo in the far end of the building, talking or yelling at Lubabalo who had a neutral expression on his face. No joking or happy mood. They both looked at me at the same time and I felt my heart tear to tiny little pieces. It was painful seeing Lukhanyo hurt but the double vision of it broke me twice. Lubby took his brother's arm and walked out the building. Lakhe: "Hey..". Me: "Please leave me alone." I cried. Me: "I need to talk to him." Lakhe: "Not now." Me: "You don't get to tell me what to do Lakh-" Lakhe: "Yes I do! First of all, your child is here, expecting you to be okay and happy with his success, you're not running after that man." I took a step back and sat down. Inside the boardroom. Sands: "I could go to him." Lakhe: "You're not going anywhere. Lukhanyo is pissed off. Let him cool down." Chris: "Everything is finished! Mama, can we go to Spur please, I want to buy you dinner." If I was not already crying, this would be the start to free falling tears. Me: "Baby." I hugged him. Me: "We can do anything you want." We packed everything away while Chris and Julie sat down with Sandile to count the money. Lakhe: "You're gonna be okay." Me: "Yeah." Chris: "I sold 30 brownies." Sands: "Yeah that's R210." Chris: "And this is 40 Biscuits." Sands: "R200. So that's R410." Chris: "And 60 cuppies. Which was more expensive." Sands: "R720, so you've made R1130. Time for expenses." Chris: "Haibo." Sands: "Yes. You have two workers and a venue booked. Not to mention transportation to this place." Chris: "Sweet Baby Jesus. You're just milking me dry. Julie was my lead worker, here is your R200. Jake, your efforts are noted, here is your R150." Jake: "Why is mine smaller than hers?" Chris: "No its not. She sold the most, next time if you up your game, you can beat her selling streak." Jake: "I wasn't told it was a competition." Chris: "We're not arguing about this Jake. Take your money, I'm still buying you a dinner. Goodness. Dad, how much do I owe you for venue?" Lakhe: "R22 000." Chris: "Haike Tata. You take installments? Uncle Sandile, please check how long I need to pay my dad if I start him with R100." Sands: "On it." Chris: "Mummy, you're not charging me right?" Me: "Never, my angel. Let's go." We took our things to the car.

At Spur, we ordered our food and the kids went off to play. I'd invited Kev and Dave but Dave was busy with work stuff and Kev was on his way still. Lakhe was still at work. I sat with Sandile at the table. Sands: "Wanna talk about why you yelled at him like that?" Me: "I don't think I'm a good girlfriend.

Actually, I'm not the right person for him. For anyone." I played with my straw and chocolate milkshake. Sands: "Can't say that just because of one fight." Me: "It's not one fight. It's not just him. From Simphiwe, I was unattentive as a girlfriend, my work and his son came first, that's why he cheated. I never had time for him. Then Lakhe, I was always busy with work and taking care of his family that I often neglected him. Now Lukhanyo." Sands: "Siya?" Me: "Oh yeah, I prioritized Lakhe's feelings over his, like I'm doing now with Lukhanyo. I don't know how to balance this. And nobody can sit me down and tell me how. I don't even have friends Sandile. It's only you and Fez." Sands: "Firstly I think it's healthy that you admit you're not perfect and you can identify your flaws. That's a good start. Have you thought about seeing a professional?" Me: "A psychologist? Isn't that extreme?" Sands: "Don't you want someone to talk to and advise you properly?" Me: "Am I even gonna have the time?" Sands: "Make time." Me: "I don't want to lose Lukhanyo. I know it's early but..." Sands: "You love him?" I sipped my shake. Sands: "Lakhe knows that. No need to hide it, I'm not gonna snitch." Me: "It's weird. An ex husband and boyfriend in the same place." Sands: "It is weird. But both of them love you. Give Lukhanyo time." Me: "The last look he gave me was really painful Sandile." Sands: "With his twin? Yeah that was mega creepy but don't think about it now. Chris made sales. Legally. He's taking his mom and girlfriend to dinner with the money. You're raising a gentleman Spho. Smile for a minute." I smiled. Me: "He is a gentleman." Kev arrived and ordered some food. Fez came too and ordered his. Finally I had a conversation that didn't lead to heartache. Just a good time with friends. Our orders came, the kids came to eat. Kev: "He's really paying for this?" He whispered. Me: "I don't think he understands that Spur costs more than he thinks." I giggled. Me: "Let me get a bathroom break. On my way to the bathroom, I spoke to our waiter. Me: "My son, brought me here for dinner, but he's not gonna pay the whole bill, I'll just let him pay the tip and make him feel good. For now, I'll pay the balance." He smiled. Him: "That is so sweet." Me: "He's a gent." I paid quickly and went back to the table. After our meal, indeed Chris called the bill. Sandile took a video of him. The waiter brought the bill and Chris counted out his money, then wrote on the slip a smiley face and paid. Me: "Thank you so much my sweetie." Chris: "You're welcome mommy. Do you feel better now?" Me: "Yes baby." Chris: "Great!" He ran off to play. Me: "Julie is gonna have such a great husband." We all laughed. Me: "You've been quiet Fez, everything okay?" Fez: "Gio loaned his brother the car and the brother got into a car accident." Me: "Oh my!! Is he okay?" Fez: "ICU." Me: "Fuck. I'm sorry." Fez: "Is it bad for a second I wished it was Gio there instead?" Me: "You want to break up with him?" Fez: "No. I just want him to be a better person." Sands: "He's an ass. You know that." Fez: "Why the fuck do you care!" Sands: "I care about you!" For

once I was glad I was not in the midst of drama but just a bystander. Fez: "You care? That's it?" Sands: "What more do you want from me Fezile?" Fez: "Sandile I told you how I felt!" Sands: "I told you, it'll blow over soon! It's nothing but a crush, it happens!" Fez: "It has been happening for months! It's not blowing over." Sands: "Once you find out what type of person I am then you won't feel the same! Trust me." Fez: "I don't care!" Sands: "I cut his brakes! I wanted to kill him!! He doesn't deserve you!" He hissed. Fez stared at him wide eyed. Fez: "What the hell!" Sands: "What was I supposed to do!" Fez: "If you didn't feel nothing for me, then you wouldn't have gone through those extremities!" Sands: "I've done worse for Spho but that doesn't mean I want to be with her." Me: "Sandile." I warned. Sands: "What? I'm a friend to you both and nobody is going to hurt you in any way while I still breath! Is that a bad thing?" Fez: "I can't do this!" He took his stuff and walked out. Me: "And I'm the jerk?" Sands: "Where was I wrong kodwa Spho?" I followed Fez out. Me: "Babe." Fez: "Just when I thought I couldn't possibly love him more, this happens. Am I stupid?" Me: "No. You're not. You're in love." Fez: "I feel like a fool." Me: "You're not a fool Fezile. Look, Sandile does things to protect his family and friends. He's right when he says he's done worse for me although I'm not comfortable to know that but it's how he is. He's a loving person. I know you love him but also take into consideration that you're attracted to his kindness because all you ever endured from straight men is hatred and violence. You're expecting him to be violent to you so that you can prove to yourself the "stupidity" feeling, which is not true. You're not stupid. Leave Gio. Sunyamezela ububhanxa tshomi."(don't be strong for shit). I hugged him. Me: "Lets go get the kids. I baked some nice brownies this morning." We walked in to go fetch the others.

Hours later, at home it was nearing dark. Julie was staying over the night. Kev and Fez had gone out for drinks. Sandile was in the back with Jake and Chris. I was in my room with Karmen and Julie. We were playing dress up. Karmie had on my blue shirt which looked like a dress to her. I tied a belt to her waist and she put on my Louboutin's, looking like clown shoes on her tiny feet. Julie wore my beige pencil skirt as a boob tube dress and my Jimmy Choo shoes to match. They looked so cute, sipping apple juice from champagne glasses. Maybe if I showed up on Lukhanyo's door step with them, he'd melt. I know he loves kids. Listen to me thinking like a psychopath, using my kids again. I painted the girls toes with red nail polish. It was only after two hours they started getting tired because of the running around we'd done. I bathed them and got them ready for bed. Sandile bathed the boys, getting them ready for bed. Finally all kids were asleep. Me: "Can you watch them Sands?"

"I'll be back just now." Sands: "Lakhe is coming with Lam soon." Me: "I'll be back by then." I took my keys and drove to Lukhanyo's house. When I arrived, there was two cars in the driveway. So he was home. I pressed the intercom and the gate opened. What would I say, where would I start? I parked and went to knock. The door opened. Lubby. Me: "Hey. Can I speak to Lukhanyo?" Lubb: "Uhm.. I'm sorry." Me: "Please Lubby. I just need to talk to him." Lubb: "Look Spho, I like you but not more than my brother. You're a nice lady but I cannot risk him getting hurt again. Not now. I don't want to sound mean or anything but please leave him alone for a minute until he's okay. I can't watch him go through this." Me: "I'm not trying to hurt him." Lubb: "I know that but he's not speaking to anyone right now. You need to give him some time and space. Once he's okay again, I'll let you know." Me: "Will you tell him I love him?" Lubb: "I will." I turned and walked to my car. Lubby closed the door, walking to Lukhanyo's room. Lubb: "Bafo, do you want me to fetch the kids?" Luks: "No." Lubb: "Okay. Spho was here, she told me to tell you she loves you. Want to talk to her?" No response. Lubb: "Sooner or later you gonna have to pull on your big boy pants and go talk to her! You can't sit there, eating ice cream and moping like a little bitch! She said she's sorry, what more you want! Dear God!" Luks: "Get out of my room." Lubb: "I'm not letting you waste your life away like this! Everyone makes mistakes, you have to sit and talk them through! Why now are you being difficult!" Luks: "How am I being difficult? You think it's nice having to live in someone's shadow?" Lubb: "Talk. To. Her." Luks: "Am I not allowed for once to hurt and take time off to Lick my wounds?" Lubb: "Fine. But not more than one day because longer than that it starts looking gay." Luks: "I promise I won't start acting gay. It's just one day. It's better than drinking myself into a coma." Lubb: "Hey, I have an idea." Luks: "I'm not drinking Lubabalo. You remember what happened the last time." Lubb: "Fine. Eat your ice cream, I'll bring Thuli over to help." Luks: "Please don't-" Lubby had already left the room bringing the dog back. Lubb: "Here's our little baby. Go on, say hi to daddy." Luks: "Sandile has a day care for puppies he knows of." Lubb: "day care? No. Not my Thulisa. She'll be pregnant by the time she comes home from the first day. Nope." Luks: "Isn't she a good girl like you always say?" Lubb: "She may be a good girl but I don't want her being objectified by all those boys then think she must choose one to protect herself." Luks: "Does that make sense to you?" Lubb: "I've studied women Lukha. When there's a group of boys, they pick one so that he can bark off the others. Men are animals. You know this. They only protect what belongs to them. So no day care!" Luks: "Fine." Lubb: "So what you gonna do?" Luks: "About?" He let the dog lick the ice cream off his finger. Lubb: "About your relationship Lukhanyo. You love this girl. Talk to her. Hear her out." Luks: "I can't Lubby. I really wish I can, I was about to forgive her when I went

to that office. I would've gotten over what she did. I know I'm not her husband so I don't have a right to tell her anything. But I'd never do something that made her uncomfortable. I'd never involve Lihle in anyway around Spho or decide something that would hurt her." Lubb: "She made a mistake Lukhanyo. I put her on the spot. I'm the one you should be mad at." Luks: "I am mad at you but this is the third thing she's done that hurts me. You're still on first strike." Lubb: "Third?" Luks: "The interview, last night's business decision and then her humiliating me in Lakhe's office. Nditheni mna dan? Can't I be happy?" Lubb: "You can be happy. You will be. Just eat your ice cream and watch TV. When you're ready, go talk." Luks: "What if she doesn't want to be with me?" Lubb: "Then you'll move on." The curtain blew a bit. Lubb: "Good thing you opened a window." Luks: "Didn't open a window." Lubby checked. Lubb: "That's weird. Could've sworn I saw this move." He got into bed. Luks: "What are you doing?" Lubb: "Spending time with my husband." Luks: "Khayeke man Lubby." Lubb: "Not until you say you forgive me my love." Luks: "I don't." Lubb: "Please do. It was selfish of me. I'm sorry." Luks: "Mxim." Lubb: "Want a foot rub?" Lukhanyo took his phone and texted Soma. Luks: "Get up. We're going out." He got dressed. Lubb: "Really? Where to? Do I wear a nice suit or my street clothes?" Lukhanyo laughed. Lubb: "That's your thuggery thug clothes. You're going to a mission." Luks: "Get. Fucking. Dressed." Lubb: "Urgh." He got dressed in similar attire. Lukhanyo closed the ice cream tub and put it aside while Thuli napped on the bed. Lubb: "I drive?" Luks: "Nope. Where are my keys?" Lubb: "Not sure. You usually leave them in the car when you come home angry. Makes it easier for you to storm off again." Luks: "Uyayithetha ikaka." They walked to the front door and opened. Sandile was leaning on the frame. Luks: "What you doing here?" Sandile looked at him and smiled. Sands: "Making sure you're not doing anything stupid." The car keys in his hand. Luks: "How did you know..." Sands: "The Queens heart."

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Luks: "Sandile get out my fucking way." Sands: "Nope." He walked in the house. Sands: "Nice crib. I wouldn't mind a place like this. Liz will love it. Maybe I should buy her a house?" Lubb: "Who the fuck is Liz?" He whispered. Luks: "Sandile give me my key- Fuck it." He went to the drawer to fetch another. Sandile pulled out all four keys from his pocket. Sands: "As I was saying, she might like a house. With a big kitchen, back yard and swimming pool. I haven't really done anything to please her. Actually thinking of going to Johannesburg to surprise her. Video calls aren't doing it for me anymore."

Luks: "What the hell are you talking about?" Sands: "My girlfriend. Who else."
Lubb: "Give me the keys in your hand." Sands: "No." Lubb: "Sandile. I don't have time today. Give me the keys!" Sands: "No. Here's the thing, I can make things very difficult for the both of you. All you have to do is sit still and wait for the Dark Hour to pass." Lubb: "The fuck is a dark hour?" Sands: "Lukhanyo knows. Tell him bafo." Luks: "What is it for?" Sands: "Bad luck for depressed people. See, with the bad energy you give out you attract bad energy back to yourself. Usually nothing bad happens, until the Dark Hour. Which is now. The same thing you've probably done all your life, might be the one thing that gets you killed right now. Nobody will understand how. Can I get something to drink?" Lubb: "Are you on drugs Sandile? Should I call Lakhe?" Sands: "No and no. Ask your brother." Lubb: "Lukhanyo, do you believe this dumbwit?" Luks: "What do you drink?" Lubb: "SERIOUSLY?" Sands: "Anything of your favorite." Lubby called Soma. Lubb: "Lukhanyo is acting crazy." Soma: "Coming." He hung up. Luks: "I'm not acting crazy. Let's just sit in. It couldn't hurt." Lubb: "You believe him? A Dark hour? Does that make sense to you?" Luks: "Yes it does Lubabalo. Do you trust me?" Lubb: "Yes!!" Luks: "Then let this be. Please." Lubb: "Fine!" He sat on the couch and switched on the TV. Lubb: "And just so you know I'm the only one allowed to handle this motherfucking remote from now till Sunday!!!!" Lukhanyo brought Sandile his drink and glass. Soma and Soso walked in. Luks: "I've given out too many keys. You can't just waltz in here whenever you like." Soso: "Knowing that you disappear for no reason, we're not taking chances. Who's this?" Lubb: "Sandile. Lukhanyo's girlfriend's former brother in law." He sneered. Soma: "Why is he mad?" He whispered. Luks: "Beats me. Drink?" Soma: "Uhm...no." He sat next to Lubby. Soso: "Okay. This is weird. Why is your girlfriend's former brother in law in your house drinking your alcohol looking comfortable as shit?" Luks: "Same reason why Lubby took my girlfriend's ex husband to Jeffrey's Bay for lunch in our helicopter." Lubby laughed. Lubb: "Lukhanyo I take you out all the time. Chill." Luks: "That's not the point!" Soma: "Not cool, Lubby. Not cool." Lubb: "Okay fine. I was wrong. For not telling you-" Luks: "Would it have made a difference if you did!" Lubb: "I don't know, would it?" Luks: "No!! Why would you befriend him?" Lubb: "It was strictly business. No talks of you or Spho...well a little of Spho but that's it." Luks: "And?" Lubb: "He just said he's bummed he has to miss his kid's first cookie sale and he'll call Spho to cover for him and he's grateful she's a good mom. That's all. You didn't even buy me a cookie and you were there!" Soso: "Not cool Lukha. You didn't even buy a cookie?" Luks: "I got a free cupcake. Kodwa Lubby, would you like it if I took out Lungelo?" Lubb: "You think I don't know you already do? I seen the chats between you two." Luks: "This is different and you know it." Lubb: "How?" Luks: "Lungelo and I's relationship is based on our daughters. That's it." Lubb: "Lakhe's relationship

and I is based on Bill." Sands: "You two drag Queens done?" Lubb: "I will punch you in the throat." Sands: "Square up." Lubby stood up, Soma holding him back. Soma: "Lubby, what is it with you today?" Soso: "Did you take your pills?" Lubb: "I did!! I don't want this one in my house!" Luks: "Weren't you chilling with him last night?" Lubb: "That was different. I was having cake and milk. You know it makes me soft." Sands: "Do you want a cake and milk?" Lubb: "There's no cake in this house." Sandile got up and walked out closing the door behind him. Lubb: "Finally! Let's give him a 5 minute head start then dash out real quick. We set?" Luks: "No. You heard hi-" Lubb: "You believe that stupid shit!! That boy is on drugs." Luks: "You never listen." Lubb: "Then tell me Lukhanyo." Luks: "I can't." Lubb: "You believe this?" He asked Soma. Luks: "You just need to trust me." Lubb: "Not if you're gonna trust your girlfriend's former brother in law who's a drug addict with intense mommy issues, turning your girlfriend into his actual mom, I'm not." Soso: "Intense mommy issues?" Soma: "drug addict?" Lubb: "We're leaving." They went to the couch looking for the keys. Lubb: "He fucking left with the keys?? Unbelievable!" Soma: "We'll take my car. Let's go." He opened the front door but it didn't budge. Soma: "Unlock this door." Luks: "Uses a code." Lubby punched it in and it beeped green light. Lubb: "open." The door didn't budge. Lukhanyo tried the code then opened the door. Still no luck. Lubb: "I'm slightly turning manic Lukhanyo. My bladder is full." Soso: "Lets try the back door." Luks: "No point. We're not leaving this house without his permission."

I was washing the dishes when Lakhe walked in with my baby. I was so looking forward to Lam this weekend. I missed him so much. Me: "Hey." Lakhe: "You've been crying?" Me: "No. Just, Uhm...washing dishes." Lakhe: "Hey.. look at me." He pulled my arm. Me: "No Lakhe. I'm fine." Lakhe: "I know you're not." He stepped closer. Me: "Please stop." Lakhe: "Spho I care about you. I can't let you-" Me: "I said stop!" Lakhe: "Fine." He gave me the baby. Lakhe: "So he's still not talking to you?" Me: "No." Lakhe: "I'm sorry." Me: "I'm really upset Lakhe. I can't... I don't know." He hugged me. Lakhe: "I'm sorry but I'm not sorry." He chuckled. I hit his arm. Lakhe: "What? You think I'm happy about this relationship?" Me: "YOU'RE in a relationship!" Lakhe: "Do you want me out of it?" Me: "You can't do that." Lakhe: "I don't like seeing you like this Spho." Me: "I know. But you can't threaten your relationship just because I'm upset. I'll be fine by tomorrow. I love Lukhanyo." Lakhe: "No you don't." Sandile walked in and opened the fridge. Sands: "Spho, can I borrow your cake? They don't have it at Woolies. I'll buy it back tomorrow." Me: "Sure. Uhm.. can I ask why?" He looked at Lakhe. Sands: "No." Lakhe: "Who are you taking that cake to?" Sands: "Boogie." Lakhe: "You're lying." Sands: "I am." Me: "It doesn't matter

where he's taking the cake. It's okay Sandile. When is Liz coming home? We haven't had a chance to hang out." Sands: "She said next week. I'm trying to prolong it though." Lakhe: "Why?" Sands: "Do we have to have this conversation right now?" Lakhe: "Yes." Sands: "Fine. I want to buy her a house. Like a big one. I need money for that." Lakhe: "Could get a mortgage with the bank." Sands: "Debt is not my thing." Lakhe: "You've been renting a car from the airport for months!!" Sands: "I pay for it cash." Lakhe: "Just buy it like a normal human being Sandile." Sands: "You're saying I'm not normal?" Lakhe: "Yes!" Me: "No! You're very normal Sandile. Not wanting to get into debt is actually a good decision. Lakhe, do you have a credit card? A mortgage debt?" Lakhe: "No." Me: "There." Sands: "I'm selling the hotel. It'll be enough for me to buy a car and a house." Lakhe: "And then what will you live on? Income wise?" Me: "Masilakhe! Instead of asking him questions, why not guide him through it!" Sands: "Actually, it's okay Spho. It's typical of my brother to pull me down when I want something for myself." Lakhe: "You're ruining everything I gave you!" Sands: "Do you see why I want to sell Spho?" He walked out. Me: "That's shitty of you Masilakhe." Lakhe: "How must I support this? He thinks he lives in a fairytale with you! Sandile doesn't have problems Spho. Everything he's ever had, was given to him. Let him sell the fucking hotel, when his life goes to shits, he better not fucking call me!" Me: "You don't believe in him?" Lakhe: "He's never finished anything!" Me: "He has a degree!" Lakhe: "Does he use it?" Me: "For once, you can actually be a better human to your family, stop treating them like shit and support them. You don't just do this to Sandile. You did it to Nosi too with her art exhibitions until they became a success. I can't always be here to sweep up after your emotional turmoil Lakhe! Stop damaging your siblings!! You're a fucking bully! You find pleasure in someone else's begging. Which is wrong! Get out of here." Lakhe: "You're throwing me out because of Sandile?" Me: "I'm throwing you out because you're mean!" Lakhe: "Spho do you realize I'm financially responsible for my entire family since you 'bought' my dad's company? I am literally the only one paying for everything. Sandile loses this hotel and becomes my problem once again. How is this fair??" Me: "Masilakhe all I ask is you to talk to your family properly and GUIDE them! Stop always yelling at them and making them feel stupid!" Lakhe: "I'm telling him not to fucking sell!! That's me guiding him!" Me: "Just leave." Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi, you're the one person who should understand." Me: "Why?" Lakhe: "You've been with me through this. You saw our bills. I cannot, for the life of me maintain four grown adults as well as my children and myself. Affording it doesn't mean I'm okay with it. Why can't they understand? Why can't you?" Me: "Okay. You need to get your temper down first. Sit." We went to the lounge and sat down. I let Lam on the floor to crawl around, the only thing he wanted was the television. He waves at it

sometimes. Me: "Sandile is unhappy. You're pushing him away and that's gonna make him do stupid things such as selling that hotel and disappearing again. The one thing I think he's still sticking for is because of me. That can't be all Lakhe." Lakhe: "So he must sell the hotel?" Me: "No. Just be there and try and figure out what's wrong." He rolled his eyes. Me: "Whether you like it or not, you are his dad. He looks up to you. You've taught him how to depend on you so you can't just cut him off like that." Lakhe: "I'd also like a dad to look up to. We don't always get what we want." Me: "Okay then." Lakhe: "Fine, I'll do it. But don't go around saying I'm a bully Spho!" Me: "You are. You are an emotional bully." Lakhe: "Mxim." Me: "You can go now." Lakhe: "Throwing me out again?" Me: "Yeah. I need some alone time with Lammy bear." Lakhe: "Can I tell you secret that's gonna piss you off?" Me: "What did you do?" Lakhe: "Revenge." Me: "For what?" Lam had the remote in his hand. Me: "You didn't!" Lakhe: "I had to. You found it funny that I couldn't sleep an entire night. Tonight's your turn. He really loves his lollipop." Me: "Masilakhe!" He walked out.

Sandile walked into Lukhanyo's house with the cake. Sands: "Hoping you have milk." He set it on the table. Sands: "Where's your side dishes? First or second cupboard?" He walked to the kitchen. Lubby looked at Lukhanyo. Lukhanyo looked at Soso who looked at Soma. Lubb: "No, this isn't broken telephone! Confront him, why did he lock us in our house and why is he keeping us hostage!" He hissed. Luks: "Can we just enjoy the cake? It looks good, plus he seems to be in a bad mood." Sandile came back with plates and a knife. Sands: "Men don't need forks right?" He joked. Soma: "So...the house didn't open after you left." Sands: "Really?" Lubb: "Yeah. REALLY." Sands: "That's crazy." Lubb: "You think? The craziest thing is that the doors lock with a code. So it grants the code, just won't open the actual door." Sands: "Should get that fixed then." He handed him the first plate while licking the cream off his thumb. Lubb: "I suppose." He took the plate. Sandile cut more pieces for the others. Lubb: "Okay. Nope. I can't pretend. Man, what the hell?" Sands: "What?" Lubb: "Why did you lock us in our house?" Sands: "No reason." Everyone had a plate with cake. Sands: "Milk?" Soma: "No. Only Lubby eats cake with milk like a baby." They laughed. Sands: "I eat cake like a baby?" Soma: "I did not see that one coming." Sandile went to fetch the milk and glasses. Lubb: "It's like I'm kidnapped, but with a kind person. Trying to feed me to get fat and weak so that he can sell me to the highest bidder with my pink belly." Luks: "Then don't eat." Lubb: "How can I not? You're all eating. Might as well get sent to China together." Sandile sat down with milk. Lubb: "Thanks." Soso: "You okay man?" Sands: "Not really. This double vision is

making me dizzy as hell." Soso: "Besides the double vision." Sands: "Nothing."
Luks: "You need to talk. Spit it out." Sands: "How do you get your brother to support you? He's always around you, or you around him. Besides having each others back and all but business, how do you get him to be on board."
Luks: "Well... Lubby just springs things on me last minute but I've learnt to trust him when it comes to business. He's been legit longer than I have. He has great instincts and he talks me through it." Sands: "So you listen to him? All the time? Even when you've got your own ideas you want to explore." Luks: "I talk to him about them. But I listen to him mostly. When it comes to business."
Sands: "And does he listen to you?" Lubb: "This is about Masilakhe. The guy is a control freak. I know this from experience-" Soma: "You spent ONE hour with him!" Lubb: "I know, it was enough. He's like a donkey merged with a lion. Stubborn as hell with killer instinct. Now, what I pick up from your questions is that he doesn't listen to you and I believe you. But do you listen to him?"
Sands: "All the time. Well, used to." Lubb: "When it comes to business, a guy like Lakhe needs his ego stroked. You can't just expect him to be following your lead. You want him to listen? Ask his opinion." Sands: "You don't know Lakhe like you think you do. Ever since.... now... he's become more difficult than before. Stronger." Luks: "Ask. His. Opinion." Lubb: "Your brother has achieved alot for himself in business. Trust me, he knows what he's doing."
Sands: "Fine." Soma: "Your brother is a dick for not listening to you. I say we go teach him a lesson!" Sandile stood up immediately. Sands: "I will rip you limb from limb if you ever touched my brother. Do not fucking test me." He walked to the kitchen. Soma smiled from ear to ear. Lubb: "Are you fucking insane man?" He whispered. Soma: "I just wanted to find out if he still loves his brother and clearly, he does. Alot. Teaches you something about him. No matter how much you agitate Sandile, his loyalty is solid gold. I love it."

Saturday morning, I was still up. I barely slept. Last night Lam took excitement to an entire new level. I tried to calm him down with a boob, he did for a while. Fell asleep but woke up again within an hour ready to go crazy. All the kids woke up and sat with him while he screamed and sang. I was damn near losing my mind but then Sandile walked in around 1am. Thank God. Lam shut his mouth immediately. They all fell asleep in the lounge, I couldn't sleep at all. Where did Sandile keep disappearing to? I found myself standing at the lounge entrance with my arms folded on my chest staring at him while he slept on the floor with Lam on his chest and Jake under his arm. Chris wasn't too far away with Karmen next to him and Julie on his other side. I'd covered them all up with their blankets and went to bed. It was still impossible to sleep. So this morning, I was groggy and tired. Everyone else seemed okay. Sandile

was making breakfast for the kids. Kevin was here. For that I was grateful. Me: "Morning." Kev: "I heard about Lam's scream party." Me: "This child is just...Woow." I laughed. Kev: "Glad I missed it. Your child is special Spho." Me: "I need a shower." I kissed Karmie. Me: "How was your sleep angel?" Karmie: "Best sleep over ever!" Me: "I'm glad you enjoyed it. How about you Julie?" Julie: "It was great. Lammy bear is adorable, loud but adorable." Me: "True." I went to shower. What I needed was sleep but there was no chance of that. I got dressed in a long white maxi dress and sandals. I was taking the kids to a picnic. I'd stuff them full of breakfast right now, then buy Happy meals for lunch. We also needed fruit and healthy snacks on the side to munch on. Kev bathed the boys, I took care of the girls then Lam afterwards. Sands: "Where you guys going?" Me: "The beach. A picnic, you coming?" Sands: "Would love to but I'm gonna be a little busy today. I'll see you a little later. You won't need help?" Me: "No I'll be fine." Kev: "You sure?" Me: "I'm sure. Don't worry. Go relax for a day." Kev: "Thanks sweetheart." We had our breakfast and got ready to leave. I packed the kids bags with fruit and juice boxes. Sandile left first with my rented and left me his big car to use. Kev left after I locked the house and buckled up the kids. I drove us to McDonald's then Spar for more snacks. Everyone was well behaved. When we arrived at the beach I had to get creative. I once saw this and I would try it. The fitted sheet I brought from home, I turned upside down. At the fitted corners I put the kids bags in all four. Then placed Lam inside the sheet tub with his toys. I applied sun screen on all of them then set up the large Umbrella for some shade. The girls were inside the sheet tub with Lam. Chris and Jake were playing with sand in a short distance. I put up my camp chair and relaxed. Perfect beach day. There was of course the familiar feeling of being watched. It was only a few minutes when Lam decided he had enough and wanted to play. He started crawling out, trying to climb out. At first it was hard for him until he decided to roll out onto the sand. Me: "Hey! Khayalam!" He smiled and crawled to Chris. I went to pick him up and took us back to our space. He wasn't having it. I took off his t-shirt and left on his swim shorts and took him to the water. My back was facing the sea because I still had to supervise these four toddlers. I held Lam's hands helping him stand; when the water came crashing gently at our ankles he screamed and giggled. Me: "You like that baby? That's so cute." I looked up again. Chris, Jake, Julie, Karmen. Then looked down at Lam. He gave me a toothless grin. Me: "Hi baby." The water came again and he bounced and laughed. I looked up again, counting my kids. Then back at him. I couldn't risk it. It took a second for a child to disappear. In a few, I looked up again. Julie, Karmen, Jake.... Where's Chris? My heart caught in my throat. To think I just thought of this and now... Me: "Christian!!!" I screamed, putting Lam on my lap. Chris: "Mummy!!!" He waved holding a man's hand. It

was Lukhanyo. I sighed in relief. Where would I have started with looking for my child? They walked to our little space and Lukhanyo sat in my chair, taking off his shirt. Julie: "Euuuww. Why do you have ink on your skin?" I could hear her from where I was because of her high pitched voice and I thought it was hilarious. Luks: "These are my kids names." Julie: "I believe this is a lion, that is a claw mark and these are numbers. Unless your kids names are Lion, Claw and Numbers." She had a disgusted look on her face. Luks: "These are just tattoos. The lion is a symbol of strength, the Claw marks are for my two brothers, we're triplets, all have the same one. And the numbers are important dates in my life that I hope I'll never forget but in case I get old, I have these to remind me." Julie: "But then your skin will be all saggy and wrinkly. Do you really want to risk that?" Luks: "Guess I'll have to stay in shape for the rest of my life then." Julie: "That's the saddest thing I've ever heard considering you're already an old man." She turned and continued with her toys. Chris: "Julie, be nice. This is mummy's boyfriend." Julie: "But Where's Mr Lakhe? I liked him." Chris: "He went to wine tasting with his girlfriend." Julie: "Why do they have girlfriend's and boyfriends? Do they hate each other?" Chris: "I don't think they do. Maybe they're just bored." Julie: "Do you think you're going to get bored when you're older?" Chris: "I hope not. It's very hard finding someone who likes the same things as me. I don't think I want to risk it with somebody who is dull." Jake: "How do you know someone is dull?" Chris: "When they speak, they ask the most obvious questions." Jake: "Like what?" Chris stared at him with a hand under his chin. Julie: "My dad always says opposites attract. So I'm more likely to marry a dumb man." She looked at Jake and sighed. Chris: "That's not true. It doesn't have to be direct opposite Julie. Maybe you'll be a short lady with a outspoken pers-" Julie: "An." Chris: "AN outspoken personality and you'll marry a tall man who's quiet." Julie: "Quiet is not something that would attract me." Luks: "Maybe your interests will expand when you grow older." Julie looked at him. Julie: "What was your name again?" Luks: "Ta Luks." Julie: "Right. Did your interests expand when you grew older?" Luks: "Highly so, yes. With every relationship I figure something I don't like or do like and implement it in my next relationship." Julie: "So you're saying that for me to find what I like I must date a number of people?" Luks: "Sometimes people find what they like in the first round but what I'm saying is, once a relationship ends, sit down with yourself and figure out what you liked and didn't like. Look out for it when you date another person." Julie: "Oh that makes sense. You taught me something I'm going to use for the rest of my life. Thank you." She looked at Chris. Julie: "I like him now." Chris: "Told you." Luks: "What do you want to be when you're older?" Chris: "I want to be a businessman. My teacher said I'm more likely to be successful in anything I do because of my high IQ but my dad said being in business will teach me more

about life and make me more money. Like him. Plus I like selling." Luks: "That's great. How about you Julie?" Julie: "I was thinking of being a Neurosurgeon, to be able to fix someone's brain is something I'd like. Alot. Then again, being a scientist will give me more time with family than being a surgeon." Lukhanyo stared at her. Luks: "You're how old?" Julie: "I'm 5." Luks: "You've thought that far?" Julie: "Yes." Luks: "So you have a high IQ too?" Julie: "With an eidetic memory, yes." Luks: "Jesus Christ. What do they feed you kids in that school?" Julie: "I'm not sure if you're being sarcastic but we eat fruit and sandwiches. My dads say I get this from my mom." Luks: "I see. And Jake? What do you want to be?" Jake: "An airforce pilot." Julie: "You've got to be kidding me." Jake: "Not everyone is as smart as you Julie." Julie: "That's my point exactly. How are you going to be a pilot and handle missiles all at the same time?" Jake: "I'll learn!" Julie: "Right. Didn't you say you want to be a magician?" Chris fell down laughing. I walked up to them with Lam. Me: "Hey guys." Jake: "Why you gotta be so mean!" What was happening? Julie: "I'm not being mean Jake. I'm asking a question. If you can't handle basic questions, do you really think it's safe to be a pilot?" Jake: "I don't want to be a pilot anymore!" Me: "No! What's going on?" Luks: "Let them talk it out." Jake: "I don't wanna talk." He ran off. I put Lam down and went after him. Me: "Jakie? Come here." Jake: "She's mean!" Me: "I'm sorry sweetheart. Do you want to talk about it?" Jake: "No!" Me: "Okay. That's fine but let's go back, just ignore Julie. You know how she is. Don't pay her any attention." He nodded and we walked back. Me: "How are you?" I asked Lukhanyo. He had Lam on his lap, dressing him in a shirt. Luks: "Fine." Me: "Still not talking to me?" Luks: "Thought you might need help with the kids." Me: "So you're stalking me?" Luks: "Only looking out." I nodded. Luks: "I took a video of the kids. You missed a good conversation." He gave me the phone. I watched the video. Regular conversation with Chris and Julie. Luks: "Both of them have a high IQ? It's crazy. This is the first I've seen of this." Me: "Same. I've gotten used to it though. It's like having two adults in the house. Of course their emotional capacity is not as advanced as their brains." Luks: "It's incredible." Me: "And mean. They tend to be very competitive and destructive. So you need to watch how the conversation is going, the last time it happened a fight erupted." Luks: "Oh.. is it okay if I showed Lubby?" Me: "Yeah." I sat down. Lam was leaning over his lap ready to jump off. I don't understand how this child has not slept and he's still active as ever. Me: "Who wants to go to the water for a minute?" Julie: "No thanks. Sea water is not really in my list of things I like." Me: "Chris?" Chris: "Same. But I'm building a sandcastle. Tata Luks? Come help me." Luks: "Sure." I took Lam. Chris handed Lukhanyo a bucket. Chris: "I need wet sand." I held my mouth trying hard not to laugh. Luks: "So I'm an assistant?" Chris: "We all start somewhere." Luks: "I suppose." He went to fetch the sand. I fed Lam his breast

hoping he'd fall asleep but I was out of luck. He just burped and carried on playing. Luks: "Is that safe?" Me: "What?" Luks: "Breastfeeding. You're pregnant." Me: "I thought it wasn't but the rules are different for me. It is compulsory for the kings to share me. It's the only bond they have." Luks: "Oh." Chris: "Compulsory. What is Compulsory?" Julie: "An obligation." Lukhanyo looked at her with a puzzled look. Me: "She studies the dictionary." I explained. Luks: "Why?" Julie: "I get bored." Me: "Which alphabet are you on now?" Julie: "O for Obligation." Luks: "You don't play? Watch TV?" Julie: "Why would I do that?" Luks: "It's what kids your age do. It's fun." Julie: "Kids my age don't like playing with me." Me: "Maybe because you're a bit mean?" Jake: "A bit?" Julie: "I'm mean?" Me: "Kinda.." she looked sad then. Julie: "But I can't help it. I didn't ask to be born like this." Me: "I know angel. You can learn to be a little nicer though. When someone says something wrong, don't correct them. They'll learn it by themselves." Julie: "I thought I was helping." Me: "I know." Luks: "And play. You need to enjoy your childhood." Julie: "Fine." Lam was crawling on the sand with difficulty but I could his direction was facing the water. Me: "Khayalam." Lam: "Dada!" Me: "Come back here!" Chris went to fetch him. Luks: "So Sandile came by." Me: "You're friends now?" Luks: "No." The kids built the sandcastle around Lam who was trying to eat sand. Lukhanyo sat next to me. Luks: "He was acting different. Not his usual self." Me: "Why are you talking to me if you're still mad at me?" Luks: "I miss you. What you did hurt me Spho, but it doesn't change how I feel about you. I care for you and your kids that's why I came here. I want to talk about Sandile." Me: "And what about us?" Luks: "Not now." Me: "Fine. What about Sandile? Lam get that out of your hand!!!" He held out his hand to Chris. Me: "Sorry." Luks: "I was on my way out to hang with the guys and he just showed up at my door. He said I can't leave. Something about a dark hour." Me: "You listened." Luks: "Yeah. I didn't have much of a choice. The doors locked when he went out to get cake and we couldn't leave. He came back upset." Me: "Oh.." Luks: "Anyway, is Sandile involved with the...." Me: "No. He's just the source for the Unborn King." Luks: "That means?" Me: "That means he uses Sandile's body as an outlet sometimes. Sandile is still in control of his whole being but the Unborn comes with." Luks: "Why him?" Me: "My dad chose him, I think because he knows we're close and Sandile will do just about anything to protect me even if it means endangering himself." Luks: "What gives him that theory?" Me: "He's done things. Horrific things. Way before my dad was in the picture." Luks: "Such as?" Me: "I can't talk about this." Luks: "Okay. So I guess it was your son that showed up on my doorstep last night?" Me: "Probably." Luks: "Is it safe? To have him around me?" Me: "He won't hurt you unless you hurt me." He nodded. Me: "I'm kind of tired now. I barely slept. Lam was up all night." Luks: "You didn't call me?" Me: "You're not talking to me." Luks: "I

respond when it comes to your kids." Me: "Thank you for that." Luks: "Ndiyakthanda. It's what I do." Me: "nam Ndiyakthanda." Luks: "Then why undenza isbhanxa Sphosenkosi?" Me: "I'm sorry." Luks: "I get that Lakhe is your kids' father, I can't change that. I'm not trying to replace him. I just want to help. This is more than just a relationship kum ngoku, last night I did some thinking. If Sandile can come to my house and sit with me, it's more than just isidyolo. We're getting familiar. I've never been one to beat around the bush. I know what I want. So I need you to tell me what you want too. If you feel we're moving too fast, tell me." Me: "We are." Luks: "Then we slow down. I just want you to consider my feelings when you make decisions regarding your ex. That's all. I'm not dictating how you do your business, but doing favors for exes is not how I know as business. Nam, I promise to do the same." Me: "I really am sorry Lukhanyo. I guess I'm always trying to prove to Lakhe I can handle business just as good as he can. He's never really believed in me being better than him." Luks: "Why do you think you need his approval?" I shrugged. Luks: "Sphosenkosi, please let us respect one another. Ndiyakukhumbula fondini." Me: "I miss you too but please stop calling my full name." Luks: "Ndithini xa undivisa ubhlungu mfazi?"(what should I do if you hurt me?) Me: "uxolo."(I'm sorry) Luks: "ndik'xolele Ma'Komander. Qha ndisaqumbile."(I forgive you but I'm still upset). Me: "How do I make it up to you?" Luks: "Nditshate kqala." I laughed. Me: "Andifuni." Luks: "Mxim." He kissed my cheek, hugging me. Me: "I'm not going to hurt you again. I promise." Luks: "I trust you won't." He wasn't looking at me anymore, his stare was annoyed and looking over by the kids. I looked over. Another family was setting up next to them. Luks: "Chris, come play here. Bring Lam and your siblings." Chris: "But our castle is almost done!" Me: "Let them finish. We will never hear the end of it." Luks: "I don't want strangers near them." Me: "I know that. But we're literally staring at them directly." Luks: "They're carrying big bags Spho. What if bahlohla one of ours in there? No. Christian!!" He stood up. Luks: "I don't care if we collect all this sand and build the castle at home." Me: "You're over reacting." He sat down. Luks: "One of my kids once went missing Spho. You don't know how it felt knowing I might never see them again. It's a feeling I never want to feel ever again." Me: "What happened?" Luks: "We'll talk about it another time." Chris: "Done!! Come see mama!" Me: "That's my cue." I got up and walked over to them. Chris: "Take a picture for daddy. Tell him it's King Lam in his castle." I snapped a picture on my phone. Lucky for me Lam was staring up at me with the biggest smile on his little face. Me: "It's so beautiful baby. Come another one with all of you." I took a few more pictures. Me: "So beautiful." Chris: "We can go now. Come King Lammy." Me: "Why is he King Lam baby?" Chris: "That's what daddy calls him when he doesn't want to sleep. Did you send him the pictures?" Me: "Not yet baby." I picked up Lam

and we all walked to our spot. Me: "I need to wash you guys off before you eat. Come on guys, walk with me." I took a clean towel and they followed me to the shower. After washing off the sand, I dried them up and we went to sit down for lunch. Chris: "Did you send it mama?" Me: "I'll do it later baby." Chris: "But he wants to see now." How would he know? Me: "First finish your food and juice." He ate quietly. I fed Lam his vege purity which he did not like at all. I would have to bribe him with a boob again. Luks: "This looks like hard work." I'd positioned Lam in my arm as he would when breast feeding, he was in a sitting position. So he opens his mouth ready for a nipple but I put in a spoon of purity and he tries to munch on it with frustration and hate. Me: "It is. Sooner or later he'll stop opening his mouth until he sees a nipple." Luks: "Is that why he's called titty man?" He laughed. Me: "Yep." Chris: "I'm done eating mummy. Can you send it now?" I quickly sent Lakhe the pictures because Chris goes crazy. Me: "There. Sent. Come let me wipe your face." Chris: "I can wipe it mummy." My phone rang. Me: "Here." I gave it to him and he answered. Me: "Lam? One more teaspoon baby?" His mouth was shut. Me: "Okay." Lukhanyo took the small jar and Lam. Luks: "Vula umlomo kwedin. Say Grrrrr." The baby giggled. He stuffed a teaspoon in his mouth. Luks: "Khamisa. Ithi MAMA." He gave another teaspoon full. Luks: "Last one." Lam wiggled. He wants out. Luks: "Yeyi. Ithi AHHHH." He stuck his tongue out. Lam tried to copy it, another teaspoon went in. Luks: "There. Asizova ngawe apha." Me: "You really good with this baby thing." Luks: "I have 9 of them Spho. I had to learn the hard way. What I like about babies is that they copy most of what they see." I was tired now. I needed some rest. Lukhanyo drove us home. When we got to my house I made sure to wash the sand off all of them again. They dressed in their pajamas and sat in front of the TV. Lukhanyo walked in, he'd gone to fetch something for a while. Me: "What's that?" Luks: "Snacks. Later on we're having a movie night. Taste this." He gave me a packet from the JuiceEnjoyIt range. Sandile walked in with Boogie in his arm. The black t-shirt Sands wore was written "Boogie's Dad". The dog was wearing his own written "I am Boogie". Sands: "Hey guys." Lukhanyo stood by the stove laughing silently. I had to keep a straight face. Me: "Hey Sands. Hi pumpkin bear." I tickled Boogie. Me: "Where's his mom?" Sands: "Mad at me obviously. He's not talking to me. I don't know anymore. What do I do Spho? I don't wanna lose Fez as a friend. Why does he like me?" Me: "Well.. I don't know but I think because you're his baby daddy?" Sands: "That's crazy. Talk to him. I want my friend back." Me: "Sandile I don't know how to. Don't you love him too?" Sands: "Of course I love Fez but I'm not attracted to him. I don't want to sleep with him. Is that what he wants?" Me: "Maybe a relationship." Sands: "I'm already IN a relationship. Fez is being silly; why does he like to stress me for no reason? All this time we've chilled, chatted, went out and

everything was fine. You know what? It's that Giovanni fool. If Giovanni treated him better he wouldn't be bothering me. Hold my Boogie. I'll be right back." Me: "Where are you going?" Sands: "To have a word with Giovanni." I took the puppy. Me: "But Sandile, do you think that's a good idea? I'm not sure how Gio will take it if you interfere in his relationship or tell him how to act in it." Sands: "He is the reason for all of my problems. I don't usually have problems Spho. This is all him." Me: "All your problems? How many problems do you have?" Sands: "My baby mom is mad at me so I don't have anyone to take care of Boogie, while I go and look for houses for Liz and then fly up to Johannesburg to surprise her." Me: "Lukhanyo will take care of Boogie. You go sort your other problems and leave Gio alone." Luks: "Mna? Why me?" Me: "You're good with babies. Boogie will be a sweetheart." Luks: "Boogie is a dog not a baby." Sandile covered the dogs ears. Sands: "I don't think I appreciate your tone!" Luks: "Fine. I'll take care of Boogie." Sands: "Are you sure? Do you hav-" Luks: "I have a dog at home. Thuli." Sands: "Boogie doesn't eat liver or red meat. Only chicken, preferably cooked not fried. He needs to take his vitamin with veges. He doesn't like veges. So you gonna have to kind of force feed him. Now what I do is-" Luks: "I'll point a gun in his mouth. He'll be fine." Sandile was shaking. Me: "He's joking! Lukhanyo!" Luks: "I was joking. Your baby is safe." Sands: "I don't know if I trust that. Is your house baby proof?" Luks: "I don't have babies Sandile. Your dog will be fine." Sands: "I'll bring his blanket over later. It smells like me so he doesn't get home sick. His toys and bath shampoo also." Luks: "Wait woah.. how long is he staying?" Sands: "Over night obviously, I'll be back tomorrow evening." Luks: "Bath shampoo?" Me: "Boogie baths every day." Luks: "Okay, fuck that. I'm not doing that. You'll bath him when you come back." Sands: "It takes one day to get him off routine! Do you know how hard I worked to get him to enjoy a bath!" Luks: "He's a dog. If you want a mini you to enjoy a bath, make a child!" Sands: "Spho, I don't trust Lukhanyo to take care of my son." Me: "I'll make sure he doesn't hurt him and Boog takes his bath. You go get ready." He looked at Lukhanyo. Luks: "He eats sweets right?" Sands: "Don't feed Boogie candy!!" Me: "Doesn't he drink Hennessy?" Sands: "His mom doesn't want him drinking anymore. I made him stop." Luks: "Okay then." Sands: "Be careful." He walked out. I took the puppy to the kids in the lounge to play with.

Sandile walked into his apartment. Lakhe was waiting in the lounge. Sands: "How did you get in here? I changed the locks." Lakhe: "I used to own this place. Your employees still know me. Besides, I'm your real brother. What's this I hear that you have a brother in law coming here? Liz has a black brother?" Sands: "Lukhanyo." Lakhe: "Lukhanyo? The thug? You let a thug in your

house?" Sands: "Lukhanyo's not a petty thief. He's richer than I am. Probably even more than you." Lakhe: "Sandile." Sands: "Bhuti." Lakhe: "I don't care about the money. But you're risking everything. You can't trust people like Lukhanyo. Where do you keep the documents of this building?" Sands: "On top of the coffee table. Everyone who walks in here takes a look, why do you ask?" Lakhe: "I'm trying to protect you and you're not even bothered to protect your own damn self." Sands: "No. You're trying to control me like you always have." Lakhe: "WHEN!! When have I tried to control you!!" Sands: "My whole entire life has been about proving I'm good enough or even half of you. Yet, you never even look twice at my achievements." Lakhe: "What achievements? Sandile, all you do is destroy!! For YEARS you've never held a job let alone a single asset in your name! I have to beg and plead you to be safe! This is literally the one thing I gave you and you can't even hold it for a year!" Sands: "Why do you always assume what I want in my life! Why can't you ask me!!" Lakhe: "YOU DON'T KNOW! I am trying to save you from yourself!!" Sands: "For once, just listen. One time-" Lakhe: "Sandile you're not a child!! You can't always be care free and happy, bouncing off the walls! You're an adult!! You need to be responsible and take care of yourself! And hold down a damn job! You are the luckiest person alive, all you have to do is exist and your brother hands over a multi million rand hotel to you and your sister in law helps you run it! But what do you do?" Sands: "I don't want to own a fucking hotel!!!!!! I don't want any of this shit!!" Lakhe: "Who's gonna give you a job when you run out of money? You gonna be car thief your whole life?" Sands: "Get out of my house." Lakhe: "You're not selling this hotel." Sands: "Get out of my fucking house you narcissistic piece of shit!!!! Why are you here!!!!" Lakhe: "Don't you dare speak to me like that!" Sands: "GET OUUUUTT!!!" Lakhe: "Are you going to throw a fucking tantrum ?" Sands: "Your mother is a tantrum!!" Lakhe's eyes turned to flames. Lakhe: "What the fuck did you say." Sands: "Your Mother. Is a fucking Tantrum." His eyes turning ink black. Lakhe jumped at his throat, Sandile threw a punch in his face and kicked him to the floor. Sands: "Get the fuck out of my house." Lakhe stood up and stared at him. Sands: "You gonn use your little demons now, Lucifer?" In a split second, Lakhe grabbed his brother's neck lifting him off the floor. Sands: "Fucking coward." He choked. Lakhe's grip tightened. Siby: "Put him down." He walked in and looked at him. Siby: "Am I gonna have to repeat myself?" Lakhe dropped Sandile and walked out...

Sibu: "What the fuck were you trying to do getting your brother angry?" He assessed his friend's neck. Sands: "He's a coward that hides behind those demons because in real life I will knock him out." He croaked. Sibu: "Lakhe uses his power and you use your boxing training. How different are you from him?" Sands: "Who's side are you on? Oh wait...he's your family now." Sibu: "Sandile. If I hadn't walked in here, Lakhe would've strangled you to death." Sands: "That would've been his biggest fuck up yet. Not only will killing me reactivate his second form but Spho will hate him and the Unborn King would kill him." Sibu: "What good would that do to everyone? Spho's kids growing up without an uncle or a dad. You know Lukhanyo would adopt those kids in a heart beat right? Your family name wiped out immediately." Sands: "So I can't defend myself because Masilakhe is a jerk that goes psycho?" Sibu: "I know it seems unfair, and hard but you know your brother more than anyone. Even before the demons, he was a stubborn guy. A control freak. Everything of his has doubled now. You need to be patient. I know you love Lakhe. And I know you don't want him hurt. But awakening those things will hurt him tremendously. Physically and mentally." Sands: "So what must I do Sibulele? Let him bully me?" Sibu: "No. Be your own man. Make your own plans. Act right. Lakhe will come around. He always does." Sands: "He just tried to kill me!" Sibu: "It's nothing new. Definitely not the first time both of you have beaten the shit out of each other." Sands: "I'm not happy Sibu. I should be. Yeah, I make good money. I own a profitable business and all but I am not happy. I don't know what I'm living for. Everyone seems to have fit somewhere and I'm still lingering. I don't want to own a hotel. I don't care about the money. I just want to do something that makes me happy. Nobody wants to hear it. I'm expected to be a grown man and just suck it up. Like I don't deserve to be listened to. All of this unhappiness is clouding my other feelings. I want to do right by Liz but how can I? When I don't even know where I belong. I want to protect Spho, but how? She's trying hard to keep me happy and listen to me but Sibu I can't burden her anymore. I don't want to trouble her." Sibu: "Spho is the last person you could trouble. She loves taking care of you. I get where you're coming from. I guess we'll have to figure something out. I don't want you exploding like that every time. It's not healthy. I don't want you depressed. What do you need right now?" Sands: "I know you're gonna tell me I'm being stupid." Sibu: "I promise I won't." Sands: "I want to sell this hotel." Sibu: "Find a lawyer. Draw up the contracts. Find a buyer." Sands: "I want to buy Liz a proper house. She's been so patient and understanding. I don't let her know often but I love her. I might not be the marriage type but a house is a step right?" Sibu: "a big step. A healthy one." Sands: "I want to plant orange trees and start an orange farm." Sibu: "What?" Sandile looked at him and laughed. Sibu: "Man, stop playing." Sands: "Fine."

Was just thinking of finding an investment banker to help me with proper investments and reputable companies I can buy." Sibú: "Okay. Why don't you start with property? Just have a look around, research stuff and get enough information. Then decide." Sands: "Sounds like an idea." He looked at the floor. Sands: "This is the kind of conversation I was hoping to have with my brother." Sibú: "I am your brother." Sands: "I know that. Maybe I was harsh on him? Disrespectful? Maybe I should just do what he says." Sibú: "If you feel you were disrespectful, call him and apologize. What you're not gonna do is live in his shadow. It's Your life." Sands: "Then why does it feel like it's not?" Sibú: "You're a source for one of the most powerful beings on earth. You won't feel in tune with anything except for Spho. You just need to wait it out." Sands: "Then what if it's him that wants me to sell? What if the Unborn doesn't want responsibility and is ruining my life by making me reckless?" Sibú: "The Unborn only uses your body as a portal. Not your mind. If you're unsure of major decisions, put them on hold. Is there anyone you trust who can hold the proxy to your hotel for now?" Sands: "You." Sibú: "I can't do it. I don't have the experience to run a hotel." Sandile smiled. Sibú: "That look on your face right now." Sands: "Don't worry. I won't do anything stupid. I need to get this stuff to Spho then catch a flight to Joburg." Sibú: "I'll take this to Spho. She's can't see you like this. You have bruises on your neck. She'll flip a switch." Sands: "Okay fine. You take them. I need a day to breath." Sibú: "Come back Sandile. The Unborn will get restless if you're not around and it will hurt Spho." Sands: "I'll be back by tomorrow evening." Sibú: "Okay. Get going. I'll take this." He took a t-shirt, Boogie's blankets, toiletry bag and toys. Sibú: "Still don't know why your dog has a toiletry bag." Sands: "How else am I to carry his shampoos?" Sibú: "I'm sorry I asked." He laughed. Sibú: "I'll see you when you're back." He walked out.

We'd just had a light dinner that Lukhanyo cooked for us. I loaded the dishes in the washer. Me: "Thank you for the food. Healthy and delicious." Luks: "You're very welcome." He kissed my lips. Me: "The kids-" Luks: "Are in the lounge. They don't see this." He kissed me again. Me: "You never go beyond this and it's actually painful." He smiled. Luks: "I thought I was being a gentleman?" Me: "A gentleman does what the lady wants from him Lukhanyo." He held my waist. Luks: "Lady if I give you this rod, you'll want to marry me." I giggled. Me: "I don't know about that." Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "Your child Spho!" Me: "What the hell? Get out!!" Lakhe: "I'm sorry, I didn't... fuck." He walked out. Lukhanyo stepped back. Luks: "Go." Me: "No!" Luks: "He is about to explode. Go talk to him. I'll take care of the kids." He walked to the lounge. This man is so complicated. What if he's upset and testing me. Luks:

"Spho, Iya kuMasilakhe before he hurts someone." I stepped out the house Lakhe was leaning on his car. Me: "What?" Lakhe: "I would've killed him." Me: "Who?" Lakhe: "Your son." Me: "My son? Which one?" Lakhe: "Sandile disrespects me Spho. I went there to speak some sense to him and he disrespected me." Me: "I know that's a lie. What did you say to him?" He looked up at me. Lakhe: "You're taking his side?" Me: "What the hell happened to your face!!" Lakhe: "It's nothing." Me: "No Lakhe! How did you drive here!!" His whole left side was massively swollen. Lakhe: "Sandile punched me! Okay? He hit me!" Me: "What did you do!" He stared at the ground. Lakhe: "He's fine. Spho, why am I still like this? You took the demons out but they keep coming back. Stronger. I get blinded by reality and I get so angry and uncontrollable, I just want to kill. I almost killed my own brother. Why are you doing this?" I assessed his face, touching the swell. The Unborn did this. This is not natural. Me: "Lakhe, the demons are out but this is like being a recovering drug addict. No matter how clean you are, the urge of one sniff is always there. The problem with you is your anger. I keep telling you to keep it under control. They want you angry. When you kill, that's when they unleash and attach right back on you. That's why it feels so strong when you're angry. There was something I should have told you." Lakhe: "What." Me: "Sandile is the source for the Unborn King. That's why your face is so swollen. A normal punch wouldn't have done this." Lakhe: "I thought only the father can be a source." Me: "Apparently not." He held my stomach. Lakhe: "This kid throws a mean punch." Me: "Lakhe you need to be careful. Actually, I'm booking you classes. I can't risk this anymore." Lakhe: "I can do that myself-" Me: "I know you won't! I'm booking you classes. I can't let you around the kids if you're going to explode like a bomb every time you're mad." Sibuy parked his car and got out. They looked at each other. Now what was going on? Sibuy: "I'll take it from here Spho. Here." He gave me a bag. I walked into the house. Lukhanyo was watching an animated movie with the kids. I could see the stress lines on his face. I sat next to him. Luks: "Everything okay?" Me: "He fought with Sandile. Actually, the Unborn. His left side is hanging off his face." Luks: "Oh." Me: "I'm sorry." Luks: "If my baby mama came to me like that, I'd want to know what's wrong. The only thing I have a problem with is being sidelined or humiliated Spho. Or perhaps we should draw up some guidelines." Me: "Like a contract?" He smiled. Luks: "Do you ever not think of business? No Spho. Just normal guidelines for things we don't like." Lam was finally asleep. Oh my, a miracle! Me: "He's sleeping!" He was sitting on Chris' lap facing the TV but now fast asleep. I went to pick him up. Luks: "Let him nap only an hour. Wake him and keep him active until bedtime." Me: "You obviously want this house to burn down. How will you wake King Lam and keep him awake?" Luks: "You want him to wake up during the night?" Me:

"No!" Lakhe walked in. Lukhanyo giggled. Lakhe: "Anything funny?" Luks: "Nope. Nothing." Lakhe: "Spho, Sibu says I might need Lam. The swell is getting bigger." Me: "He's asleep! Lam is a baby, you need a doctor!" Lakhe: "Spho. I know you're being over protective but look at my face!! I can't go to work like this!" Me: "Go to Siyanda and Niny. He'll help you." Lakhe: "Sphosenkosi." Me: "Masilakhe. Did you even greet Lukhanyo? Do I ever waltz into your house and not greet your guests?" Lakhe: "I can barely SEE!" Me: "You drove here." He sighed. Lakhe: "Molo Lukhanyo." Luks: "Sho." Lakhe: "Spho?" Me: "Is he fine?" Lakhe: "I see this. You're trying to get revenge." Me: "On what?" Lakhe: "Spho, this is petty. Come on!" Me: "Uphilile na uLukhanyo?" Lakhe: "Lukhanyo. How are you?" Luks: "Standard." Me: "Lukhanyo, how is Lakhe?" Luks: "Grand?" Lakhe: "Splendid. Spho?" Me: "Sensational! But Lam is asleep. He didn't sleep last night. You know what you did to him. He didn't sleep all day either. We went to the beach and he played like you wouldn't believe." Lakhe: "How could you not tell me you're going to the beach Spho? You know how much Lam gets excited when he sees water, there is literally nothing in the world that can get him that happy." Me: "Oh? So you secretly take him to the beach?" Lakhe: "Only once!" Me: "Hmm.." Lakhe: "Spho, please. I am begging." I looked at him. He did look hideous. Chris would scream. I gave him his son. Lakhe: "Thank you. I'll bring him back soon." He walked out. Luks: "Figure that was a bit difficult for you." Me: "No it wasn't. Lakhe needs to understand he's not the boss of everyone." Luks: "Not talking about that. I'm talking about giving him your baby." Me: "Lam is a healer. King of the Pure. His spirit is made for peace." Luks: "He's a baby. Your son. Same as the Unborn. It's hard for you that they're part of this clan and have work set out for them even though they don't know it." Me: "I should probably get these ones to bed." Luks: "Leave the kids. They're comfortable. Talk to me." Me: "I don't have a choice Lukhanyo. It is what it is." Luks: "Is there anything I can do?" Me: "Not really, no. Just being here is enough." Luks: "Cool. So what happened?" Me: "He fought with Sandile but the Unborn hit him." Luks: "How the hell?" Me: "You know that Sandile is the source, so his strength is based on the presence of the Unborn. If King is awake in Sandile at that time then he'll be the fighter. If not, then Sandile will be using his own strength." Luks: "Shit. Considering the Unborn is with Sandile most of the time..." Me: "He has the strength. Yes." Luks: "Fuck. Remind me not to get on his bad side." Me: "You're close to my heart Lukhanyo. If you're in danger, he's coming for you. While King is in my stomach he's my protector. He will eradicate everything that upsets me." Luks: "Okay. I hear you. Enough about this. I'm taking the kids to bed so we can have a bit of a chill. Okay?" His phone rang. Luks: "Fuck. What now." Me: "Maybe it's important." He answered. Luks: "Ja." Soso: "Where are you?" Luks: "kuSpho." Soso: "I might wanna get over here. Lubby broke his ankle." Luks:

"What the hell was he doing!" Soso: "Do you really want to know?" Luks: "Fuck no." He hung up. Me: "And then?" Luks: "Lubby broke his ankle. I don't know why he can't sit still!" Me: "Is he okay?" Luks: "He'll be fine. Let me carry these ones to bed-" Me: "Haibo Lukhanyo go to your brother." Luks: "And leave you alone here?" Me: "I'll be fine. I'm indoors." He wasn't convinced. I could see it on his face. Me: "What are you scared of?" Luks: "I'm worried Spho." Me: "Sibu will be here in no time. Go. Leave Boogie for now." He helped me place the kids in bed. It was still early but they were quite tired. Luks: "I won't be long." Me: "Baby." Luks: "I'm serious. I'll be back." He kissed my forehead and walked out quick. I relaxed in the couch with a glass of juice. Me: "What do you want?" He sat down on the couch. Kom: "I want to talk to you." Me: "Did you hurt Lubabalo?" I looked at him. Kom: "Who's that?" Genuine confusion. Me: "What do you want?" Kom: "Sandile. Why did he leave?" Me: "Short holiday." Kom: "He's not supposed to be away from you. The Unborn needs to be let out when he wakes up. It's not safe for you Spho." Me: "I can handle my baby." Kom: "I don't want us to be enemies. I did what I had to do to stay alive back then." Me: "Get out of my house." Kom: "I have one last thing I need to tell you. I promised never to lie or keep secrets from you-" Me: "You killed my mother!!!!" I quaked. The house shaking off the ground. Me: "Now you better get out before I lose my temper." He sat there unmoving and unaffected. Kom: "Your mother betrayed me and compromised the entire bloodline. She knew the consequences of that. YOU know the consequences of that. Which is why you shield Lukhanyo so I can't find him. Impressive by the way. How did you manage to hold up a wall of safety around one human and for so long? Teach a class." Me: "I'm much stronger than you. All of you, combined." Kom: "True. However, I'm not interested in Lukhanyo. Although you could do a better job at choosing boyfriends that aren't thugs." Me: "I don't care what you're interested in father. Get out of my house." Kom: "Okay. Fine. Your father, Komodity has a guest in his house. You'd be interested in knowing her. Seemingly he isn't making an effort to tell you which I told him to do weeks ago." He walked out.

Lukhanyo stormed into the hospital looking for Soso. Luks: "Where is he!" Soso: "You came." Luks: "Uphi uLubabalo!" Soso: "He's with Soma in the room singing Ducktales but you came?" He led him to the room. Lubby was high on sedatives with Soma right next to him. Luks: "What the fuck man!! What were you doing?" Lubb: "Whoopty whoop. The dragon is back." Luks: "Lubabalo you're a grown man! How the fuck do you break your ankle?" Lubb: "Lakhe pushed me." Luks: "Why are you lying? I know for a fact he wasn't anywhere near you." Soma: "Ohh? So you were with him? Hm?" Luks: "I wasn't with him.

He was with Sandile. They fought and he came straight to Spho." Soma: "Where did they fight Likhanyo?" Luks: "At the hotel, obviously." Soma: "Oh? The hotel where Lubby was having lunch?" Luks: "What?! What the hell!!" He charged for the door. Soso pulled him back. Soma: "Don't be dumb. Sit." Luks: "Look here. I don't like Masilakhe any more than I have to however I tolerate him because of Spho but if he thinks he can bully or even touch my brother. I'm breaking bread with his body parts. Let go of me!!!" Soso: "SIT." Luks: "Soso, if I dare put my weight on you!!" Soma: "Why are you so angry!! Just sit!!" Likhanyo sat down, fuming. Lubby had fallen asleep due to the sedative. Soma: "Lubby is not upset. He said to me Lakhe wasn't himself when he saw him. Tried to call his name and ran after him. Unfortunately, Lakhe pushed him aside and Lubby fell. He laughed through the story. You know how crazy your brother is. He's literally a clown. What I'm worried about is, why was Lakhe that pissed? Where is Sandile? What did he do to him?" Luks: "I don't know." Soma: "You'll have to know Likhanyo because if I have to get out of this seat just to go look for Sandile, Lakhe is gonna have to square up." Luks: "Sandile is gone. He's flying to Joburg." Soso: "How sure are you?" Luks: "He told me so." Soma: "Before or after the fight?" Luks: "Does it matter? He's a grown man and not my problem. I'm not his father." Soma: "He is kind of like your step son. I like him. Call him." Luks: "I am not calling Sandile. But Lakhe is paying for this!" He pointed at his brother. Soma: "It's like trying to squeeze water from a rock. Likhanyo, Lubby will wake up here and sort out his own problem with Lakhe. He's very capable." Luks: "With a broken ankle? Lakhe overstepped the line. I'm gonna hurt him." He stormed out.

It was nearing dark. The kids were still napping but I was gonna wake them up for dinner and a board game. Just as I got up, someone knocked on my front door. Urgently. I wonder who. I knew it wasn't really a threat if they knock because my enemies literally just appear inside the house unannounced. Nx. Damn Komander. I opened the door. Hlumi. Babalo's wife. Wow. When last did I see her? Me: "Can I help you?" She stepped in. Hlumi: "Help.." She choked and fell down. Her neck twisting and finally cracked into an abnormal angle. I froze on the spot, my mouth ajar. WHAT THE FUCK. Did she just come and die here???. Oh God. Who will even believe I did not touch her or even think this? I tried to move but I was stuck in limbo. In a few minutes, I remembered. The kids. Shit. Komodus will be looking for his wife and hell is about to break lose. I started for my phone and it rang. Sibuh. Me: "Bhuti." Sibuh: "What should I get for dinner-" Me: "Forget dinner! Come home. NOW!! The kids will wake up any minute and they can't see a dead body on the kitchen floor!!" I whispered. Sibuh: "I'm 3 minutes away." He hung up. My heart

was slowing down with the reality hitting. I couldn't even look. She's actually dead. In my house. A demon wife was dead in my house. Not just any demon. My uncle. He's a madman when he switches form and the thought made my bladder jiggle. I dialed for Graham. Graham: "Yes ma'am." Me: "Are you busy?" Why was I asking? He's my guardian, it's part of his job to drop everything. Graham: "No. What's going on?" Me: "So I might need you to come here immediately." Graham: "Okay." I hung up. Sibú walked in and stared at Hlumi's body then back at me. Me: "I didn't do it!" Sibú: "No. This is not your style." He squatted down to take a closer look at her neck. Sibú: "Fuck. Something was riding on her back. It fucking snapped. Her head is twisted all the way back." Lukhanyo walked in. Luks: "Spho I need to talk-" He stopped. Luks: "Who is this?" He hissed. I couldn't even answer him. Sibú: "Our uncle's wife." Luks: "Why is she dead? Spho did you do this!!" He whispered, wide eyed, clearly shocked to oblivion. He marched to the kids bedroom, coming back in a few minutes. Luks: "They're still sleeping but what the hell! There's kids in the house!" Sibú: "She didn't do it!" Luks: "Then who? You?!" Sibú: "I just got here! Another spirit was riding on her." He stood up straight to look at me. Sibú: "It snapped when it saw you." Tears were already running down my cheeks. Me: "What kind of spirit?" Sibú: "Not sure. We'll have to ask him." Me: "No!!" Sibú: "Spho, we don't have a choice. He is the only one that can identify this!" Me: "He's going to tell Komodus!! Komodus is gonna be so angry! This is going to start a war!! He'll think I did this!" Sibú: "I'll talk to him." Lukhanyo stood in the far corner. Luks: "I need a thorough explanation. I don't understand what is going on." Graham walked in and gasped. Niny looked my direction. Graham: "How..." Me: "She just stepped inside and her head snapped." Graham: "This is bad." Me: "It wasn't me!" Graham: "Spho, It was. The Unborn did this." Me: "That's impossible." Graham: "Spho, you need to accept what you are carrying." Me: "Why would he do this?? She's on his side!" Graham knelt down next to the body. Graham: "She's pregnant." Luks: "Was." Graham stood up. Graham: "The Unborn doesn't want any pregnancy near his. With this one he's a little more aggressive. I can't understand why he's so angry. Where is Sandile?" Sibú: "Joburg." Me: "What do you mean this one?" Graham: "This isn't the first pregnancy the Unborn terminates." My first thought was Nosi. The air blew out my lungs. Me: "GRAHAM!!" Graham: "Nothing can stop him." He looked at the body. Sibú: "What now." Graham: "Komodus will start sniffing around. We can't let him find her here. Her body and any trace of her spirit need to be destroyed." Me: "No!!" Sibú: "No other way Spho." Luks: "Okay. I'll deal with the body. You two take care of the spirits. Spho keep an eye on the kids." Me: "I am Queen Komander. This is my child, therefore my mess. I will take care of the spirit, and the body. You will take care of the kids." Luks: "It doesn't work that way spho-

Sibu: "Actually.." Me: "It does." Luks: "I am not letting you!" Me: "What are you going to do if Komodus follows the scent of his dead wife to your car? To you? Do you have an idea what he'd do? Because I do. I've seen it." Sibu: "Spho takes care of the spirit with Graham. Lukhanyo and I take care of the body. I'll deal with Komodus when I see him. End of discussion." Graham: "Lets start." Luks: "Call me when you're done." He went to the kids room. The house started to shake lightly. Sibu: "Quickly Spho!" Me: "Something is blocking me!" Sibu: "Fuck." He closed the house doors and windows helped by me and Graham. They blew open the minute we were done. Okay. Graham: "I need your ultimate strength to keep these closed." Sibu: "He'll tear her apart. Leave it to me." Me: "Sib-" He was out the door, holding it closed with his might. Niny kneeled by Hlumi's head. Graham at her feet. I held one hand on her chest, the other on her neck. A gust of powerful wind swept around us like a hurricane. I held on firmly. Me: "Et in Spiritu denuo nasci." Graham: "Hurry Spho." Me: "Et in Spiritu denuo nasci. Spiritus dimittere. Regina in gratiam tui." Nothing was happening. I repeated it twice; the house went still. The spirit was shifting out of her. It was time to send it away. Graham: "Ocean. I'll take her." Me: "Call Sibu." Sibu walked in. Sibu: "Lukhanyo!" Luks: "Is it safe?" Me: "It's safe." Luks: "Kids are awake." Graham: "We'll take it from here. You can go." I went to the bedroom. Chris was clinging on Lukhanyo. Luks: "I take it he's been through this before?" Me: "Too many times for my liking. Come here my angel. It's okay." He almost jumped from Lukhanyo to me. Me: "I'm sorry baby, you okay?" Chris: "I'm okay." Me: "Alright. It's all done now." Luks: "Is there a way you can put him to a deep sleep when this happens again?" Me: "As much as I didn't want to, I'll have to. I just preferred him to be in his right mind." Luks: "He's traumatized." Me: "He doesn't see it, he just hears. I'll do my best Lukhanyo." He hugged me. Luks: "I know." Then walked out.

Lukhanyo hauled the body out the boot onto the ground then dragged it to the bush. Sibu: "So, You've done this before." Luks: "I still think we should burn it to ash. That way we can throw it in the water. Nobody will ever know." Sibu: "You're right. Go ahead." Luks: "What do you mean?" Sibu: "Well, burn it." Luks: "I've never burnt a woman before." Sibu: "She wouldn't have hesitated to kill you if she was still alive. She was a demon Lukhanyo. A ruthless one. Burn her." Graham walked to them. Graham: "What's the problem?" Sibu: "Lukhanyo suggested we burn her but now he's chickening out. If roles were reversed, she wouldn't have given you the courtesy of being dead before she set you alight." Graham brought a small tank of diesel opening the lid. Luks: "You're a pastor." He took the tank. Sibu: "Make up your damn mind!" Luks: "Fine." He poured the liquid over the body then stared. Sibu lit the match throwing it at

her body, immediately catching fire. Graham: "It won't be enough. It won't be ash. Just a burnt body." Sibulele blew into the flames and they erupted into a ball of dangerous fire. Sibulele: "That'll do." Graham: "Almost." Sibulele: "Lukhanyo, step back." Luks took a few steps back. Sibulele stood with his hands rising up in the air. Sibulele: "Surgant, et ignis urere in cineres abit." Screams surrounded them. Sibulele: "Adolebitque." the flames rose higher and bigger, hauling the bushes alight. Graham: "Sibulele!" Sibulele slowed, putting his hands down. The fires died immediately. A pile of ash remaining on the ground. Sibulele: "That should do." He looked at Graham. Sibulele: "Who are you?" Graham: "You need to tone down. You don't talk to me in that form." Sibulele: "I talk to you however I want. Who the hell are you?" Luks: "Uhm.. what's going on over there?" Graham: "I'm nobody Sibulele. We should get out of here soon. I need to clear this space before it's traced!" Sibulele: "I don't care. Nobody is going anywhere until you tell me the truth!" Graham: "There is a mortal here!!" Sibulele: "And Spho won't be happy if he doesn't come home in one piece. So start talking." Luks: "Sibulele Fondin? Zitshaphi?" Sibulele: "Our accomplice here has secrets." Luks: "What secrets? I thought you were a pastor." Sibulele: "The type that kills because this is not the first time he's done it. Tell him Graham. Tell him how a pastor kills." Graham: "I don't kill!!" He hissed. Sibulele: "Oh, you pissed now? You're sent by God to kill which probably makes you feel better than the rest of us. Doesn't that piss you off Luks? That we get condemned for killing but Pastor Graham doesn't?" Luks: "Sure as hell does but is it safe to have this conversation right here?" Sibulele: "Is it Graham? Is it safe?" Graham: "What do you want me to tell you Sibulele???" Sibulele: "Who you are." Graham: "You know me! I'm Graham. Nothing else-" Sibulele: "I can't see the past. But Spho can. All I have to do is tell her. I am going to tell your queen you are keeping secrets from her." Graham: "I am not!" Sibulele: "You're a Komander. Is that so? But which kind? And where from?" Graham: "I am not a Komander!!! I am done with this conversation!" Sibulele: "If not a Komander. Then what?" Luks: "Uhm guys.." Sibulele: "I'll find out. When I do, you and I are gonna have a big fucking problem. However, Spho will make matters much worse for you." Graham: "Fine." Sibulele: "Well?" Graham: "Go ahead and tell her." Sibulele: "Tell her what." An eerie silence fell above them. Sibulele: "Tell her what!" Graham: "I was the first dark King."

#217

Sibulele and Lukhanyo walked into the house. The kids were eating dinner in the dining room and I was setting up the board games in the lounge. Lukhanyo sat down and stared at the TV. Sibulele did the same. Me: "You did it right? She's gone?" Sibulele: "Yep." Me: "You okay?" Sibulele: "Great." I looked at Lukhanyo.

Lukhanyo looked at Sibü. Me: "Lukhanyo?" Luks: "Hm?" Me: "You okay?" He nodded and looked at the floor. So that's a lie. Me: "What's wrong ?" Sibü stared at Lukhanyo in warning. Luks: "Nothing. She's gone." He sighed. Me: "I'm sorry I had to put you through that." I hugged him. Luks: "It's okay. I'll do anything for you." Me: "Let me get you some food. Okay? Bhuti, are you hungry? I made Mac and cheese." Sibü: "Starving. Let me take a quick shower while you dish up. Brother in law, it was nice spending some time with you. I hope we get to do this again soon." Luks: "I'd love it." Sibü went to his room. Me: "Okay, did he threaten you? What did he do? Oh God, don't tell me he recruited you. You said no, right? You can't do that!" I whispered. Luks: "Relax. He didn't recruit me. He told me to stand far while he did his job." Me: "So... what did he do?" Luks: "Do you really want to know?" Me: "Tell me." Luks: "He kind of obliterated her existence." Me: "And you saw him do it?" Luks: "I was kind of there so yes. Don't worry about it baby. I'm hungry." Me: "Of course I'm worried. I promised I'd protect you from that. That you'll never have to see it." Luks: "And I won't. And Sibü is not scary. He kind of reminds me of Lubby. That reminds me, I wanted to talk to you about something your ex did." Me: "Do we have to talk about him now?" Luks: "He pushed Lubabalo. That's how he broke his ankle." Me: "What!!" Luks: "This is unacceptable." Me: "I agree but where did this happen?" Luks: "At the hotel." Me: "I'm sorry about this." Luks: "You're not gonna take his side? Tell me he wasn't in his right mind?" Me: "He wasn't. But he never really is. I don't want you to fight. I don't want to be in the middle. But Lakhe can't take advantage of that and do as he pleases." Luks: "I'd never do anything to make you unhappy. I swear." Sibü: "So dinner?" He walked into the lounge. Me: "Oh yes. I'll get that sorted." My phone rang and I took it to answer in the kitchen. Sibü: "Her hearing is impeccable. Don't make mistakes." Luks: "I wouldn't." Sibü: "Good looking out by the way. You'll fit right in." He relaxed back in the sofa. Luks: "How does it feel? To have that much power but letting someone else take reign." Sibü looked at him. Sibü: "You know exactly how that feels. The feeling you have of your brother. That is the original feeling." Luks: "I love my brother, I don't mind he's mostly in control." Sibü: "Me too." He smiled. Luks: "What are going to do about..." Sibü: "Nothing." He got up and went to the table to eat.....

Sunday.

Johannesburg.

Sandile woke up patting the bed next to him. Sands: "Babe." He croaked. His voice completely gone forcing him to get up. In the kitchen Liz was making breakfast. Liz: "You're finally up. You've been asleep for almost 15 hours. You okay?" Sands: "I'm fine." He hugged her from behind. Liz: "Great so I'm making brekkie. It will be ready in 10 minutes. After that we're going to Gold Reef city. I know you've always wanted to go there." Sands: "I've been there more than once." He let go of her. Liz: "Alone." Sands: "He never really had time to come with me and to him it looked gay. Apparently. I don't know why he's so hard on me. It's almost as though I stole his shine and he hates me for it so I have to live my life proving to him it's not like that." Liz: "I'm sorry about this sweetheart. You're a good man. Your brother.... he's different. You now have to focus on what's good for you. What makes you happy. Like being in Gold Reef with me." Sands: "My last birthday, Spho took me to a snake park." Liz: "There's a reason why she's your sister and I'm not. She's got the energy to deal with that part of you." He hugged her. Sands: "You're amazing, you know that? I know I annoy you with my life and problems and family but you never complain. You're a good woman Liz." Liz: "Look here. I've encountered enough stress with narcissists, deadbeats, and dumb ass men. You are the least annoying one of them all. I don't even get annoyed with you. You care about your family Sandile. You talk about them all the time and who did what and where. I thought you wanted to start your own family so that's why I wanted a baby with you. I love that about you." Sands: "Well, we're not having a baby lady." Liz: "Yet. I'll wait till you're ready." Sands: "I need to borrow you Titty man for a day and you'll quickly change your mind." Liz: "Oh really baby? That would be wonderful!!" Sands: "I'll talk to Spho. For now, can I have some food? Gold Reef is big and I want to explore it till my butt hurts." She laughed. Liz: "That sounds so wrong." Sands: "Only to you. You got nasty all on your mind. Tryna shake my body down to the last minute of the day. Getting me drunk all the time to take advantage of my penis." She giggled. Liz: "And don't you enjoy it?" Sands: "Every breath." He kissed her skin. Sands: "But I'm hungry now. You can't make me work and not feed me, woman." Liz: "Here's your plate." Sands: "Yum." He took it and sat down. Liz: "So you didn't tell me what happened with your brother." Sands: "Nothing." Liz: "You got here angry and unable to talk." Sands: "Just a minor disagreement. We always fight. It's nothing." Liz: "He can't hit you Sandile. That's wrong." Sands: "He didn't hit me. We fought. It was not one sided and I'd like to enjoy my breakfast, thank you." Liz: "Are you gonna call him?" Sands: "Not yet." Liz: "What about Spho? She's probably worried." Sands: "She knows where I am. I don't need to burden her every hour. I'll call her later after Gold Reef." She sat down and ate. Sands: "You don't need to worry about my family Liz. I'm here with you for a reason." Liz: "Yeah and what is that?" He sighed. Sands: "I love you. I want to make you

happy. I want to put you first. Your feelings and your passions. I want to nurture them. I want to be your man." Liz: "Baby that's the sweetest thing you've ever said to me!" She jumped on his lap. Liz: "I love you too." Sands: "So you gonna stop acting crazy?" Liz: "Not a chance." She kissed his lips. Sands: "Good."

Lukhanyo went to fetch his brother from the hospital. Soma was waiting there for him. Luks: "Hey." Soma: "Hey? Since when do you say hey?" Luks: "Not today please." Soma: "Did you find Sandile?" Luks: "He's in Joburg. I told you that. And he's safe. I'm sure of it. God." He signed the discharge papers. Soma: "What went up your bum this morning?" Luks: "Where's Lubby?" Soma: "Soso is helping him bath. Now answer me." Luks: "I'm tired." Soma: "Oh... that huh." Luks: "Not that. And why would I tell you about my love life? I'm just tired from a long week of work." Soma: "Okay. Did you see Lakhe?" Luks: "No. He disappeared." Soma: "You're not gonna do anything, are you?" Luks: "You're the one who said I should let things be." Soma: "Good. Yeah." The doctor walked in. Soma: "Hello." The doctor stared at Lukhanyo. Doc: "Your ankle was broken." Luks: "Twin." Doc: "Another pair? So... your parents just give birth to identical twins only?" Luks: "Precisely." Lubby came out naked, holding a crutch and hopping. Lubb: "No Soso. I can take it from here! I'm grown. I don't need another man touching my underwear!" Soso: "I am a doctor, and I am your best friend." Soma: "Please don't take it there-" Lubb: "Soma is my best friend! If anyone can touch my willy's then it's him! You touch Lukhanyo's willy's and leave mine alone sir!" Luks: "Nobody is touching your willy! Just get dressed! There's a lady in the room!" Lubb: "So What? She ain't never seen a grown man willy before?" Soma fell down laughing. Luks: "Lubabalo. I am begging you. Soma stop laughing bra." Lubb: "Did you bring me my sick pants?" Luks: "I did. Here." Lubb: "These aren't my sick pants." Luks: "What are you talking about?" Lubb: "These are my cleaning pants Lukhanyo." Luks: "Lubby it's just pants!" Lubb: "I can't carry a broom and my crutches!" Luks: "How about not carrying a broom. Pretend these are your sick pants. I swear Lubby, I promise on God I will do anything for you." Lubb: "Anything?" Luks: "Anything. Just put on the pants." Lubb: "Okay." He sat down and pulled on the pants. Luks: "Did you eat?" Soma: "He refuses to eat before you do." Luks: "Mxim. I'll feed him at home. Doc, we're ready. Here's his papers. I didn't catch your name." Doc: "Dr Miya Selano. Here is his prescription for pain meds. He's to come back here to see me next week. Try not leaning on that ankle Mr Morrison-" Lubb: "DR Morrison." Doc: "Seriously?" Luks: "PhD. I'll make sure he's here for all his appointments. We get this at the pharmacy?" Doc: "Yes. Enjoy your day Dr Morrison." Lubb: "Highly doubt it. Hey, Do I get a free

wheelchair?" Luks: "No! No you don't! This wheelchair only gets you to the entrance; after that you hop yourself everywhere. Let's go." Lubb: "Don't want this ugly ass wheelchair anyway." He sat in the chair. Luks: "What do you say to Dr Miya?" Lubb: "Thank you Dr." Doc: "You're welcome." She walked out. Soma: "She's nice." Soso: "You're still married." Soma: "All I said was she's nice. I love my wife and she understands me." Lukhanyo pushed Lubby out through the passage followed by Soma and Soso. Lubb: "You look tired and stressed. Is it because of me?" Luks: "No. I'm not tired or stressed." Lubb: "You look it." Luks: "Why aren't you eating?" Lubb: "I can't eat if you don't eat." Luks: "I already ate this morning and about an hour ago. You need to stop this foolishness. Wait here." He went to the pharmacy. Lubb: "Something is eating him." Soso: "Definitely. Maybe he fought with Spho." Lubb: "About me? I told you not to tell him about Lakhe!! He's going through something and I slipped!" Soma: "Why are you protecting your new friend? Is it because you want him to like you?" Lubb: "He's not my friend and I don't care. I just don't want any trouble in Lukhanyo's relationship!" Lukhanyo came back with the packet of medicine. Luks: "Time to go." Lubb: "Did you fight with Spho because of me? Lakhe didn't hurt me." Luks: "I didn't fight with Spho. Why would you think that?" Lubb: "Why are you mad then?" Luks: "I'm not mad." His phone rang. Luks: "Soma, push Lubby to the car." He answered his phone. Luks: "Ja?" Sibu: "Where are you?" Luks: "Hospital. Came to fetch my brother." Sibu: "Okay. When you're not busy, I'd like to meet up. We'll have lunch. Come alone." He hung up. Lubb: "Who's that?" Luks: "Soma, did I not tell you to push him?" Soma: "You're not the boss of me." Luks: "Get in that car Lubabalo." Lubby walked with his crutches to the car. Luks: "You two need to stop feeding him lies and conspiracies." Soso: "You usually tell us everything Lukhanyo. But these days I feel like you're hiding a lot from us. Is it because of Lubby? He's not interested in Spho. I wouldn't lie to you." Luks: "I know that!! I know he's not interested." Soma: "We want to be part of your life with whomever you love Lukhanyo. We're not that bad, are we?" Luks: "Soma, I myself am still trying to get to know Spho and her family and be able to understand them with their ...life. I need you to be patient. Please." Soma: "Fine. But she's pregnant Lukhanyo. Soon, she'll give birth and there won't be time for us all to bond." Soso: "Are you bringing her to our anniversary party?" Luks: "Both of you are having the anniversary on the same day?" Soma: "We got married on the same day, I'm not sure why you're asking that." Luks: "Do you have to share everything??" Soso: "Are you bringing her or not?" Luks: "Yes I'll bring her." Soma: "Soso invited Lihle and Remy. You think that's a good idea?" Luks: "What do you two want from me?" Soma: "I want you to be prepared and definitely not act a fool. Because if your insecurities hurt Spho in any way I'm

beating you black and blue. I swear." Luks: "Okay." He got in his car. Soma: "I mean it!!" Luks: "Okay." He drove off.

Lukhanyo met with Sibü at a restaurant overlooking the ocean. They sat on the balcony and ordered their meals waiting with a glass of whiskey each. Sibü: "Don't eat too much, Spho is making a delicious meal. Beef stew and roasted veges, the dessert is a surprise, you don't wanna miss that." Luks: "Thanks." Sibü: "My sister is a great person. With the purest heart you'll ever see. Which is why she's the Queen." Luks: "Why then did you not tell her about Graham?" Sibü: "She's carrying a Dark King. She may be pure of heart but he's not. Her reaction will be implemented by him. It won't be safe." Luks: "How long?" Sibü: "For her to give birth? 2 months hopefully." Luks: "I thought demon babies came out much faster." Sibü laughed. Sibü: "Not a King. He takes his time." Luks: "How's it going to be like when he's here?" Sibü: "Bad. Uncontrollable. But it's not him we should be worried about. Lam is more in danger than anyone." Luks: "So babies fight?" Sibü: "The existence of one threatens the other so the course of life let's the most powerful one suffocate the weaker and kill him. So they're not gonna fight physically that's just weird. They will fight spiritually until the weaker one dies." Luks: "How is it that the Unborn is more powerful?" Sibü: "He was conceived by a Pure Queen and a Full Dark King." Luks: "Lakhe? Then how come Lam ..." Sibü: "Is pure or weaker? Lakhe was not full dark or a demon when he conceived him. Lam's power is only from Spho. It's strong but it's only one. The Unborn is two beings in one." He gave it some thought. Sibü: "Queen Mother gave birth to Komander, my dad. His power suffocated that of his other brothers. They were all miscarried after him. Her last pregnancy, the longest, she managed to run away and gave birth elsewhere. So our bloodline babies don't fight, they suffocate each other by spirit. The stronger ones win." Lukhanyo nodded. Sibü: "What is it that you want to ask?" Luks: "When I marry Spho and we have kids, will this happen?" Sibü: "If you follow the rules Spho gives you then all your babies will be born Pure blood. They won't have to kill each other if they're on the same side as mom and dad." Luks: "That sounds like good news." Sibü: "It isn't. You could still get kidnapped and turned into a demon without your consent, like Lakhe was." Luks: "What are the chances of that?" Sibü: "80% for sure if my father can find you. I don't think he is able to, currently. But he can find a way. That's his power." Luks: "Why can't he find me?" Sibü: "Your girlfriend protects you." Lukhanyo frowned. The food arrived. Luks: "That's not the way it should be. I must be the protector." Sibü: "If you want to be part of this family, then you obey that specific rule. Spho protects you. Nobody else. The kind of thinking you have will only make it easier for my father to find you and lure

you with your darkest desire. Control." He started eating. Sibú: "Get rid of that mindset." ...

Sunday afternoon, Masilakhe knocked on the door. Me: "Oh wow, manners. Come in." Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "Hi." He gave me Lam. Lakhe: "How are the kids?" Me: "They're in the garden outside. Your face is healed." Lakhe: "Thank you. Something smells nice." Me: "Beef stew." Lakhe: "Miss the days I used to be invited for dinner." Me: "We moved on." Lakhe: "We weren't together but I still got food." Me: "Have you spoken to Sandile?" Lakhe: "Why should I?" He sat down. I took my phone and wrote an email to a therapist. Lakhe: "What are you doing?" Me: "Booking your anger management appointments." Lakhe: "I said I'd do that-" Me: "I don't trust you! Lakhe... when you left here, Komander visited, then after he left, Hlumi. She didn't survive. Your son killed her. Now I need you to tone down your anger and speak to Sandile like a human being. People are going to die like flies if he's not stopped. The Unborn has no outlet when your brother is away. He is so angry and I don't understand why. Please Lakhe. I am begging you. Fix things with your son." Lakhe: "He killed her here!?" Me: "Yes." Lakhe: "And Bab-" a knock disrupted him. I looked at the door. Oh father God. Why. Me: "Come in." Babalo walked in. Lakhe stood up and next to me. Balo: "So you two back together again? To be honest, I can't keep up with you. You need to pick once and for all." Me: "What do you want?" Balo: "Your brother. I heard he lives here with you." He sniffed around him. Me: "He's not here." Balo: "When will he be back? I need him." Me: "I am not my brother's keeper. He does what he likes." Balo: "Spho, I can't find my wife. I need him!!" He roared. Balo: "He can track her! That's his power! He's able to trace everything!" Lakhe: "Lower your voice when you talk to a queen." Babalo paced the floor. Balo: "She left me. She was pregnant, with my child. She said she didn't want any demon babies. Did she come to you Spho? You're the only one she would've come to." Me: "I didn't... see her." Our eyes locked. I blocked him. He couldn't see I was lying to him. He searched and failed. Balo: "Then where could she be?" Me: "Maybe with her parents?" Balo: "They haven't seen her since we changed. I need her back Spho. She is my life." Me: "I'm sorry Babalo. I'll let Sibú know." Balo: "Thank you." He walked out. I watched him get in his car and drive off. Lakhe: "She was pregnant?" Me: "Graham says the Unborn doesn't want any pregnancy near his." I bit my tongue. Lakhe: "So I guess he was responsible for Nosi's one too. We have to keep everyone away from you until this kid is out." He sat down. Me: "I'm sorry." Lakhe: "You didn't do anything wrong. If even you can't control him, then I know you've tried your best. We need a plan Spho. We need to find the book and see how we can turn the Unborn." Me: "I'm almost 2 months

away." Lakhe: "Then we don't have much time. No more twiddling our thumbs. We act. Now." He stood up. Lakhe: "We're about to leave." Me: "I want them to bath first." Lakhe: "I'll bath them at home. Spho, it's not safe. What if.... he does it again." Me: "You're right. Just give me a minute. I haven't seen Lam." Lakhe: "It's not safe for him Spho. I don't want to lose my son. Please." Me: "I am his mother. I would never let anything happen to him!" Lakhe: "This is not in your control. Babe, I don't want you to regret yourself if something happens and you could've avoided it. I know you love Lam but... before Sandile is back, we can't risk it." Me: "Okay. I hear you." Lakhe: "I'll call him. He'll be back by tonight. I swear." Me: "Thank you." Another knock disturbed us. Who? I gave the baby to Lakhe and opened. Some lady I didn't know. "Oh, lovely. Both of you. Listen, hi." Me: "Hello." Lady: "I love kids generally. Your kids are probably nice but the screaming? They throw things in my yard? They just broke the sliding door glass with this!!!" She shoved a toy in my face. This belonged to Chris. Lakhe: "Hey. Look here. I apologize for the kids. There's no need for the anger. We'll get the glass fixed. And don't lash out at her. We're talking about children. That's what they do, they play and scream. The fuck is wrong with you?" Me: "Lakhe!!" Lady: "How am I supposed to sleep with a broken glass door giving entrance to my house! I want it fixed now!" She stormed out. Lakhe: "She probably hasn't had dick in a while. Who freaks out over a broken door?" Me: "Everyone but you!! It's evening and a Sunday! How will that door be fixed before she sleeps?" Lakhe: "What is she gonna do? Call the cops on toddlers? The door will be fixed in the morning, tell her to put cardboard on the frame like normal people would do." Me: "Christian!!" Lakhe: "Don't yell at my son." Me: "He just damaged property!" Lakhe: "Spho, Chris is used to playing unlimited in my yard. He can't tone down his energy because of some old woman going through menopause." Me: "You can't possibly think what you just said is right! I'm trying to teach these boys responsibility and care for others. Your attitude, Masilakhe is not in alignment with how I want my kids to turn out." Lakhe: "My attitude?" Me: "Yeah. You're a narcissist and a bully." He laughed out loud. Lakhe: "So? Those are the real winners in life. I don't want my kids getting picked on with their peace and love banners hanging on their shoulders." Me: "Chris doesn't get picked on in his school!" Lakhe: "He's going to Grade 1 soon. Where big boys are and he'll get picked on if he can't defend himself." Me: "And what do you think you're gonna do?" Lakhe: "Teach him how to fight and look mean. Take what's his and never apologize for being himself! He is the best original Christian Sobukwe there is and no one can take that away from him." Chris: "Sir, Yes Sir!" Me: "You're gonna get my child in jail. Pumpkin, we'll have to talk again." Chris: "What did I do wrong noooow?" I heard a hysterical scream from outside. "HEELP MEEEE!!!!" It said. Lakhe: "What the hell." He gave me the baby

and ran out. Me: "Stay here Chris. Don't move. Here." I gave him Lam and walked out. The lady, my neighbor who was here minutes ago was running in the street, in actual flames, flailing her hands around, burning alive. I took the bucket and filled up water. The other neighbors pulled their hose pipes out and sprayed water all at once. Three hose pipes and the fires grew bigger. Oh God. He didn't. Her screams were turning lighter to gasps of air and despair. Everyone stared in disbelief. Her body finally fell down in the middle of the street. Burnt to a crisp. Dead. Lakhe had his hands on his hips. Everyone was stuck. As if frozen in time. I was just numb. My Unborn son just burnt a woman alive.....

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My mind started again in a few minutes. I shook my head and looked around. Lakhe was on his phone and speaking to the neighbor at the same time. The other neighbors were comforting each other on the side of the road. Lakhe: "Did someone throw something at her? Was she smoking? Anything??" Neighbor: "No! We were just chatting right here and she started choking and patting her arms then I saw the flames. Nobody touched her." Lakhe spoke in his phone again. I couldn't watch this. I went inside the house and found Chris with his friends sitting in the lounge watching TV with Lam on his lap. Chris: "See Lammy, that is Squidward. He's very grumpy, so mean. He's always upset. And that is Patrick, he's dumb." Gosh, Chris. Me: "Hey baby. What are you guys watching?" Julie: "SpongeBob for Lam and Karmie. There's something burning outside so we came in. I hate smoke." I love this child for not being her curious self just for this moment. Me: "That's good. Smoke is bad for your lungs." Julie: "My dads say so too. What was burning? Someone's house?" Me: "Uhm...yeah. I think so. I didn't really see. I didn't go there. I just stood here outside." Julie: "Good. You can't be around smoke. You have a baby coming." Me: "Thank you sweetie. I'll try my best. Who's hungry?" Jake put up his hand. He's such a good eater. I needed to get Karmie to eat some more too. She didn't like food that much. I've tried cooking what she's used to eating at her house but still. Her mom said she barely eats. I wanted to try cooking food from her mom's family heritage and see if she can eat that instead. Although she never has. Where is Lukhanyo? I haven't heard from him in a while. I called his phone, straight to voice-mail. I dished up for the kids and they ate. I took Lam for a quick bath and dressed him up warm and comfy in a fluffy little elephant onesie. Lakhe: "The cops and the coroner are here. They took statements and they're about to take her body." Me: "Okay. So... do they know how... she..." Lakhe: "No." I gave him the baby, and took

out a Tupperware. I dished up some food. Me: "This, is for the kids if they get hungry later. They're eating their last meal of the day right now." I gave it to him. He smiled. Lakhe: "Thank you Spho." Me: "Don't get used to it." I wiped Chris' mouth. Chris: "Mummy I haven't finished. Come on." Me: "Sorry baby. Karmie, you have to eat my angel." She shook her head. What the hell can I feed this kid. Me: "Can I make you a smoothie?" She nodded. I washed the fruits, chopped them and threw in the blender with a bit of milk. Me: "Don't forget to call Sandile Lakhe. Do you see what just happened." I hissed. Lakhe: "Yeah. It was crazy. For a second I just went dumb. What is setting him off like that?" Me: "I really don't know. I don't understand. He's not even talking to me anymore. Usually he communicates or at least I see him. Nothing now." I poured the smoothie in a sippy cup for Karmen. Lam reached out for it. Me: "This is not yours Mr Sobukwe Junior." He wailed immediately. I took out Chris' other cup and poured a small bit for Lam. Me: "This is for you. Ask your daddy to feed you. Here." I put it in his chubby arms. Me: "Here Karmie." I gave her hers. Me: "Now everyone has food. Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "Hm?" Me: "Why are you staring at me like that?" Lakhe: "No reason." I sighed. Lakhe: "How do you remain calm and know what they want and cater for all of them all at once? Half the time, I'm losing my mind. These kids don't stop screaming Spho. Charcoal lady wasn't lying. When they're here, it's peaceful." Me: "I don't know, it just happens and don't call her that!" Lakhe: "Sorry." Sibu walked in with Lukhanyo behind him. Sibu: "What's going on outside? Who die-" Me: So the kids, were just leaving. Guys, say goodbye to Uncle Sibu and Ta Luks?" Jake: "Bye uncle Sibbles. Bye Ta Luks." Julie: "Bye bye!" She waved. Karmie: "Bye uncle." Chris held on Lukhanyo's leg. Chris: "Bye Tata Luks." Lukhanyo picked him up. Luks: "Goodbye guys. Behave okay? You gonna be a good boy?" Chris: "Yeah. Are you gonna come visit me at my daddy's house?" Lakhe: "Lukhanyo has a lot of things to do Christian. His name is Lukhanyo." Luks: "Maybe another time okay? You're welcome to come to my house anytime. We have big garden in the back and fertilized soil I was planning to plant something. Maybe you can help me." Chris: "You don't have to tell me twice Tata Luks. I'm already fingling. I'll come tomorrow." He kissed his cheek and wiggled off. Lakhe: "So what's that about?" Chris: "Lets go daddy." He pulled his hand. Lakhe: "Hold on Chris. Have you guys collected your stuff?" The kids ran to the room. Lakhe: "Tata Luks? Since when?" Me: "Lakhe please." Lakhe: "Why does he cling on to him like that?" Luks: "He was scared. I was the person who came to check up on him like you would've done as well if you were here. Spho needs help, she can't look after the kids and fight these things and still try to fix the mess the baby creates all on her own." Lakhe: "It gives you no right Lukhanyo. None." Luks: "Oh? Like how you pushed my brother when he was trying to talk to you? What did he ever do to you

Masilakhe? Lubabalo is a kind person! Why do you think it's okay to hurt my brother? See, this is the last time I'm addressing you. If you want to pick a fight, direct it at me. Ndik'lindile sani." Lakhe: "Christian! Let's go." He walked out. Chris: "Bye mummy. I love youuu." Me: "I love you too my angels. Call mummy when you get home okay?" They all took off after Lakhe and Lam. Sibuh: "So what happened outside. I saw the coroner van driving off." Me: "He did it again." Sibuh: "Who?" Me: "Some lady from next door came in here, shouting about how the kids are making noise and apparently this broke her sliding door. She walked out and... after a few minutes, she starts screaming. We went outside to check, kanti she's in flames, burning. We all tried to put the fire out. I saw his shadow surrounding her. He killed her. He just burnt her alive for no reason. It's getting more ridiculous Sibuh. Yesterday I watched a woman's neck twisting all the way back, today I watched one burning alive. All because of my son? I knew he was bad, but this? This is just horrible." I sobbed. Luks: "Fuck." Sibuh dialed a number on his phone. Sibuh: "Mans." Sands: "Hey. How's my Boog life?" Sibuh: "He's sleeping on the couch. Mans, when are you coming back?" Sands: "Hmm.. was thinking of staying an extra few days-" Sibuh: "You can't. Things have gone wrong Sandile. A lot of things." Sands: "Such as?" Sibuh: "The Unborn needs you. You're too far away. He's killing people like flies now." Sands: "Shit!! Are you fucking serious?" Sibuh: "Hlumi yesterday, today some random lady. Every person who walks into Spho's direction, he eliminates. You know I want you to be happy. But you need to come back son." Sands: "I'll book the flight now." Sibuh: "Thanks Mans. See you." He hung up. Sibuh: "He's coming." Me: "Should call Graham to help cleanse the area tonight." I wiped my tears. Sibuh: "I'll let him know. How about you take a bit of a nap. You need some rest. Maybe if you're sleeping, he will be sleeping too." Me: "Okay." Likhanyo kissed my forehead and I walked to my room. Luks: "I'm worried about her." Sibuh: "Don't be. Sandile will be here in no time. He never takes long." Luks: "I have a bad feeling Sibuh. Like something is about to happen again." Sibuh: "Then you best go take a nap too. You need to be next to Spho. Go."

Liz walked into the apartment lounge where Sandile was waiting. Liz: "Hey babe. I booked the flights on my way back. They have one for tonight at 21:15pm. Sands: "It's perfect. Although, you don't have to come with babe." Liz: "I was already done this side anyway, I'd have booked to go home tomorrow or Tuesday." Sands: "Are you sure I'm not disturbing your plans?" Liz: "Yes, I'm sure. Let me pack for us." Order a quick pizza." She went to the bedroom. Sands: "Okay. How was your meeting?" She followed. Liz: "Wasn't really a meeting. Just my dad being a pain again." Sands: "He still wants you

to move?" Liz: "Yes! To Dubai of all places?" Sands: "It's a great opportunity. Dubai is quite cool." Liz: "I don't want to go live there. I like my life here. I want to build it with you." Sands: "Liz... I don't want to make empty promises to you. I love you with all my heart but-" Liz: "You're not the marriage type. I know that. I don't want you to change who you are. I just love you as is." Sands: "But your father hates me. He thinks I'm not good enough and I'm taking you for a ride." Liz: "Fuck what he thinks." She packed the suitcase. Liz: "You're literally the first guy I've met who doesn't lie or cheat. Never in my life have I been in such a relaxed relationship." Sands: "I'm too lazy to lie or cheat baby. Forgive me." Liz: "I know." She kissed his lips and went to the bathroom to collect toiletries. Sandile dialed for the pizza company and the door bell rang. Sands: "Hi there. Who am I talking to?" Caller: "This is Debonairz pizza, you're speaking to Simon." Sands: "Hi Simon. How are you doing man?" Simon: "Good sir and yourself?" Sands: "Fantastic. I'd like to order a pizza." He went to the door. Sands: "A large Barbecue chicken. Give it extra cheese." He opened the door. Sands: "Uhm.. Simon, let me call you back quick." He hung up. Sands: "You look familiar. Can I help you?" Man: "Come with me." Sands: "No. That's not gonna happen. Who are you?" Man: "Your girlfriend is in that room. She will start screaming to her death in 13 seconds. Step out this door, right now." Sandile sprung to the bedroom Sands: "Liz, jump out the window. NOW!!!" Liz: "What? Why? What's going on?" The man entered the bedroom and grabbed Sandile, choking him. Sands: "Call Lak....." he fell unconscious. Man: "It is within your best interest to stay away if you ever want to see him alive." He threw Sandile's body on his shoulder and walked out.

In my sleep, I could feel the baby trying to turn in my stomach. He was uncomfortable. I tried to wake and help him but I couldn't wake up. I was slipping deeper into a sleep coma. He twisted and turned inside me, tearing and scratching. My prayer couldn't reach him. He screamed in my ears. Luks: "Spho!!!" He shook her body. Luks: "Baby please!! Sibul!!!!" He screamed. Luks: "Spho..." the blood was pouring out her mouth. Sibul walked in. Sibul: "What?" Luks: "Call an ambu- Fuck it." He stood up. Sibul: "Leave her.." Luks: "I have to take her to the hospital. She's vomiting blood and unconscious!" Sibul: "She's fine. Leave her. Get the bible, Graham will be here in 2 minutes." Luks: "ARE YOU FUCKING INSANE MAN!!!! SHE'S DYING!!!" He pushed Sibul against the wall. Graham walked in. Graham: "Damn it." He quickly went to her side and knelt next to her. Luks: "Help me carry her-" Graham: "No." He held her head and her stomach. Graham: "May the Almighty Father hold on to your spirit and strengthen you. May the angels of God deliver your soul from this rupture." I opened my eyes and gasped for breath. My body was shaking.

Me: "Where.." Luks: "I need you to go to the hospital baby. Are you okay?"
Me: "Where is Sandile." I wiped the blood off my mouth. Sibú: "He's tearing you inside? I haven't heard from him." Me: "Find him. Now." I sat up from bed. My body cracking in pain. Luks: "What happened." Me: "Something is happening to Sandile. Something bad. I can't move." Likhanyo walked out of the room. Graham: "He's not taking it well Spho." Me: "That's why we have to find him-" Graham: "I'm talking about Likhanyo. He feels helpless. He thought he was watching you die." Me: "It's nothing." Graham: "Does this look like nothing to you? You were unconscious, bleeding." Me: "I'll talk to Likhanyo, but I need to find Sandile right now." Graham: "Did you see him?" Me: "No. I can't see anything." Sibú's phone rang. Sibú: "Hello? Who's this?" Caller: "It's Liz. Sandile's girlfriend." Sibú: "Oh yeah. Hi. Where is he?" Liz: "Some man came in here and grabbed him, strangling him unconscious and took off with him. He told me if I want to see him alive again, I should stay away. Sandile's last words were Call Lakhe. But I'm so scared, he's gonna think it's my fault!" She cried. Sibú: "Wait, hold on. Talk slower. Someone kidnapped Sandile?" Liz: "YES!! Please Sibú! Please help!" Sibú: "Stay right there. Don't move. Don't call anyone. I'm coming." He hung up. Sibú: "FUCK." Likhanyo walked back in. Luks: "Do you need anything?" He asked me. His eyes were red and moist. My baby had been crying. Just seeing it broke my heart. He couldn't even look at me. Me: "Uhm-" Sibú: "Sandile was kidnapped." Likhanyo's head shot up. Luks: "WHAT? Where!!" Sibú: "Johannesburg. His girlfriend just called. That's why Spho was reacting. Do you think it's someone from the bloodline." Graham: "Definitely. But who?" Me: "I need to change. Call Komander." Graham: "Spho, I don't think-" Me: "You do as I say, not the other way around." They all walked out and I went to wash up. Likhanyo paced the living room, talking on the phone. Luks: "Where in Joburg?" He asked Sibú. Sibú: "Bryanston. I'm tryna get the address." Luks: "Get my jet ready, and a pilot. We're going to Joburg in the next 45 minutes." Caller: "Ta Luks, I can't find a pilot that quick." Luks: "Sounds like your personal problem to me. Ndifike net ingekho pilot kulo airport ndiyokuqhekeza indawo." He hung up the phone. Graham: "Likhanyo, how about you wait for Sibú at the airport." Luks: "Why." Graham: "Well, Kadir Komander is coming. It's not wise to see him in the situation that we're in. There'll be uncontrollable emotion." Likhanyo looked at the bedroom door. Graham: "She'll be fine. She's stronger than you think." Luks knocked on the door. Me: "Come in." He walked in. Luks: "My beautiful angel." I had a towel around my body, having just stepped out the shower. Me: "My handsome warrior." Luks: "I preferred it better when I was called a big bad thug." Me: "You still a big bad thug?" He shook his head laughing. Luks: "I love you Spho." Me: "I love you too." Luks: "I'm bringing back Sandile. I promise." Me: "Just be careful okay? I would say don't go but I know you will." Luks: "You

gonna be safe?" Me: "I will. There's a shield protecting you from all forces. I strengthen it every night. Don't drink or eat anything you're offered, awake or asleep. Okay?" Luks: "Okay." He kissed my lips. Luks: "Should I get the guys to watch over you and the house while I'm gone?" Me: "That won't be necessary. And probably not safe for them either." Luks: "Okay then. Be back soon." He kissed me again and walked out.

Lakhe: "Okay guys. Time for bed." He put Lam in front of the playing blocks on the floor. Julie: "But it's still early. We took a nap earlier, can we play?" Lakhe: "Only a bit. No video games." Jake: "Ohh come on!" Lakhe: "Yeah. Go fetch your toys. Chris?" All the kids went to the play room to fetch toys. Chris: "Yes daddy." Lakhe: "You know that daddy loves you right? And you can always count on me for anything." Chris: "I know daddy." Lakhe: "Good." Chris: "Tata Luks is a nice person daddy. You must invite him to come play with us." Lakhe: "That's not happening. Ever." Chris: "But mummy and Aunty Mimi chat on the phone. Why don't you want Tata Luks to be your friend? You don't have friends daddy. Tata Luks looks like you. He's your type." Lakhe: "Before we get to that. Your mum and Miya chat on the phone? When?" Chris: "Yesterday." Lakhe: "What were they talking about?" Chris: "Hayi daddy, eavesdropping on adult conversation is bad." Lakhe: "How much do you want?" Chris: "R100." Lakhe: "You're ripping me off Chris!" Chris: "You have money mos daddy." Lakhe: "Who is raising you?" He took out his wallet and gave him him the note. Lakhe: "This better be worth it." Chris: "They were talking about the baby, how he's doing. He can kick now. Alot. And also, mummy asked Aunty Mimi to look after us while we're here and they spoke about Karmie and why she isn't eating. Then... they talked about me and school." Lakhe: "That's it?" Chris held out his hand. Lakhe: "Christian Sobukwe!" Chris: "Hayi ke." Lakhe took out his wallet and gave him 50. Lakhe: "This is the last I'm giving you!!" Chris: "Then they spoke about you." Lakhe: "What about me?" Chris: "That you're a bully." Lakhe: "They gossip about me?" Chris: "Maybe." He shrugged. Chris: "Can you take me to the bank tomorrow?" Lakhe: "You'll use that money as taxi fare." Chris: "Haibo Tata. How can you be so cruel?" Lakhe: "I'm the cruel one? You charged me for gossip Christian!" Chris: "Fine. I'll ask Tata Luks to take me. He has a Bentley. I want to sit in the back like a president." Lakhe: "My house costs 10 Bentleys. I'm not even offended." Chris: "I'm still going to deposit my money in my bankie account like a president." Lakhe: "Have fun." Chris: "You're jealous." Lakhe: "How can I be jealous of something I don't want?" Chris: "You want to cry." Lakhe: "Jokes on you. These are tears of joy. Jake, Julie, Karmen and I are going to Spur tomorrow while you go deposit money." Chris: "Without me?" His bottom lip quivered. Lakhe: "Andithi you're going with

your Tata Luks? I doubt he knows Spur shame. They don't have Bentley parking spaces. Poor thing." Chris: "Hayi Tata. You're leaving me behind? Mos wena you said you love me?" Lakhe: "I do, my son. Very much." Chris: "But kaloku don't leave me behind." Lakhe: "Aren't you going to the bank?" Chris: "I don't wanna go anymore." Lakhe: "Why not?" Chris: "I want to go to Spur." He sobbed. Lakhe: "Uxolo kaloku mntanam. Yhini." He put him on his lap, hugging him. Lakhe: "You're coming with me?" Chris: "Yeah." He cried. Lakhe: "Okay then. We'll go to Spur, all of us. Don't cry. Daddy doesn't want to see his baby cry." He wiped the tears off his son's face. Lakhe: "Do you really want to go to the bank?" Chris shook his head. Lakhe: "I'll take you after school. I have your bank account ready." Chris: "Okay." He sniffed. Lakhe: "Thank you daddy?" Chris: "Thank you daddy. I love you so much." Lakhe: "I love you too. Don't cry mntanam. You're hurting my feelings. Look, your mom is calling. Please Chris, I'm begging you." Chris: "Okay I'm done." Lakhe answered. Lakhe: "Did you put an emotional tracker on your kids?" Me: "No, why?" Lakhe: "Never mind. What's up?" Me: "Are you home?" Lakhe: "Yeah. Just got here." Me: "Didn't want to call while you're driving. Uhm... we have a problem." Lakhe: "What is it?" Me: "Sandile has been kidnapped." Lakhe: "WHAT!! By who!! Where!!" Me: "He was in Joburg with Liz, she just called. Some man walked in and grabbed him. Lakhe... it may be someone from the bloodline."

#219

Komander was sitting in my couch elbows on knees, fists under chin position. A sign of complete stress. Me: "Lakhe will bombard this door any second. You have to leave." Kom: "It's been months. Lakhe has healed from me, you've prayed for him, revived him. I can't affect him anymore." Me: "I know that but he will still see you as his father. He's going to be angry. I don't have the energy to deal with all that right now." Kom: "Where's Graham?" Me: "He said he had to run an errand quick." Kom: "Sibulele?" Me: "He left. He went to Johannesburg to look for Sandile." Kom: "Spho. He let him loose." Me: "Who's he and him?" Kom: "He is your son, the Unborn. Him is your grandfather." Me: "How is that possible? I didn't even go near there!!" Kom: "He sent someone. Was there a man you had to put down? Rescuing an abused woman or such?" Me: "Kirsten's husband?" Kom: "Yeah. He poured himself in that man. He does whatever he commands. Your child is already building a powerful army before he arrives." I sat down. Kom: "Sibulele isn't on good terms with me. He refuses to speak to me more than necessary. For us to find Sandile, I need to speak to one of them regularly and give them direction on where to

look." Me: "You are going nowhere near Lukhanyo and Masilakhe. Do you understand me? DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME!!" He sighed and walked out. Komander must think I'm dumb. Where did Graham go kanene? He rushed out of here before Komander arrived. Within a minute Lakhe stormed into the front door. Lakhe: "WHERE." He was breathing fire. Not good. Me: "Hey. Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "No Spho!!" Me: "Listen to me." Lakhe: "Where is he?" Me: "I don't know yet. Masilakhe, I need you calm. Please? Where are the kids?" He paced the floor. Lakhe: "With my parents." Me: "Okay. How's Lam doing? Is he fine?" Lakhe: "He's okay. Obsessed with SpongeBob though." Me: "Alright. You? How's things?" Lakhe: "My brother is missing. And you want to analyze me?" Me: "I'm just having a conversation." Lakhe: "I need to find him. They can't. He can't. Not to my brother Spho. If I have to be the demon of the family then so be it. But not Sandile. He's a child!" Me: "He's a grown man. But yes, I get you." Lakhe: "I feel like you're hiding something from me. Why are you trying to get me calm?" Me: "No reason." Lakhe: "Tell me." Me: "When I took Kirsten, I left her husband there. The Unborn poured himself into him and now Kirsten's husband is his.... zombie. He let Rex loose." Lakhe blinked. Frozen on the spot. Me: "Say something." Lakhe: "Rex. Is. Free?" Me: "Yes." Lakhe: "Jesus Spho!!! You're coming with me, I don't care! Let's go!" Me: "No! I'm not going anywhere with yo-" Lakhe: "He kidnapped you once! He WILL do it again!" Me: "He didn't kidnap me. Komander took me to him then he held me hostage because he wanted to get me pregnant. I serve no purpose to him now." Lakhe: "Except the fact that you're carrying a Full Dark King? The one he wants? The most powerful being in this bloodline?" Me: "I can handle Rex. He can't come near me anyway, if he could, he would. Graham will be here the whole time with Niny to protect me." Graham walked in the house. Lakhe: "If anything happens to her while I'm gone, I'm burning you and your entire congregation alive." Me: "Masilakhe!" Lakhe: "He needs to know Spho. I'm going to Johannesburg to fix this shit." Me: "Uhm..." Lakhe: "What is it now!" Me: "Nothing. Just be careful. Remember to breath. No anger." He walked out. Graham: "You didn't tell him Lukhanyo is going there too?" Me: "Yeah that wouldn't have kept him calm at all. Besides, Lakhe doesn't do well with surprises. He just keeps quiet when he's caught off guard." ...

Sunday Night.

Johannesburg.

Sandile woke up in a brightly lit room. Two people stood in front of him. Sands: "What the hell? Where am I?" The man who kidnapped him walked away. The one who remained, stared at him then his face shaped and changed into Komander. Sands: "Oh my fuck. It's you again? Komie, what do you want from me?" Rex: "The book. Where is it?" Sandile gave it some thought. If Komander gave him the book, then he wouldn't be asking for it back. This wasn't Kadir. Sands: "What book?" Rex: "You're a bad liar. Bad bad liar. A baddie. You know exactly what I'm talking about and yes, this isn't Kadir." Sands: "You're supposed to be dead. Or in some portal, trapped forever." Rex: "Lucky for me, I have a great grandson who is about to be King upon his birth." Sands: "The Unborn let you free?" Rex: "Yes, he did. Now I want my book." Sands: "I don't have it." Rex: "I know you do. Where did you put it?" Sands: "I don't have it." Rex: "Wow. So we gonna have to do this? And here I was, trying to play nice. Oh well." He turned into large snake. Sands: "That's the best you can do? I like snakes by the way." Rex: "Snakes you can control. Goodnight Sandile." The lights went off. Sandile laughed. "Goodnight Father." ...

3 hours later.

Lakhe walked into O.R Tambo international. Sibuy and Lukhanyo had just arrived. Sibuy: "Oh oh." Lakhe looked at them. Lakhe: "And what the fuck are you doing here?" Sibuy: "We're here to find Sandile." Lakhe: "He's MY brother. I will find him-" Luks: "How? Do you even have a lead? If you could just get your head out of your ass for a minute!" Sibuy: "Hey! Enough! Sandile is relying on all 3 of us here. We all look for him. There's Liz, control yourselves and focus." Liz walked over to them with a man behind her. Sibuy: "Hey." Liz: "Hi. This is my cousin, Trev. T, this is Sandile's brothers. We can go sit." Luks: "You go ahead. I have a few things to sort first." Lakhe, Sibuy and Liz left for the car. Lukhanyo stayed behind making a call. In the parking lot, Liz explained the incident again. Lakhe: "Can you identify this man that took him?" Liz: "Yes. He has brown skin, and sugar brown eyes. There's a scar on his left eye." Sibuy: "Did he seem, unnatural in any way?" Liz: "Kinda. Just that... he didn't look strong but he was able to strangle and carry Sandile. He didn't even choke him for long. It was seconds." She cried. Sibuy: "Did he say anything prior taking him?" Liz: "I vaguely remember the conversation. I remember hearing the doorbell. Sandile was on the phone and he opened. I'm not sure after that, but Sandile came in running to the bedroom asking me to jump out the window." Sibuy: "Why would he ring the doorbell if he was from the bloodline." He whispered to Lakhe. Lakhe: "Unless he isn't. But the strength isn't making Sense." Sibuy: "I'll

need to sniff out the house. If it's from the bloodline, he'd have left his dem-scent there." Lakhe: "And you're taking this cartoon character with you?" Lukhanyo walked to them with a gang of men. Sibu: "How the hell did he organize a gang that quick? Surprisingly excellent." Lakhe: "They're human." Sibu: "They're soldiers. Willing to die for us, all thanks to him. Be grateful. Liz, you're going home with Trev. We'll take it from here. You don't breath a word of this to anyone. I'll update you when we find him." Liz: "I'm sorry Mr Lak-" Lakhe: "Go." She walked away with her cousin. Sibu: "You don't have to be rude. It's not her fault." Luks: "Will this be enough?" Lakhe: "I'm sorry? But are they demons? Since we're going to come head to head with supernatural beings, what are your little goons gonna do?" Luks: "It's either them or you Masilakhe." Lakhe: "I fight my own battles. I don't need a paid army." Lukhanyo grabbed his shoulder and pulled him aside. Lakhe: "Don't fucking touch me!!" Luks: "Mamelapha. I don't fight my own battles because I have a family. I have 11 children waiting for me to come home and I will be damned if they have to cry themselves to sleep with broken hearts seeing me in a coffin before time. These men, aren't forced to be here. They don't have families. They don't want families. They choose to be anywhere I call them at any given time to fight for me. It's not a paid army, it's a loyal army but you wouldn't know that because you're a fucking narcissist. You look down on everyone including your own family. Which is why you don't even have friends. So for once, accept help, awuzophuma sfombho. I don't care for you, I care for Spho and Sandile because unlike you, He's actually quite cool. Do you want your brother back or not?" Lakhe: "Don't fucking touch me again." He walked away. Luks: "And Chris sings about you when you're not home. So at least try and be the hero he sees in you!" Lakhe looked at him. Sibu: "Perfect. Now we can go?" He got in the car with Lakhe. Luks got in the minibus with his gang.

Sibu: "Tongue lashing you got there." Lakhe: "Must have made you happy seeing I'm not your favorite person." Sibu: "It did. Don't know how many times you need to be reminded that people love you. Spho, your parents, your brother, even your enemies." Lakhe: "Lukhanyo is only here for brownie points from Spho. He likes acting like a fucking hero and it's annoying. This is MY family, he has no right to be here. He doesn't even know Sandile!" Sibu: "Sandile visits Lukhanyo in his house and chills with him and his brothers. They like him. You know your brother is a teddy bear." Lakhe: "He's just doing this to piss me off." Sibu: "Or the other thing." Lakhe: "What other thing!!" Sibu: "The fact that you're loved. If we couldn't stand you, we would have let you come here alone, get attacked and probably die with your brother. We're all risking

our lives here Lakhe. The least you could do is work with us. Especially Lukhanyo." Lakhe: "If he so much as touches me again." Sibü: "If he's tryna keep you alive then I support it." He parked the car. Lakhe: "Look at him, acting so smug, giving orders. What does Spho see in him?" Sibü: "You." He walked in the building and unlocked the door. Sibü: "Fuck." They stared at foot tracks to the room. Luks: "That's a large boot print." Lakhe: "It's a demon." He sighed. Luks: "Where would they take him? Why?" Sibü: "I can only find out one of those." Lakhe: "Which is..?" Sibü: "The why. Call Spho." Lakhe took out his phone and dialed the number. Sibü: "Lakhe." Lakhe: "What?" Luks: "You're... your..." he pointed to the nose. Sibü: "Get him out. NOW." Lukhanyo grabbed him and hauled him out the apartment. Lakhe: "I told you not to fucking touch me!" Luks: "Fight me then." He threw him on the pavement. Luks: "You got blood on my shirt." "Hello??" Lakhe: "Lukhanyo pushed me on the pavement." Luks: "Give me that." He grabbed the phone. Luks: "Baby. The demon took him says Sibü. Hold on." He stepped on Lakhe and went into the building. Luks: "Here." Sibü: "Spho?" Spho: "Okay, what's happening there? Why is Lakhe yelling in the background?" Sibü: "No reason. I can't trace this scent mummy. I don't know who this is." Me: "Where is Masilakhe?" Sibü: "He's outside. His nose started bleeding." Me: "He's angry isn't he? Sibü, go to the door. There has to be some kind of trace at the door. That's where he must have stood the longest." Sibü: "The door is clean." Me: "So he knew we'd be looking. Any other marks?" Luks: "Boot prints." Me: "I need to see them. FaceTime me." We switched the call. Sibü: "Are they clear?" Me: "Nope. This is new. Definitely new. He created a whole new demon. Wow." Luks: "Who's he?" Me: "Rex. My grandfather." Luks: "You said he was trapped." Me: "The Unborn let him loose." Luks: "Okay. So what now? What does he want from Sandile?" Sibü: "Sandile is the source. He wants the book and the King." Luks: "Well tell him he's not getting either." Me: "Before you go in there guns blazing. Let me consult. I'll call you back-" Sibü: "We don't need-" Me: "I know! I know! But bhuti, he's the only one we've got. Now I know I sound like a hypocrite but we need him." Sibü: "Fine. But Graham speaks to him. Not you." Me: "But-" Sibü: "Sphosenkosi. Graham speaks to Komander on your behalf. Not you." Me: "Fine." I hung up. Me: "I need to see Komander." Graham: "Sibü said-" Me: "Is he here?" I took my bag, walking out.

Monday morning. I was still up. I couldn't sleep a wink. Nobody could. Niny and Graham were here with me. We'd prayed the whole night but Sandile had disappeared without a trace. I had a meeting today but I don't think I'd make it. My head hurt so bad. I was so stressed. Graham: "You should rest." Me: "I can't. If I sleep, something bad is going to happen. The last time I took

a nap, the baby was suffocating and clawing himself out of my womb. I can't risk it." Graham: "I'll try and look for Kadir again." Me: "He's gone Graham!!! If we couldn't find him yesterday, then you won't find him today!! He played us!! He's gone!!" I paced the dining room. Me: "He's the one that dropped the bomb about Rex being free! Knowing fully well he helped. We're screwed Gray. If we don't find Sandile, by 5pm tonight. I need everyone away from me. The Unborn will kill every living being near me." Graham: "He can't kill me." Me: "This is not the time to act brave. I need you to do as I say." Graham: "Spho, I am your protector." Me: "I know. And I am your Queen." I went to get ready for work. A quick shower and a white bandage dress. My tummy poking out like it was a normal human being instead of a King. Me: "You really know how to spice things up my angel." I tried to call Lukhanyo and his phone was off. Then Sibu. Then Lakhe. His just rang to voice-mail. I was beginning to panic. After wearing my shoes I went to the lounge. Me: "When last did you speak to them?" Graham: "last night. They haven't picked up since. I'll keep trying them." Me: "Contact me as soon as you have news. Let's go Neens." Niny drove me to work. Tar was waiting for me in my office. We started our first meeting while I checked on the kids. Me: "Mimi, how are the kids? Did you sleep okay?" Miya: "How did you know?" Me: "Lakhe can't lie. His parents aren't much of a sleepover with kids type." Miya: "They were wonderful. You're right about his parents. Stella had a date and Rob kinda drank himself sorry. He spoke about you alot." Me: "Bad things?" Miya: "Yep. He was drunk. But the kids were sleeping luckily. They've gone to school now." Me: "Okay. Thank you Miya." Miya: "Is everything okay?" Me: "Yeah and no. Sandile is missing so Lakhe is trying to track him down. That's why he's in Joburg." Miya: "Oh shit. That sucks. Well I hope they find him." Me: "I'm sure they will. Have you seen my dad lately?" Miya: "Yeah, I see him often. He's always here in the office. Works late." Me: "Has anyone come to visit him?" Miya: "That guy? I told Lakhe about it and he all but bit my head off." Me: "What guy?" Miya: "Uhm..." Me: "Miya, Lakhe is not here. Tell me what guy?" Miya: "Some good looking older guy. He's got alluring eyes." Me: "How often does he come there?" Miya: "Almost everyday." Me: "Have you seen him today?" Miya: "No. Even your dad isn't here today. Since Saturday." Fuck. Me: "Okay. Stay away from that guy." Miya: "Okay. I will." Me: "Bye Mimi." I hung up. Tar: "I feel like something is happening." Me: "Sandile is missing." Tar: "Isn't that his thing." Me: "Well... still." Tar: "Thomas just pulled up. He's expecting excellence. Can we give that to him?" I nodded. Tommy walked in with his brother. Thomas: "My favorite people. Good morning." Me: "Hi Tommy." We shook hands and begun.

Monday Middyay.

Johannesburg.

Lukhanyo paced the living room with his socks on, texting on his phone. Lakhe: "Do you ever sleep?" He woke up from the couch. Luks: "Only a psychopath can sleep during a crisis." Lakhe: "Mxim." Sibü walked into the lounge. Sibü: "any leads? Spho is going to panic." Lakhe: "Where's my phone?" Luks: "Got a lead. Waiting on it." Lakhe: "on my phone?" Luks: "I threw it against the wall Masilakhe. It kept going off like a fucking siren! I couldn't think!!!" Lakhe: "That's my damn company calling!!! What's wrong with you!" Luks: "You don't need a stupid company while your brother could be dying!! Get the fuck up and eat something. You need to be awake!" Lakhe: "You fucking-" a loud bang on the door disrupted them. Lukhanyo pulled out his pistol. Luks: "Ngubani?" "Ndim Ta Luks." Luks opened. A short guy walked in carrying a back pack. Lakhe: "You're light headed and delusional if you think any type of gun will stop Rex Komander." He walked to the kitchen. Luks: "Siphi Juju?" Juju: "I got the footage from both the building and outside, surrounding buildings. Ta Luks, akhonto i-great. It does not look good." He set up his laptop and they stared at the footage. Sibü: "That's him." Luks: "Isn't he supposed to be invisible?" Sibü: "He's compelled. He's definitely a human being in demon process. Once the full moon hits, he will turn. For that they need dark blood. Which is why they have Sandile." Luks: "But Sandile is not a demon." Sibü: "His brother was." They looked at Lakhe. Lakhe: "What?" He swallowed his gulp of milk. Luks: "They're looking for you." Lakhe: "They knew where to find me. I'm not what they're looking for." Luks: "Then who?" Lakhe: "Your brother in law is the only Komander that is untraceable." Luks: "One of you are gonna tell me the truth or I'm calling Spho!! Who the fuck do these niggas want and why!!" Lakhe: "First fix my phone." Luks: "Fuck your phone!!" Juju: "Uhhh. Ta Luks?" Luks: "WHAT." He stared at the screen. Luks: "What is that?" They all looked. Sibü: "We need to get moving. And soon." Luks: "Juju, did you track this-" Sibü: "Juju can't track this!! This is beyond him!" Luks: "Are you going to do it Sibü? Because you've been sitting here staring at me!" Sibü: "We can't just go after this thing!! We don't know what he's capable of! You heard Spho, he created a whole new demon in this person." Lakhe: "And it's a full moon tonight. If that thing turns. He's taking Sandile with him. Can't believe I let this happen a third time." He wore his shoes. Luks: "A third time?" Lakhe: "Sibü, where's our next lead." Sibü: "Hold on." Luks: "A third ???" Lakhe: "Will you shut up!" Luks: "If this has happened twice before, then you can save him again?" Lakhe: "No. I don't have the power. The first person who helped us was Kadir. The second person was Spho. Both of them aren't here. We need to improvise." Luks: "You were once a demon. Is there a way.." Lakhe:

"No." Luks: "You didn't let me finish. When you fought with Sandile; you held him, almost killed him but nonetheless, there was contact. Your demon self was erupting. Is it possible that your scent stuck on him?" Sibü looked up. Sibü: "That is actually genius. It's true." Lakhe: "So what do I do?" Luks: "Get angry." Lakhe: "Are you STUPID?" Lukhanyo punched his face to the floor. Luks: "Been waiting to do that since I first met you." Lakhe stood up. Lakhe: "You son of a bitch." Luks: "Leave my mom out of this." Lakhe: "Wait till Spho hears of this." Luks: "Oh yeah? You gonna run to mommy? Pathetic." Lakhe jumped at him, Lukhanyo threw another punch and kick. Sibü grabbed Lakhe back. Lakhe: "LET ME GO." Sibü: "Where is he." Lakhe: "Let me go!!!!" He roared. Sibü: "Lukhanyo get outa here man!!" Luks: "Where is Sandile!!" He grabbed Lakhe's shirt. Sibü: "I cannot hold him any longer LUKHANYO!!!!!" Luks: "He'll talk either way." He pulled out his gun. Sibü: "Lukhanyo!!" Luks cocked the gun. Lakhe: "South..." Luks: "South Where!" Lakhe: "I'm gonna fucking kill you!!" Sibü locked his throat with his arm. Sibü: "Sleep." Lakhe dropped down. Sibü: "What the fuck is wrong with you?" Luks: "He was so close-" Sibü: "To killing you!! My God!! Where does Spho get you suicidal ass niggas?? Haibo!" Juju was standing in the corner of the room, shaking out of his skin. Luks: "Do you know how big the south is?" Sibü: "Lukhanyo. The first thing we exercise here, is safety. Stop provoking Masilakhe. He already doesn't like you. He was ready to kill his own brother in that form. Stop this! I do not want to explain myself to Spho and her Unborn." Luks: "I'm sorry." Sibü: "Stop being sorry and be careful! Jesus Christ, I almost peed." Luks laughed. Luks: "But Sibü you're the Heir. I thought you're more powerful than him." Sibü: "What did I tell you about always trying to prove your power?" Luks: "Everyone will know what to expect." Sibü: "Exactly. I may be blood born but I'm not full dark. I refuse to be. It's an evil that consumes you without knowledge. Next thing I know I'll be another Rex. And I love my sister too much for that." Luks: "Okay. I apologize. I'll apologize to him." Sibü gave Lakhe a bit of a shake and he woke up. Lakhe: "Damn it." He sat up. Luks: "I'm sorry. I shouldn't have done that." Lakhe: "It's fine. Can I get a pill. My head hurts." Luks: "Juju." The guy jumped and hurried out the house. Luks: "So what's next." Sibü: "We head to the South."

After a cracking long day, I was ready to go home. It was getting late and I needed to lock myself alone. If the Unborn needed to exercise his power, it will have to be on me. Me: "Niny. You can drop me off and go home. I'll be fine from here on." Niny: "I don't leave my queen. I stay." He turned into my street. Me: "Niny, I don't want you hurt, bunny. Please. I will be fine." He didn't respond. A Bentley and a Porsche were parked outside. I knew they weren't Lukhanyo. The blue Bentley Suv belonged to Lubby. I don't know the white

Porsche. Niny: "Niny not leaving." Me: "Yeah. You have to drive these people away." I got out the car. They weren't anywhere outside. I walked in the house and they were sitting in the lounge watching TV. How the... how? Me: "Good afternoon." Lubb: "Hi pumpkin." Me: "How did you get into my house?" Lubb: "The nice white man with a pony tail let us in. Said he had to get to church." Me: "He left you here?" Lubb: "In his defense, he thinks I'm your Lukhanyo. Which brings me to my question. Where is my Lukhanyo?" Lubby was sitting here with the other twins. Soma and Soso. For a second it felt like I was staring at Lukhanyo but something in me panicked. He looked calm but a pin drop away from a blast of anger. I don't know why but my heart started racing. Me: "Would you like something to drink?" Lubb: "Do I look like I want something to drink?" Me: "Uhm.." Lubb: "Siphosenkosi Sobukwe. I like you. You're my brother's girlfriend and seemingly, while I could still get a hold of him, he was happy. Until this weekend. Then he disappears. Our jet disappears. Aaand, I can't get hold of him. Now, I'm not accusing you of anything but Uhm, I would like to know where he is, and why I can't get hold of him." Me: "He said he's going to look for Sandile." Lubb: "Why?" Me: "He's missing. Lukhanyo offered to go. With my brother." Lubb: "I see. Where did they go?" Me: "Johannesburg." Lubb: "Ohh... and where is Sandile's brother?" Me: "He left also." Lubb: "So what you're saying is; my brother left without telling me. To go look for your exes brother, with your ex. The ex that is his enemy. And somehow, he's disappeared. Sounds sketchy." Me: "I can assure you, nothing will happen to Lukhanyo. He's going to be okay. He's fine." Lubb: "Lukhanyo is not the one I'm worried about. I don't like being an ugly man Spho. You're a nice lady but my brother better come home." He stood up on his crutches he's and walked out. Soma: "Ignore Lubby. He's a little stressed out." Me: "He's right. I can't get hold of them either. All of them. I don't know what is going on." Soso: "How did Sandile go missing?" Me: "I can't go into detail." Soma: "We can't help if you don't, Spho." Lubby hopped back in the house. Lubb: "Actually I wouldn't mind some juice. There's a shady man standing outside your gate Spho." Before I could take a step, Babalo barged in. Lubb: "That's him." Balo: "Where is he!!" Me: "Who!!" Balo: "Your Brother!! WHERE!! I want my wife back Spho!" Me: "Jesus, Babalo I don't have the time to hear you whine about your dead wife!!!!!!!" I screamed. Right after I said it, I regretted it. He took a step back and stormed out. I locked down the doors immediately, closing my eyes and keeping them shut spiritually. Niny stood back. Lubb: "So no juice?" Soma: "Lubby!" He said through gritted teeth. Lubby looked up. He stared at the flames in her eyes. The mist around her fists and head. They all stared in disbelief. Lubb: "Get..." he tried to breath. Lubb: "me..." and collapsed.

#220

Somangaye paced the floor. Soso sat in the couch staring at Lubby. Niny had picked him up and placed him on the couch, dabbing his forehead with a damp cloth. I didn't have a choice. Babalo would have killed us all. Me: "Niny, check the house." Niny: "Yes my queen." He walked away. Lubby looked around. Lubb: "Think I just had another episode. Soma, where are my pills?" Soma pulled out a bottle of pills from his pocket and gave him one. Lubb: "Thanks." He drank the water next to him. Lubb: "That was wild." He laughed. Lubb: "I think my doctor needs to explain himself. My hallucinations are getting worse." Soma: "They sure are, buddy. Do you want to take a nap or something?" Lubb: "No I'm fine. I'm sorry you had to see that, pumpkin. When I get stressed, shit gets real." Me: "When did it start?" Lubb: "About a year ago-" Soma: "Four years ago." Lubb: "Don't exaggerate. It wasn't until last year I got episodes." Soma: "Lubby has been suffering with clinical depression for the past four years. In and out of hosp-" Lubb: "Spho doesn't need to know that! I'm fine now." Me: "So you just kind of collapse?" Lubb: "Sometimes. Other times I stop talking. It's weird. But I'm fine pumpkin. Do you have some cake for me?" Soma: "Actually we have to get going. My wife is waiting for us." Lubb: "I'm not going there. I'm waiting for Bafo." Soso: "Yeah. We've over stayed our welcome Lubby. Lukhanyo won't be happy finding us here." Me: "It's okay. Really." Lubb: "Fine. Let me use the bathroom first. Jesus, these crutches." He stood up and hopped to the bathroom. Me: "I'm sorry." They just stared at me. Me: "Please say something. I had to protect you. That was not an ordinary human being. He would've destroyed everything here." Soso: "He was right. All this time, I thought he was crazy. He was actually right." Me: "What?" Soma: "Lubby keeps dreaming about a lady with flaming eyes and wings on her back. That's all he spoke about for the past year. We took him for a psychiatric evaluation. That's why he's on medication. I can't believe this. I've been poisoning my best friend to keep him quiet." He had tears in his eyes. Soso: "Does Lukhanyo know about this?" I nodded. Soso: "Is he safe?" Me: "Yes. He's safe." Soso: "Can we leave now? Whoever that was-" Me: "He's gone. It's not you he wants. Niny will protect you." Soso: "What is that anyway?" Me: "My security." Soso looked at Soma. Lubb: "Okay I'm done. Pumpkin, we're leaving now." Me: "Do you want me to pack you your cake in a lunchbox sweetie?" Lubb: "Oh that would be wonderful of you. Thank you so much." I went to cut them slices of cake and packed them in containers. Me: "Here. For just after dinner. Enjoy." Lubb: "You're a lamb. Thank you." Soma took the containers and walked out without a word. Soso: "We're taking the Porsche only." Me: "Niny will drive. I'll keep the Bentley safe." Lubb: "Why are

we leaving my car?" Soso: "Soma is too tired to drive. We'll pick it up in the morning." Lubbb: "Okay then. Bye pumpkin. Thank you so much. Tell Baffles to call me I miss him." Me: "I will Lubby." He walked out. Soso stayed behind to look at me. I felt so small under his gaze. Soso: "What are you?" Me: "It's too complicated to explain." Soso: "Spho, what happened to Lukhanyo? Is he still alive?" I nodded. Me: "Nobody can hurt Lukhanyo. I am protecting him." He looked out the door. Soso: "Please do. Lubabalo would turn into a monster if anything happened to his twin." Me: "I know." He walked out. Niny drove them home.

Monday evening.

Johannesburg.

Lukhanyo jumped out the car as soon as it stopped. Lakhe: "What the fuck is wrong with you!?" Luks: "Every minute we waste, he could be dying. Look at you, sitting there like a princess while your brother is suffering. Fucking ridiculous." Lakhe: "Lukhanyo I am warning you." Sibub breathed in and out. Sibub: "Both of you might want to sit this one out." Lakhe: "That's bull crap. That's my brother in there." Sibub: "Those are demons in there. They will snatch your souls. It's better I go in, at least I can handle my family." Luks: "They already know we're here. We're going in." His gang surrounded the building. Lakhe: "This is the point I wish I had a camera. Speaking of which, when do you think you're getting me a new phone?" Luks: "Masilakhe, I'll buy you the entire iStore if you want. Can you just focus?" Lakhe: "What is your gang of men gonna do?" The skies turned dark. Sibub: "Hold on to something!!!" They held on. A great force of wind blew all around them in circles. Lakhe pushed through to the dark building entrance. Sibub: "What in the fucking!!!" Luks: "Damn it!!" He followed. Sibub: "If you both make it out alive, I'd be impressed." He mumbled. He walked normally to the entrance. Lakhe: "Sandile!" He yelled, banging on the doors, kicking them down. Luks: "Lakhe!" He pointed to a brightly lit room. Sibub: "DON'T GO IN!!!!!!!" A spiritual force knocked Lukhanyo off his feet to the next wall and dropped to the floor. Sands: "Stay out!" Sibub: "No can do. Your mother wants you home." Sibub walked in. The demon man stood in front of him. Sands: "He won't stop Sibub. Leave!!" Rex appeared. Rex: "My beautiful baby boy." Sibub froze. Rex: "How I missed you. I waited and waited...you never came. Then I realized your father blocked you from me. He's always been jealous of our relationship. Something he's never had. You have potential Sibub-" Sands: "Sibulele please go!!!" Rex: "You have the potential to

be me. We can rule together. Me, You, the Unborn. You could have everything you've ever wanted. Your deepest desires. You have a beautiful sister, who can give you endless heirs. My son, you would be as powerful as me. Hm? Finish him my boy." Sands: "Mans... please." Lakhe walked in. Rex: "Reunited at last. My other kin." He lifted his hands. Sibú closed his eyes and held on to time. Everything stopped moving around him. Sibú: "I am not your son." He dropped his might with a groundbreaking thud. Everything moved all at once. Lakhe jumped for Sandile, shaking him loose and dragging him out. Sibú held onto Rex, holding him down. Rex: "You're..." Sibú: "Yes, I am. Do I break you or do you stay away? I am King. Not we, not us. ME." Rex evaporated instantly. The walls caught fire all around. Sibú walked out the building. Sibú: "Where's Lukhanyo?" Lakhe and Sandile looked around. The building was engulfed in powerful flames. Lakhe: "Fuck!!" He ran inside. Lukhanyo was watching the flames growing around him as he gained consciousness. Lakhe grabbed his shirt and threw him on his shoulder, running out. The building fell into a heap. They all stood outside staring. Rex's shadow above the flames and he disappeared once again. Sibú: "Now he's pissed." Luks: "You came back for me." Lakhe: "As if Spho would ever forgive me knowing I let you die. Besides, your 11 children are waiting.. so you better shut the fuck up about this and get me my phone." He got in the car with Sandile and drove off. Luks: "I need to brief the rest of the guys." Sibú: "Make it quick." Lukhanyo walked over to gang in their taxi to have a word.

Lukhanyo arrived at the airport with Sibú. Luks: "Fuck. My chest is on fire." Sibú: "You inhaled smoke. I told you it's better we start at the hospital-" Luks: "I'll go straight to the hospital where my doctor is the minute I land." Sibú: "You could die!" Luks: "I won't die." They used the private entrance. Sibú: "Lukhanyo. You know how pissed everyone will be if I let you suffocate to death? Especially Lakhe, he literally risked his life coming for you. You two should just start dating." Luks: "Where the fuck is my jet?" Sibú: "It was parked here right?" Luks: "Of course it was!! How does a whole jet go missing!?" He screamed, dialing a number on his phone. Luks: "What the hell do you mean it just took off?? It can't take off, it's waiting for ME!!!!" He panicked. Luks: "You're the fucking pilot!!! How does it leave without you?? Who took it!? WOOOW." He hung up. Luks: "Masilakhe Sobukwe hijacked my jet. He stole an entire jet. How the hell do you hijack a fucking plane?" He announced. Sibú: "I'll book us a flight-" Luks: "I don't want a damn flight! That's why I have a jet!" Sibú: "Now you sound like your brother. The most important things are, Sandile is safe, and you're going home. Unless you want us to use the Komander jet." Luks: "A flight will be fine thanks. I'm good with your family now." Sibú: "This is not

usually how we are. We're nice people." Luks: "Right. Might as well just start at the hospital then." ...

Lakhe walked in with Sandile just after 9pm. I gave him a big bear hug. Me: "My little angel. Are you hurt?" Sands: "No, I'm okay. They didn't touch me. Tried to scare me but I'm fine." I assessed him. Sands: "I promise I'm fine." Lakhe: "His leg is swollen." Sands: "Rex the snake bit me." Me: "Are you fucking serious!?" Lakhe: "We need to get the poison out Spho." Me: "Siyanda is the doctor. I don't know how to do that." Lakhe: "Fine." He sat down. Me: "Where is Lukhanyo?" Lakhe: "He's fine. Who's car is that outside?" Me: "Where is he??" Lakhe: "He got delayed a bit. But he's with Sibu. They're okay." Sandile looked at him. Lakhe: "What?" Sands: "Nothing. My leg mummy.." I called Siyanda. Me: "Hi." Siya: "Hey." He seemed to be out of breath. Me: "You're at the gym?" Siya: "Uhm yeah. How can I help?" Me: "Well, I'm sorry to disturb but Sandile is back, just that Rex bit him. On the leg. As a snake." Siya: "Oh shit." Me: "I can't find my dad-" Siya: "No I'm on my way. Hang tight. Try and block the poison from spreading. I'll be there in 10 minutes." I hung up. Sands: "I'm feeling dizzy now." Me: "He'll be here in 10 minutes honey. Hold still." I tied a belt to his thigh tightly. Sands: "My throat is closing up." Me: "Lakhe please help with something!" Lakhe: "What do you want to drink?" Sands: "Anythi..." Lakhe went to fetch water and helped him drink it. Siya arrived in under 10 minutes with his medical bg in hand. Siya: "Hi." Me: "Hey." He took off Sandile's pants. The leg was swollen near the knee and throbbing. He sterilized his equipment and made two incisions. Green liquid started oozing out. Siya: "Make this for him to drink." I took the piece of paper and went to the kitchen to make the ghastly tasting liquid. This is similar to what Siyanda used to drink when he was still a demon to keep him strong and heal him quick. I brought the drink to them. Siya: "Sandile. I know you're strong. I need you to gulp all of this down at once and keep it down. Okay? It doesn't taste good, but it will help you." Lakhe helped hold the glass and Sandile drank. A few times he almost threw up but managed to keep it down. The poison in his leg came out more rapidly. Siyanda was preparing a large injection. Sands: "That's going in me?" Siya: "Yes. Last thing you'll feel is a sting. The poison is coming out but I need to drain the excess from inside, before that, this injection will clean it out." Sands: "Okay." He closed his eyes. Siya mimed to Lakhe. Siya: "Hold him down." Without using his voice. Siya: "Spho.." I moved closer and held on to Sands. Siya: "firmer." We held tighter. Siya injected into his thigh. Sandile screamed out loud, his body shaking in agony. Siya: "And we're done. Good job, mans." Sands: "That was not a sting!!" Siya: "I miscalculated it. How does it feel?" Sands: "Better. Lighter. Normal. Where's my phone, I need to call my

girlfriend." Lakhe: "You'll talk to her later. You need to recover." Sands: "She needs to know I'm safe and alive." Lakhe: "She will." Sands: "Spho please call my woman." Me: "I will sweetheart. I promise. Boogie will be so glad to see you." Sands: "I know. He can probably barely contain himself in that room." Siya: "Do you want to be asleep for this last part? I have to drain it and stitch you up. You'll need crutches for a while." Sands: "Yeah, put me to sleep but mummy next to me." Lakhe: "You're a grown man!" Me: "Did you not say he's the chil-" Lakhe: "Don't give him the platform please." Me: "Fine. Let's get Sandile on an anesthetic. Come honey." I held his hand. Siya gave him one more injection. Sands: "I love you mummy." Me: "I love you too my angel. You scared me." Sands: "Never again." He nodded off. Lakhe: "I'll clean this up for now." He went to fetch the cleaning supplies. The floor was covered in blood and poison. It'll probably need to be disinfected 7 times before I let the kids here again. Me: "Thanks Lakhe." Lakhe: "Not honey, my angel or sweetie? Wow." Me: "You're a grown man." I laughed. Lakhe: "So I can't be a baby." Siya looked at me and back at his work. Lakhe: "How long is this gonna take?" He asked him. Siya: "20 minutes give or take." Lakhe: "Alright." He carried on cleaning. When Siya was done, he was also done. Siya: "So we're gonna let him rest for a minute. He's going to sleep through the night for sure. I'll be back first thing in the morning to check on him." Me: "Thank you so much Siya. If he wakes up because of the pain?" Siya: "Give him this." He gave me a bottle. Siya: "One teaspoon." He got up, trying to pick Sandile up and to his room. Me: "You could've helped." Lakhe: "He has it handled. Siya is strong." I shook my head. Lakhe: "So where did Graham disappear to?" Me: "He hasn't disappeared. He just keeps running off. I don't know why." Lakhe: "You think something is going on?" Me: "With him? Probably. He's so distant to me. Won't even touch me anymore." Lakhe: "Maybe because you're dating a thug and he likes his life fine?" Me: "Lukhanyo is not harmful. He's a teddy bear. And he's not a thug." Lakhe: "Lukhanyo? The one who shot at a young boy on school premises?" Me: "That was an accident." Lakhe: "Oh yeah? Spho. I know you like him, he's exciting but he scares people. Everyone knows him and his family. They're psychopaths." Me: "Take that back!" Lakhe: "It's the truth. Hey, Siya. What do you think of Spho's new boyfriend?" Siya: "If her ex husband is asking the question to an ex, I don't think I want to be part of this conversation." Lakhe: "I thought we were cool." Siya: "You hate my guts." Lakhe: "Not true." Siya: "You broke down my house door, fought me without demons, you sabotaged my dates with Spho. The list is endless. It's not me that's a problem, it's my position in Spho's life. Which is why, you despise Lukhanyo right now." Lakhe: "I don't despise him. I couldn't care less about him. The fact is, he's a thug." Siya: "And me?" Lakhe: "What about you?" Siya: "Would it kill you to say one nice thing about me?" Lakhe: "Well... You're..."

good at your job?" Siya: "And?" Lakhe: "Now you're pushing it." Siya: "Lakhe you're a nice man. A lot of people don't know that about you. You've got a lot of good in you but you cover it up by being this cold hearted person. You're kind and very attentive. You don't need to be asked, you just get things done. Just leave Lukhanyo alone. This toxicity is unhealthy for you, your children and Spho." Lakhe: "Okay Siyanda. Goodnight." Siya: "I'll be back in the morning Spho." Me: "Thank you Siya. For everything." He took his bag and walked out. Lakhe: "So he's definitely going through something." Me: "He's not lying. Why are you pushing everyone away?" Lakhe: "I'm not. How can I be pushing everyone away when they just leave anyway." Me: "What's that supposed to mean?" Lakhe: "It means I fuck up everything. Miya is incredible. So supportive. A good woman. I just don't deserve her." Me: "Yes you do. You deserve to be happy." Lakhe: "I want to believe that. I want to believe one day I'll be happy with someone that isn't you. I miss you. Not just simple miss you, I miss our life. We didn't get a chance. And I blame myself everyday for not trying harder. Now Lukhanyo just swoops in like an eagle. Chris is calling him Tata, Lam responds to him, sooner or later he'll also call him Tata and where does that leave me? Part of what I loved was knowing I could be their number 1 dad and now..." Me: "You're still their number 1 dad. Chris doesn't miss a heartbeat without mentioning you. He sings about you. He wants to call you every minute to show you everything he's doing. Even with Lukhanyo here. You're literally his number 1. Same with Lam. He knows you more. You shouldn't be worried about this. I also had to accept Miya and come to terms with the fact she'll be taking care of my kids when you're not around. Lukhanyo would never hurt your kids. I would never let him do that. He has his own." Lakhe: "Yeah, 11. He mentioned." Me: "I'm just as scared of what the future holds but we can't go back Sobukwe." Lakhe: "Not even once Spho?" He held my hand and cheek. I removed the one on my cheek Lakhe: "I turned into a demon for you. I will do it again if that's what it takes." Me: "I'll let you die this time. You better not." He laughed. Lakhe: "On a serious note, is he treating you well?" Me: "He's amazing. He's been really wonderful." Lakhe: "Okay. I'm not giving up though. One mistake. He better know." Luks: "I think he does." He stood by the door. Lakhe: "I'm trying to have a conversation with the mother of my children." Luks: "I'm sorry to disturb." Me: "Are you bringing the kids home?" Lakhe: "Let's get the firsty to recover. Then we'll take it from there. You know how needy Sandile can be. I don't want you overwhelmed." Me: "I'll be fine. My kids don't overwhelm me." Lakhe: "You and I both know Sandile. You've been living with him for almost two years. You know how he gets once he's sick." Me: "Fine." Lakhe: "We'll talk later." He walked out. Me: "Hey." I hugged Lukhanyo. He responded so warm and firm. Luks: "Hey. Give me a minute." He kissed my lips and walked out. Luks: "Ekse." Lakhe: "I'm not

one of your hoodrat friends Lukhanyo." Luks: "Hoodra- heee. Undiqhela amasimba Masilakhe nhe? Why the fuck you steal my jet?" Lakhe: "That's what you left your woman in that house to come ask me?" Luks: "You stay away from my shit. Stay away from my brother, stay away from my private jet, don't lean on my fucking car." He pushed him off. Luks: "And stay the hell away from my woman." Lakhe: "Your woman." He laughed. Lakhe: "Is carrying my child. It'll be wintery night in hell before you replace me." Luks: "Wintery nights in hell is where I like to vacation the most." They stared down at each other. Lakhe: "I saved your life. You should be on your knees thanking me." Luks: "Like you weren't bleeding out your nose like a teenager and falling apart? I was there to help you!" Lakhe: "Nobody asked you!! Everything was perfect before you came along! You ruined it all. Why couldn't you just stay with your own wife or simply just get rid of that punk? Why you got to mess up my life?" Luks: "You think I wanted to be near you? Did you take a hard look at yourself? You are conceited." Lakhe: "ME?? Voetsek Lukhanyo." Luks: "I'm sure you can't even look at your brother in the eye and tell him you love him." I had to go and check what was going on out there. I walked out the door. Lakhe was staring at Lukhanyo like he'd just punched his stomach. Me: "What is it now." Lakhe: "Nothing. We're just having a chat." Me: "Khanyo?" Luks: "We good babe. Organizing a braai for the kids." Lakhe: "I'm not doing that with you." He hissed. Luks: "Then you tell her." He whispered. Me: "Is that true Lakhe? That is so cute!" Lakhe: "Yeah. I'm a real sweetheart." He got in his car. Lakhe: "I want my phone by tomorrow morning Lukhanyo or I'm breaking something you like." He drove off. Lukhanyo came to me. Me: "I'm glad you two are getting along. It's so sweet. Thank you so much baby." Luks: "Anything for you my angel." ...

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I cooked a quick supper while Lukhanyo sat there and told me about Joburg. Luks: "Why is my brother's car here?" He bit into an apple. Me: "They came looking for you." Luks: "Oh my God. He's still here?" He whispered. Me: "No. He left with Soma and Soso." I laughed. Luks: "Yoh baby I don't have Lubby energy right now." Me: "Lukhanyo he was worried about you." Luks: "He's worried about me when I stay too long in the toilet. It's nothing new. Khazapha ndiphuze." (Give me a kiss.) Me: "Lukhanyo." Luks: "What? What did he say to you?" Me: "Nothing. Just that... Babalo came here." Luks: "Babalo as in your uncle?" Me: "Yes. I let it slip that his wife is dead and he all but freaked out. I locked the house in, to protect them. They saw me." Luks: "They?" Me: "Your brothers. They know." Luks: "Fuck." He stood up. I know he was about to

pace the floor again with his socks. It's so cute when he does that like he doesn't want to hurt the floor. Me: "Then something else. They say Lubby has been having episodes. Seeing a woman-" Luks: "Flaming eyes and wings on her back. He would wake me up at three in the morning telling me that. He would be so frightened, you'd swear she was in the room staring at him. Then he got used to it. He once said she held him and pulled him out of a death trap. Lubby talks a lot of shit Spho. He has an overactive imagination. He thinks his dreams are real." Me: "You need to talk to him." Luks: "In the morning." Me: "You need to be there tonight. They need you Lukhanyo. They're confused." Luks: "What am I supposed to say? Tell them you're a Komander and that is not the criminal but a demon spirit that kills people? Haibo Spho." Me: "Well, what choice do we have now?" Luks: "Perhaps tell them you're a psychic." Me: "They'll think I'm a witch!" Luks: "You're the kindest person alive." Me: "They don't know that." Luks: "Okay fine. We'll do that tomorrow. Right now, ndilambile fondini mna." Sandile appeared in the passage holding on the wall. Me: "You're not supposed to be walking!" Sands: "But I'm hungry." Lukhanyo held him to a chair and sat him down. Me: "Siya is bringing your crutches in the morning. You need to stay off that leg." I dished up for them. Sands: "Thank you mummy. Yoh. Joburg was wild. Did Ta Luks tell you he almost-" Luks: "So I did. And you know where we should visit next? Cape Town. You'll love it. Eat Sandile." Sands: "Wow." He started eating. Me: "What else happened in Joburg Sandile?" He stared at me with big eyes then back at Lukhanyo. Luks: "This is lovely baby. The symphony of flavors just melt in my mouth." I smiled. Me: "Sandile?" Sands: "He's right mummy. It's amazing." He stuffed his mouth. Sibuh walked in the house. Me: "I was wondering where you'd gone! Hey." I hugged him. He smiled and walked to his room. Okay ouch. I dished up his food and put it aside. Luks: "Hlala phantsi baby." I sat down next to him. Luks: "Khamisa." (Open your mouth.) Me: "I'm not hungry." I opened my mouth and he gave me a spoonful. Luks: "Ubukhe walala phof?" (have you slept?) Me: "A bit. Yes." His phone rang. A picture of a woman laughing, holding a child was displayed on his screen. This was probably his ex. Luks: "Ja?" He answered. I got up and he held my arm. Luks: "Ngoku? Haibo Fondin Lihle. Kwathini ungatsho kwangoko? Where is she? Ndiyeza." He hung up. I tried to wiggle my arm out of his grip. Luks: "What's this now?" Me: "Nothing. I thought you needed space to talk to the mother of your children." Luks: "It's the picture isn't it?" Me: "What picture?" Luks: "Geez Spho. She barely even calls me, we only text about the kids. I forgot it's even there." Sands: "This seems personal, so I'm gonna sit here and listen." Sibuh: "No you're not. Get up." Sands: "Yuh hayi kodwa. I can't walk!" Sibuh picked him up and went to the bedroom. Luks: "What's this about?" Me: "Nothing." Luks: "No. It's something. I'll remove the picture." Me: "Don't." Luks: "I have to." He

removed the picture off the contact. Me: "That's unnecessary." Luks: "Nothing is ever unnecessary when it comes to your feelings to me. I know that picture bothers you and now it's gone. I'll never let anything that makes you uncomfortable linger for no reason." Me: "No. You're making me feel like I'm barely doing anything to accommodate your feelings when you say stuff like that." Luks: "Haiké baby." Me: "So what's wrong?" Luks: "Luhle is sick. When she gets sick, she only wants me or her twin. He's probably asleep." Me: "Oh." Luks: "I'll fetch her and be back in a few minutes." Me: "No. You'll go home and spend some time with her alone. She needs you." Luks: "Baby she'll be asleep right after I hold her." Me: "Still. Your child needs your attention more." Luks: "Fine." He sulked. My phone beeped. Me: "Should I pack you something to eat?" Luks: "You not gonna get that?" Me: "It's Lakhe's girlfriend updating me about the kids." Luks: "Hmm." Me: "Perhaps at the braai we could all sit together and talk. As parents and step parents we need to be on good terms." Luks: "Uhm... yeah." I checked the message. It was a video. Lam took one step and fell on his bum. I couldn't help but laugh. Me: "Look." Luks: "He's so cute." He smiled. Me: "Maybe he'll start walking at the braai." Luks: "You think?" Me: "When is it going to be?" Luks: "We haven't discussed the fundamentals yet. Soon though." I kissed his cheek then his lips. Me: "You're a wonderful man. Thank you." Luks: "I love you Spho." Me: "I love you more." He kissed me again. More passionately. Holding my waist. Then stopped. Luks: "Let me get going. I'll call you when I'm home." He walked out.

Tuesday morning. Lakhe woke up earlier than usual. A persistent knocking on his bedroom door. "Daddy I can't open. The handle is too far!" A squeaky voice said from the other side. Lakhe: "Jesus Christ. It's half past 4. What the hell." He mumbled getting up to open. Karmen was standing at the door with wet pajamas. Karmie: "Hello." Lakhe: "Hi." Karmie: "I had a nightmare." Lakhe: "So you can talk." He picked her up. Lakhe: "We gonna have to get these off you and take a bath." Karmie: "Okay." He kneeled next to the bath tub and ran her some water. Lakhe: "Hop in." Karmie: "I can't. My clothes are wet." He undressed her and dropped her in the bath. Lakhe: "Tell me when you done." Karmie: "I can't." Lakhe: "What can you do?" Karmie: "Mommy says I can't be in bath alone." Lakhe: "I'm not taking a bath at quarter to 5 my angel. That's just not my life." Karmie: "Are you gonna sit with me?" He sat on the floor of the bathroom. Lakhe: "What was your nightmare about?" Karmie: "My other daddy." Lakhe: "What about him?" Karmie: "He was hurting mommy again." Lakhe: "He'll never do that again. Okay? It's wrong and he's punished for it." Karmie: "Is he gonna come back?" Lakhe: "No." Karmie: "Are you my daddy now?" Lakhe: "Uhm.." Karmie: "You don't want to be my daddy?" Lakhe: "We'll

ask your mom if it's okay first. Okay?" Karmie: "Okay." Lakhe switched on the vibrating jets in the bath. She screamed. Lakhe: "Sorry." He laughed. Lakhe: "Come. It's time for bed." He wrapped her in a towel. Karmie: "But I can't sleep." Lakhe: "Honey it's still dark outside. You have to sleep." He dressed her in his t-shirt. Lakhe: "There. Let's get you to your room." Karmie: "Please?" Lakhe: "Okay. But you're gonna have to sleep if you're here." She climbed on the bed. Karmie: "I'm hungry." Lakhe: "No you're not." Karmie: "I want chocolate milk." Lakhe: "Heee." He walked to the kitchen and made hot chocolate with mini marshmallows inside it. He put a few drops of Panado for kids in it. Back in the bedroom. Karmie was singing and jumping on the bed. Lakhe: "Come on angel. It's time to sleep now. Here's your milk." She took it and started drinking. Karmie: "You want some?" Lakhe: "Only a sip." They sat in bed until she fell asleep after 6. Lakhe: "Wow." He got up and went to get ready for work. Chris: "Tata!! Tata ka Chrissie!! Where are you?" Lakhe: "I'm right here." Chris: "Hello Tata." Lakhe: "Good morning my boy." Chris: "Where is Mimi? Why is Karmen in your bed?" Lakhe: "Karmen had a nightmare like how you sometimes do. Mimi is behind you." Chris turned around. Chris: "Hello Mimi!" He hugged her. Miya: "Good morning angel. We need to get you ready for school." Chris: "I'll wake up Jake." He ran out. Miya: "Hey." Lakhe: "Hey baby." He kissed her. Lakhe: "Remind me to buy more condoms. I can't have another child. I can't." She laughed. Miya: "What happened?" Lakhe: "I was woken up at half 4 this morning. Forced to give her bath and make her milk. Then talk her to sleep. I can't do it. All these kids act crazy when you're not home." Miya: "I'm sorry love. Let me get them ready for school." Lakhe: "Let Karmie sleep. She fell asleep 30 minutes ago." Miya: "Babe. I just came from a shift, I won't be able to watch her during the day." Lakhe: "I'll take her with me." Miya: "And Lam too?" Lakhe: "Yep. I'm about to be super dad. Pray for me." She laughed, walking out..

In the office that morning. Lakhe walked in carrying Lam in one hand and holding Karmie in the other. Lakhe: "Nwabisa, I need you to find activities for Karmen. Coloring books, building blocks, anything. Here's her toys." Nwabi: "And Lam?" Lakhe: "Leave my son." He sat down. Karmen occupied the chair opposite him. Karmie: "What is this?" Lakhe: "A telephone." Karmie: "Can I call my mommy?" Lakhe pressed the number for her. Lakhe: "There you go angel." She climbed on the desk and listened. Karmie: "Hi mommy." Lam started reaching out to the desk. Lakhe: "Boy yam. Please don't start." Lam: "Dada!" Lakhe: "I know that sir but I need you to calm down. Look. No. Hey!" Lam: "Dada." Lakhe: "Fine. Fine. Dada is here." They faced each other, Lam on his lap staring at him smiling. Lakhe: "Baby I can't do this all day. I love you but I

need to work." Lam: "Dada." Lakhe: "Masilam. Karmen, you're gonna fall off that desk, please sit still." Karmie: "I'm talking to mommy." Lakhe: "Baby talking to mommy is not going to help you not fall off the desk." Karmie: "Okay." Lakhe: "Don't jump off!" Karmie: "Okay. Hold here." She put aside the phone. Lakhe: "What are you trying to do?" Karmie: "I want to sit on the floor and talk to mommy." He helped her off the desk. Karmie: "I'm hungry." Lakhe: "I brought you your breakfast." Karmie: "I want chocolate milk." Lakhe: "You'll drink it after eating first." Karmie: "If I finish my food, I can have chocolate milk?" Lakhe: "Definitely. You're done talking to mommy?" Karmie: "Yeah." She opened her bag. Lakhe picked up the phone. Lakhe: "Kirsten." Kirst: "Hey. How are you?" Lakhe: "I'm good. How are you?" Kirst: "I'm coping. I just have nothing to do here all day." Lakhe: "You could have the kids over for a while. Would that be better?" Kirst: "I guess. But they're at school all day." Lakhe: "Could get you a job." Kirst: "As your assistant?" Lakhe: "I already have two assistants, we could find you something in admin. I'll speak to HR." Kirst: "Oh okay. Thank you, Lakhe. You're a good man." Lakhe: "Thanks. Listen, I have to go. We'll talk later." Kirst: "Okay." He hung up. Karmie: "I don't want this." She gave him the lunch box. Lakhe: "Bunny, you have to eat." Karmie: "I want spaghetti." Lakhe: "Okay. And what else?" Karmie: "Nothing else." He dialed the phone. Lakhe: "Nwabisa. I need you to get spaghetti as soon as you possibly can." Nwabi: "Yes sir." He hung up. Lakhe: "Now, daddy needs to do a bit of work." His assistant brought the food within 30 minutes. Lakhe: "Thank you. Come Karmie. Here's spaghetti." Karmen took the plate and stared at it. Karmie: "What's this?" Lakhe: "That's mince meat." Karmie: "I want spaghetti. Not mince meat." She sat on the floor with the plate. Lakhe: "Let me jus-" She poured the mince out on the floor and ate the spaghetti. Lakhe: "Well at least you're eating something." Lukhanyo walked in carrying his daughter. Lakhe: "What do you want?" Luks: "You wanted a phone." He put the plastic on the desk. Lakhe opened the plastic. Lakhe: "What stupid game are you playing." Luks: "It's a phone isn't it?" Lakhe: "This barely cost R200. It's a brick!!" Luks: "An expensive brick then." Lakhe: "Lukhanyo! LUKHANYO!" Luks: "Relax! Give him the box, baby." His daughter gave out the wrapped box. Lakhe: "Bring your daughter to work day? But you don't have a job so..." Luks: "I have companies Masilakhe." Lakhe: "That your brother runs for you. Complete the sentence." Luks: "You think you know so much. He has his own, I have my own. My daughter is sick and wants her daddy." Lakhe unwrapped the box. Lakhe: "Didn't have to wrap it and make it look gay." Luks: "Just thanks would be fine." Lakhe: "If you hadn't broken my phone to begin with." Luks: "I'd love to catch up but I want us to discuss the venue for the braai." Lakhe: "I told you we're not doing that." Luks: "Spho is expecting it. She wants all of us to be in the same place to discuss as parents and step parents." Lakhe: "Your ex wife

is coming with her boyfriend so you want me there. He must be really out of your league for you to want me near you as competition." Luks: "I don't like talking about that in front of my daughter." Lakhe: "I'm inclined to be on his side. I don't like you." Luhle: "My daddy bought you a present and you're being mean!!" She screamed. Lakhe stared at her. Luhle: "I don't like you either! Daddy take your present! He doesn't deserve it!" Luks: "It's okay, bumble bee. Sometimes we need to let go of negative energy. Remember we learnt that in family camp last month?" Luhle: "Yes daddy. But I also learn not to let people bully you because you're nice. You have to fight back. If you can't, I will." Luks: "Thank you sweetie. Lakhe do you want to apologize?" Lakhe: "I apologize. Thank you for the phone Likhanyo. I'll email you with a venue and date." Luks: "Thank you." He smiled. Luks: "I raise them bold." He walked out.

Likhanyo walked into his house with his daughter. Luks: "So what else did she say?" Luhle: "She just frowned and walked away. So now Jessica and Matty don't play with her anymore because she's mean." Luks: "I'm glad you stood up for your friends baby. It's a good thing. Don't ever let anyone bully you." Luhle: "Yeah but now I feel bad because nobody plays with her and she sits alone." Luks: "Then you talk to her about her attitude if she wants to be around you and your friends." Luhle: "Okay daddy. I want to get juice. Do you want some?" Luks: "Yes." He put her down. Soma and Soso stared at him. Luks: "Hey." Soma: "Hey? That's it?" Luks: "How you guys doing?" Soma: "No. NO!! You don't disappear and come back to ask us how we're doing!!" Luks: "My child is in the kitchen." He hissed. Soma: "Likhanyo, where have you been?" Luks: "With my girlfriend. Where else?" Soma: "Okay. Now the truth?" Luhle: "Here you go daddy. Uncle Soma why are you cross at my dad?" Soma: "I'm not, my angel. We're just having a grown people chat." Luhle: "Oh okay." Soma: "Your twin is in his room baby, he missed you." She broke into a sprint down the passage. Luks: "Sure loves her twin brother." Soma: "Could learn a thing or two from her." Luks: "What do you want from me?" Soma: "SIT." Likhanyo sat down and sipped his juice. Soma: "What's going on?" Luks: "Spho told you." Soma: "No she did not. She couldn't explain herself. Tell me Likhanyo. Did she bewitch you?" Luks: "No. Spho is not a witch." Soso: "Likhanyo, the flaming eyed woman that Lubby goes on about. It's her. We saw it with our own eyes. Lubby collapsed the minute he saw her changing. Exactly the way he described it. He wasn't hallucinating. It was real." Luks: "What do you mean?" Soma: "Lubby had a dream about your girlfriend way before you met her. A whole year before. Likhanyo, what did you bring home fondini?" Luks: "Spho is not a witch." Soso: "Okay but what is she then?"

Luks: "It'll be best that she explains it but please don't treat her differently."
Soma: "I saw flames in her eyes. Actual fire. That is different enough for me Lukhanyo. Are we in danger now?" Luks: "You're not in danger. Where's Lubby? Does he know?" Soso: "No! He thinks he had another episode. We can't let him know it's real until we know it's real." Soma: "How more real can it get?" Soso: "I don't know! I couldn't even sleep last night." Soma: "Me neither." Luks: "How's he doing?" Soma: "He's been quiet today. Not his usual self. I think he's a little embarrassed. He thinks he's going crazy Lukhanyo. What do you think could be eating him for so many years that he is literally losing his mind?" Luks: "I'll talk to him." He received an email and read it on his phone. Luks: "So we're having a braai soon." Soma: "For what now. Did you forget the ceremony this Saturday?" Luks: "Oh yeah.. damn, I forgot that. Maybe we'll do the braai Sunday." He laughed and typed. Soma: "For a minute. For a minute can you give us your attention?" Luks: "I will. I'm just inviting him to the ceremony. I can't wait to see him make a fool of himself." Soso: "Who?" Luks: "Masilakhe." Soma: "He's the one we're braaing?" Luks: "No. We're just gonna have a chill for the kids." Soso: "Okay. Where is Ta Luks and take away this fraud." Luks: "Relax. I'm still here." Soma: "You're inviting your girlfriend's ex to your family ceremony. Then the following day, you have a braai with him. We need to update our life policy. Lukhanyo is clearly deranged." He said to his twin. Lubby walked in with his crutches. Lubb: "Hey." Luks: "Heard you held a search party for me." Lubb: "Would've been nice to let us know where you are." He went to the kitchen. Luks: "Okay?" Soma: "Told you." Luks: "Uphi uThulani?" Soma: "Probably at work. Go to your twin. Only you can fix this." Lukhanyo sighed and walked to the kitchen. Luks: "Okay. Bring it in." Lubb: "Bring what in?" Luks: "I know you want to." He held out his arms. Lubb: "Haven't you done grocery this month? My tomato juice isn't here." Luks: "Lubby what's wrong please?" Lubb: "Nothing. I just want my tomato juice." Luks: "Yeah, I'll buy it later." Lubb: "any chance now is later? I would go but I'm not allowed to drive and Soma is tired of me." Luks: "I'll take you but I want us to talk man. What's going on with you?" Lubb: "Nothing." Luks: "Lubby, you're not yourself." Lubb: "They told you about yesterday right? Wow. Do you think I want it to happen?" Luks: "I know you don't. It's not your fault." Lubb: "Are you throwing me some pity again? I can't fucking take it Lukhanyo please. I'm already tired." Luks: "No I'm not throwing you pity. I understand where you're coming from-" Lubb: "But you don't believe me. I don't even believe me. I just don't understand why it doesn't stop." Luks: "I believe you." Lubby stared at him. Lubb: "You don't have to lie to make me feel better." Luks: "I'm not lying. Soon, I'll let you know everything. But for now, I believe you. You trust me right?" Lubb: "Do I have a choice?" Luks: "No. You don't." Lubb: "Fine. Let me go put on my grocery pants. I want my tomato juice." Luks: "Your pants are

just fine-" Lubb: "These are my house pants. I'm not letting you trick me again. Walked around the last time with a urge to spring clean and gossip." He walked out. Lukhanyo stood by the lounge waiting for him. Soma: "Givenchy." Soso: "Definitely the Dior." Luks: "What are you two arguing about?" Soma: "Quickest way to make money is to bet what Lubby is wearing for which occasion." Luks: "Do you want a hint since I live with him?" Soma: "He's my best friend, I already know." Luks: "Fine. He'll be wearing Gucci. He says it's the cheapest of his clothing and he doesn't wear it for anything other than menial errands." Soma: "I'm sticking with mine." The gate buzzed. Luks: "Anybody order something?" Soma: "Probably your serial shopper twin." Lukhanyo opened. The van drove up and parked. Luks: "What the fuck is that?" He watched as they offloaded a huge box. Luks: "He fucking did not." Soma: "Who?" Lukhanyo was seething. Delivery guy held out a clip board. Man: "Delivery for Mr Mzinyathi." Lukhanyo stared at him. Soma signed the paper and took the box in. Soma: "What's this?" Soso: "Jesus, Soma. What if it's a bomb?" Soma: "Oh wow. I've always wanted a bomb! Make it open!" Lukhanyo tore of the envelope on it. Inside was a note written. "Hope your brother gets well. This should help for now. PS: still don't like you. MKS." Soso: "Who's it from?" Soma opened the box. Soma: "It's a wheelchair. Did Lubby order this? Why are you angry?" Luks: "Masilakhe bought it. He is trying so hard to be the good one but I have news for him." He fired up an email. "Got your gift. Looks mega cool. He'll love it. Thanks. Don't forget to RSVP for Sat." Send. Soma: "Is this how we fight now? Buying expensive gifts? Lead us, Ta Luks we are your onions." Soso: "You can't say it like that!" He laughed. Lubby walked out. Soso: "What the hell is that?" Lubb: "What?" Soma: "What are you wearing?" Lubb: "Grocery pants obviously." Soma: "Which brand?" Lubb: "Mr Price. Why?" Soma: "Check his tag." Soso: "How the hell did you find Mr Price?" Lubb: "They have nice cheap clothing and it's so comfortable." Luks: "How did you end up at Mr Price?" Lubb: "If you grannies think you can make money off me, it'll be brand new day for you. I bought you identical pants too. You want to put them on? We'll look like twins." Soma: "YOU ARE TWINS!" Lubb: "Oh yeah. What's thi-" He gasped. Lubb: "For me!!!?? Oh my God! It's a wheelchair! Look at the wheels on that thang!" Luks: "Your new friend bought it." Lubb: "I definitely have to go change my shoes so I can match with my pants then you can take a picture and send it to him okay? Cool!" Luks: "He's not interested in your pi-" Lubby already walked down the passage.

My day was not going that well. I was now tired by midday. I figure it's the pregnancy mostly. I was also addicted to donuts. My little King loved his donuts. I slept so peaceful last night. For the first time in a while. Sibuy walked in

with a box with half a dozen donuts. Me: "You are literally my life saver." I started eating. Sibú: "So how is your day so far?" Me: "Bad. I'm so tired." Sibú: "You can work from home." Me: "You're right. Also, we have a problem." Sibú: "What is it?" Me: "Babaló knows his wife is dead." Sibú: "So? It's not like he'll find her." Me: "Well, he's angry. He wants answers-" Sibú: "I'll talk to him. Don't worry. For now, let's focus on this little guy being fed." He touched my stomach. Sibú: "And taken home to rest." Me: "Okay." I packed my work things. Me: "Have you seen your father lately?" Sibú: "My father? Is he only mine now?" Me: "He disappeared." Sibú: "I saw him last night." Me: "So he'd gone to Johannesburg." Sibú: "He had to. We all would have died if he didn't." Me: "Did Lukhanyo see him?" Sibú: "No. None of them did." He took my bag for me and we walked out the office. Sibú: "Will you be okay to drive?" Me: "Yes I will. For the first time in a while I'll be home early to rest." Sibú: "Sandile?" Me: "He's mostly asleep but Niny is there with him to help him with anything he needs." Sibú: "Perfect." He kissed my forehead and went to his car. I got in mine and drove home. Sibú got in his car and drove to Babaló's house. He needed to sort this out once and for all. Baló was in the kitchen staring at the boiling kettle of water. Sibú closed the lid breaking his concentration. Sibú: "You were looking for me." Baló: "I know she's dead. Did you kill her?" Sibú: "I have no reason to." Baló: "Then who? Spho?" Sibú: "A Pure Queen doesn't kill." Baló: "Unless She's carrying a Dark King." Sibú: "It wasn't Spho." Baló: "Where are her remains? I want my wife." Sibú: "Fine. Follow me." He walked out, getting in the car with Babaló. He drove to the location he had burnt and disposed her ashes. Once they'd parked, Babaló got out the car and walked around. Baló: "What the fuck is this. Where is she buried." Sibú threw his cigarette on the ground, blowing smoke out of his nose. Sibú: "At which point do you think it's fine to disrespect your queen." Baló: "What the hell are you on about? Spho is no queen of mine!!!" Sibú: "Is she not?" His eyes came alight with flames. Babaló stared at him. Baló: "Sibulele. I want my wife's body." Sibú: "There is no body. I burnt her to ash. All of her is swallowed by the sea." Babaló crumbled. Baló: "How could you ?" Sibú: "It's the rules." Baló: "What rules!!!! What fucking rules!!!!!" He screamed until his throat stuck, stopping his breathing. Black smoke surrounding his neck. Sibú: "You don't talk to me like that, uncle. You want your wife? Follow her." He lifted his hands. Kom: "HEY!!!!" Sibú looked at him in anger. Kom: "That is your family!!!" Sibú: "He must stop provoking me Father. My patience is worn thin." He walked to his car and drove off.

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I was asleep when I felt his presence heavily in my room. So he was obviously angry. Me: "You could've knocked. I was asleep." Kom: "I did. You need to speak to Sibiu. He needs to calm down. Something is happening and I can't figure it out!" Me: "But why must I be the one to tal-" He disappeared. Me: "Wow." I checked the time. It was early evening. I wasn't going to talk to Sibiu, he is his father, he must talk to him. I got up and went to the kitchen. Sands: "Nope. Andifuni." Lakhe was standing in front of him. Me: "What are you doing here without my kids?" Lakhe: "I came to fetch Sandile. I'll bring the ki-" Me: "Don't come back here without my children. Sandile, what is it?" Sands: "He's tryna trick me into crime." Lakhe: "I did not!!" Sands: "Then what you want?" Lakhe: "I just want to take you out for dinner! Damn." Sands: "You've never taken me to dinner bhuti, I'm not going to sleep with you. You're not my type." Lakhe: "What is your type?" Sands: "Liz. Whom you blocked." Lakhe: "I didn't block her. Can we go?" Sands: "Fine. Spho, if I go missing blame him. Shake him down for everything he's got. He's got a lot by the way." I chuckled. Me: "Have fun." Sands: "I can't walk. You'll have to carry me." Lakhe: "I'm buying you food. You better march!" Sands: "Mean." He mumbled, hopping out with his crutches. Lakhe: "So what got you so mad?" Me: "I'm not mad!" Lakhe: "Upset then." Me: "Kadir woke me up. He's mad at something Sibiu did. I don't understand why I must be the one to talk to him. He's the father! He should talk to his son." Lakhe: "What's wrong with Sibiu." Me: "How must I know? He was fine this afternoon when he came to my office he said he would talk to Babalo about his wife." Lakhe: "His wife? What happened to his wife?" I stared at him. Lakhe: "I'm kidding!" He laughed. Me: "What's wrong with you today?" Lakhe: "Nothing. I just thought I'd try and lighten things with humor. Need a minute to sharpen my skills." Me: "Okay. Try and avoid serious topics. Joking about those might rub others the wrong way." Lakhe: "Explain serious topics." Me: "Sarcastic? This might not be your thing." He smiled. Lakhe: "Fine. If your father came to you, don't you think he failed to talk to Sibiu? He wouldn't come to you unless he needs your help for real. He's terrified of you. Coming to you threatens his existence. I'll see you later." He walked out. That gave me some thought. Could Kadir honestly be in need of real help? Is he really unable to talk to his son? Or maybe it's the broken bond between them. Just then Sibiu walked in. Now I saw it. He really had changed from the time I'd seen him earlier which tells me he was hiding this side of him. Sibiu: "Thought you be sleeping." Me: "I was." Sibiu: "Don't worry about dinner. I'll cook it." His sweet self was returning again, masking the dangerous. This was bad. I was almost too scared to approach the topic. Me: "So what's going." Sibiu: "With?" He pulled out meat from the fridge. Sibiu: "Where is Sandile?" Me: "He left with Lakhe. I mean with you. You seem... angry." Sibiu: "I'm just tired. I work 19 hours. Owning a restaurant isn't as glamorous as it looks." Me: "Okay. You want to

talk about it?" Sibu: "Not really. Not much to talk about." Me: "Oh." This wasn't working. Me: "How is Babalo?" Sibu: "He's fine. A bit dramatic but fine." Me: "Did you tell him?" Sibu: "I showed him." He defrosted the meat. Me: "Your father was here." Sibu: "Still only mine?" Me: "Our. He's worried about you?" Sibu: "He shouldn't be. I am what he is. Let me take a quick shower. Put your feet up. I got dinner." ...

Lakhe helped Sandile into a chair at the restaurant he'd picked. Lakhe: "So.. what you gonna have?" Sands: "I've barely sat down two minutes, haven't even touched the menu." Lakhe: "Oh yeah. I guess a conversation while you pick will do just fine. So how's things?" Sands: "Are you taking drugs? You've been abnormally nice to me today and I'm trying not to freak out. Must I expect you to take off your shirt and jump off the tables soon? What's going on?" Lakhe: "I just wanted to do something nice for you." Sands: "You never do anything nice for me unless provoked. Who bribed you? Oh wait... you want something." Lakhe: "I don't. I just wanted to spend time with you. We hardly talk." Sands: "Whose fault is that?" Lakhe: "Not sure really." Sands: "You never want to talk unless it's about business. After that you boss me around. What is this about. My bladder is starting to panic." Lakhe sighed. The waiter came to take the orders and walked off. Lakhe: "I'm getting older. I'm approaching 40 soon. I work alot. I don't know if I have enough time with my kids. I'm just worried... if I were to... die, would you take them? As your own." Sands: "There's Lukhanyo for that....ohhhh. I knew it. You don't want him to raise your kids." Lakhe: "He will change their surnames. Their identities. He will eradicate me from their lives." Sands: "He's just the same age as you." Lakhe: "He's three years younger." Sands: "Oh my God. You Googled him." Lakhe: "Of course I did! I ran a whole background check on him. He's around my children Sandile. He's around Spho." Sands: "You know I'm good for gossip, spill it out." Lakhe: "I don't gossip. We're not doing that. I just need your word." Sands: "Listen here. You're not dying. God forbid you do, I'll be there. Nobody is taking away your kids names. They're Sobukwe's. Considering their the future of our family. I got your back Jack." Lakhe: "Really?" Sands: "Of course." Lakhe: "Thought you were his fan." Sands: "I am. But you're my brother. You come first and you're buying me food. I'm not treacherous." Lakhe: "Good to know." Sands: "So that's why you took me out. To outshine Lukhanyo and be the better brother." Lakhe: "No, I actually need a favor from you. He invited me to a ceremony at his place on Saturday. I know he's expecting me to make a fool of myself and I might. I'll need someone in my corner." Sands: "I legit got your back Jackson." Lakhe: "Thanks." Sands: "Yeah but you'll have to add dessert to this meal though." Lakhe: "What you take me for?" Sands:

"Definitely not a cheap skate. That's for sure." Lakhe: "So tell me how's things?" Sands: "Are you really interested or you're trying to be nice?" Lakhe: "Both." Sands: "Fine. Things are great considering I just got bit by a snake demon. In positive news, I'm buying Liz a house, her birthday is coming up." Lakhe: "A whole house huh." Sands: "Don't even try to judge me you bought a Porsche for your ex and you still have it parked in that garage with no one to touch it. Why are you punishing yourself?" Lakhe: "I'm not." Sands: "Drive the damn car." Lakhe: "I don't want it." Sands: "Sell it." Lakhe: "I can't. It's hard." Sands: "She's not coming back bhuti." Lakhe: "I know that. I've made peace with it." Their drinks arrived. Lakhe: "Just something Sibu said that kind of halted my decisions." Sands: "What did he say?" Lakhe: "He says Spho sees me in Lukhanyo. Which is probably why she's dating him. I mean, if that's true, why not come to me directly. Are there qualities about me she hates? What are they? Does he not have them?" Sands: "I can't really answer you bhuti. All I can say is; the only quality she didn't like about you was you being a bully with her work.

What Lukhanyo does or has will never be able to replace you. You're the kids dad. The hero. Have you seen how Lam looks at you when he's on your lap. You'd swear he's staring into heaven. His tiny mouth open and eyes wide. He knows you're his Dada. Chris has a whole song about you. That's something he can't compete with. Focus on that." Lakhe: "I try Sandile. There are nights I stay up till morning trying to think maybe if I'd been more welcoming to her family, to her... things might have been different. Turning into a demon was the most painful thing I've ever experienced. It ate a part of my soul and left me numb. I don't think there's anyone who can fully understand the impact." Sands: "Siyanda. But you don't like him." Lakhe: "Even he can't fully understand. He was half demon. I was a full dark blood about to be King. Kadir tore into my flesh and mixed our bloods together. A part of him will always be in me, no matter what I do." Sands: "Does it still hurt?" Lakhe drank his juice. Sands: "You can tell me." Lakhe: "Painfully. I wake up at night as if my hands are burning like when he set them alight. Sometimes I don't even want to touch a woman at all because it hurts. I can feel the cut on my arm. I can feel his hold on it. I can feel his blood seeping through my flesh into my body like a virus and it's setting everything alight in its passing." He stared at his juice. Lakhe: "The only time I do feel better is when I've seen Spho." Sands: "Wow. This is alot. Why don't you say anything?" Lakhe: "To who?" Sands: "Anyone! You can't go on like this." Lakhe: "It's really not something intense. It happens twice a week usually." Sands: "Do you pray?" Lakhe: "Don't start-" Sands: "It's the only way. You can't drink a potion and make this leave. You

need to soldier through it." Lakhe: "Tell me about the hotel." Sands: "We're gonna fight now?" Lakhe: "So you still want to sell?" Sands: "Yes." Lakhe: "Fine. I'll get you a lawyer-" Sands: "I already asked Tar. He will have the papers ready by tomorrow." Lakhe: "Oh. Do you need a buyer?" Sands: "You interested?" Lakhe: "Not in buying a hotel. No. I gave it you for a reason." Sands: "Go ahead and make me feel bad." Lakhe: "I just want what's best for you Sandile. I don't want to watch you starve or depend on anyone but yourself! I don't want you falling back into crime. You'll sell the hotel then what? Have money, buy a big house and car then what?" Sands: "We were having such a good time." Lakhe: "Okay. Fine. This is me as a big brother. Let me find you a hotel manager, to take care of the running of the hotel, sell a few shares of it and keep the majority. You'll have some income, you'll have money to invest, and you'll have a home should things not work out with Liz." Sands: "Things will work out with Liz. I love her." Lakhe: "Sandile Life happens. Wena when you fall in love, you literally give it all your power. Which is amazing, but keep some for yourself too. Liz is lovely but, so are you. Take care of you." Sands: "Fine. I'll sell them to Liz." Lakhe flinched. Lakhe: "That's okay. Let's get this weekend out of the way. I've never been to a slaughtering before." Sands: "Me neither. I'm sure we can YouTube it." Lakhe: "Haik Sandile. We're guests there. We won't have to slaughter it." Sands: "Well... just saying. In case they need help. It'd be nice to know which leg of the cow to hold." Lakhe: "I'm done with you." ...

A phone beeped in the middle of the night. A little after 23:30pm. It rang. Luks: "Lubabalo Andrew Morrison!!!" Lubb: "What!" Luks: "Answer your damn phone! This is why I didn't want you sleeping in my room!" Lubb: "I didn't summon it to ring!" Luks: "ANSWER IT." Lubby took the phone as it stopped. Luks: "Put it on silent Lubabalo or get the fuck out my room." The phone rang again. Luks: "For Christ sakes!!!! Who the hell is that!!!" Lubb: "Hello?" He answered. Lubb: "Now? Damn okay." He hung up. Lubb: "Now I need to put on some pants." Luks: "You were in my bed without pants???" Lubb: "Oh relax! We were in the same womb for 9 months without clothes now you wanna act all brand new." He got up and put on pajamas, hopping out the room with one crutch. Lubby dialed the number again. Lubb: "Masilakhe Sobukwe. Why could you be possibly calling me at this time of night?" Lakhe: "Open the gate." Lubb: "Jesus Christ. How did you find me?" Lakhe: "Open it or I'm sounding this hooter till morning." Lubb: "Okay!!" He opened the door and hopped out to the porch, opening the gate with a remote. The Audi drove in and parked, then flashed bright lights. Lubb: "You want Lukhanyo to murder you!!" He hissed, quickly going to the car. Lakhe: "Get in." He switched

off the lights. Lubb: "What do you want? I know it's not money, I've broken ankle so it can't be assistance, oh damn... You're one of those huh? I didn't take you for an after 9 but I ain't judging. I'm just not into-" Lakhe: "I don't want you! I'm not gay. I just need your help." He sighed. Lubb: "What do you need?" Lakhe: "I don't trust anyone. I don't trust my family. I don't have friends. I just-" Lubb: "Man. Just tell me what you need. I may be a clown but I don't joke with serious shit. What happened?" Lakhe: "My brother. I need you to buy the hotel shares he's selling. When Sandile falls in love, he'd literally give up everything. His whole life for a person. He got hurt once. This drove him into a psychotic rage. I had to deal with the aftermath of a depressed, murderous person. That girl broke him. Now, he's healed and is doing it again. Giving up everything for this one. I am almost scared to know what he'd do if this doesn't work out. I just need a safety net for him. I didn't cope with that hotel because I'm always busy. You on the other hand..." Lubb: "But why me?" Lakhe: "You're a big brother. You'd do anything for Lukhanyo. Sandile wants to give those shares to her. If he was sane, and didn't literally go crazy, I'd let him. I am just concerned of the destruction he would cause should it fail." Lubb: "Okay." Lakhe: "So you'll buy it, get a hotel manager-" Lubb: "I know what to do Masilakhe, I'm a business man. I've got properties. Might not be as big as a hotel but I know what to do." Lakhe: "Thanks." Lubb: "Does this mean we're friends?" Lakhe: "No. We're not friends." Lubb: "Hmm. Okay. Get off my yard then, it's after 10pm." He got out of the car. Lubb: "Wait. How did you know I'm the older one?" Lakhe: "Lucky guess." Lubby stared at him. Lubb: "Soma is the eldest." He walked into the house. Luks: "Who is that?" Lubb: "One of the guys." He got into bed. Luks: "At this time?" Lubb: "Crisis at home. It's sorted now. Why aren't you with Spho?" Luks: "She asked me to be with you here." Lubb: "She's so sweet." Luks: "She is." Lubb: "She's still worried about my episode?" Luks: "Yeah." Lubb: "Well, tell her I'll be fine. It's nothing. Night." Luks: "It's not nothing." Lubb: "Meaning?" Luks: "The woman with red flamed eyes is Spho." Lubb: "Now who's crazy? Haha. Khawulale wethu." Luks: "I'm serious. You saw her, in real life. I've seen her. Soma and Soso saw her. It's real." Lubby kept silent..

The next morning I was woken up by a knock in the front door. Everytime I try to sleep. Everytime. I got up and went to open. Lakhe gave me a bubbly wide awake Lam. Lakhe: "Take him!" Chris stood next to him, barely awake, rubbing his eyes. Chris: "He doesn't stop screaming mama." Me: "Did he eat candy? You fed him a lollipop again didn't you?" Lakhe: "I did not!! I made sure he didn't get hold of any candy! He is just refusing to sleep." Me: "You must have done something out of routine Masilakhe. It's 5 in the morning."

Lakhe: "No Spho. Lam is just over hyped about something I don't know. I need to sleep." He picked up Chris and kissed his cheek. Lakhe: "I'll see you later baby boy okay?" Chris: "Are you gonna teach me how to ride a bicycle?" Lakhe: "Sure I will. I'll bring it home after work." Chris: "Okay daddy. Love you." Lakhe: "Love you too." He put him down. Chris ran off into my bedroom. Lakhe: "He's been obsessed over bicycles lately. Apparently someone in his school got one for his birthday and it looks "cool" So he wants one too." Me: "And you're just gonna buy it?" Lakhe: "Well yes." Me: "If tomorrow he wants a Ferrari?" Lakhe: "He's getting it. No pause." Me: "You think that's a good thing? To grow up knowing he can depend on you whenever he wants something?" Lakhe: "I never do anything right in your eyes." Me: "Buying your son a bike is something right but I need you to also teach him the value of working to obtain nice things. I don't want my child skating through life because he has rich parents. He needs to be able to work for what he wants." Lakhe: "How do you suggest he works for it?" Me: "You'll think of something. Sensible kid chores will do. Extra merit for things he figures out himself." Lakhe: "You know that he's a genius that can weezle his way out of anything right?" Me: "I don't want a criminal child Lakhe. Please teach him not to be a criminal." Lakhe: "Done." Me: "Where is Jake and Karmie?" Lakhe: "With their mom. She asked to see them." Me: "How is she?" Lakhe: "She's fine now." Me: "That's good. I didn't want to overwhelm her. I'm sure she isn't ready to face me yet." Lakhe: "Probably not yeah." Me: "How did your dinner with Sandile go? Where is he?" Lakhe: "It went well. Might be something we can do weekly. He's asleep at home. You know he would sleep through the world ending and not hear a thing. He's very selective with his sleep." I giggled. Me: "You're the one that made the baby. Not him." He smiled. Lakhe: "I did." He touched Lam's cheek. Lakhe: "Can't believe he's actually half me. A whole human. Don't you dare do that to me, Hey!!" He woke him up. Me: "Let him sleep." Lakhe: "Hayi Spho. He can't keep me up all night and come here to fall asleep! That's not fair!" Me: "He missed you. Don't take it personal." Lakhe: "How can I not? I have work to get to!" Me: "And I don't?" Lakhe: "Everyone must suffer. Lammy, boy yam?" The baby was dozing off on my chest. Lakhe: "Look at how cute you look like you're not a terrorist. Look at him." Me: "He's a sweetheart. You just don't understand." Lakhe: "He's a sweetheart until he wants a titty. Just you wait. I have to get going." Me: "Oh okay. Thanks for bringing them. I'm taking the day off. I haven't seen them in a while. Bring me my first born please." Lakhe: "He'll bring himself. He's grown." Me: "He's got a broken leg!" Lakhe: "It's just a snake bite! I'll get him a driver then. Wooh." He walked out. I went back to the bedroom with Lam hanging on my nipple with his mouth. He was really sleepy now. Me: "You missed your mommy my angel? That's why you don't sleep?" He smiled sleepily. In my room, Chris was in bed sleeping. I let him be.

He probably didn't sleep enough because of Lam. I safely put Lam in his cot and he fiddled, yawning until he fell asleep.

Komander stood in the living room staring at Babalo who was on his couch with a blanket. Kom: "What are you doing?" Balo: "Leave me alone." Kom: "You can't still be upset about thi-" Balo: "Your SON killed my wife and now he wants to kill ME!!!" Kom: "My son never killed your wife. The Unborn did. And he doesn't want to kill you." Balo: "Oh???" Because I saw different!" Kom: "Sibu is just frustrate-" Balo: "Stop trying to protect him!!!" Kom: "Fine. You good now?" Babalo glared at him. Balo: "Do you have any heart or compassion?" Kom: "Do you know why the Unborn killed your wife?" Balo: "He was jealous of the baby in her stomach! He doesn't want to be upstaged." Komander laughed. Kom: "You think just any body can upstage the King? He doesn't have competition. He kills without command. He is uncontrollable. That little baby meant nothing to him." He stepped closer. Kom: "Your wife wanted out. She cheated with another man. She was pregnant. Who's baby could it be? Your King was trying to protect you!" Balo: "If she'd cheated I would've known! I can sme-" Kom: "Your sense of smell can be blurred once she touches the blood of a Virgin. Hlumi had visits from various demons that taught her how to trick you. Unfortunately she didn't say anything where we would've helped her block them. She listened to them and look where it got her. In this bloodline, we know not to trust anyone. Demons don't sympathize. I know it's hard. I know you loved her but she's done. Gone. Never to return. You need to move on. I brought you something." He looked at the door. A gorgeous chocolate brown skinned woman walked in. Her body the shape of an hour glass, skin as smooth as satin. Her big eyes hazel and gleaming with excitement. She was breathtaking. Kom: "This is your new wife. She is half demon and only belongs to you. She listens to no one else's command but you. She doesn't speak. Only listens. To you." Balo: "Are you fucking serious!! I don't want a doll!" Kom: "She's definitely not a doll. Tell her to turn." Balo: "Turn around." She turned around slowly. Her behind big, round and heart-shaped. She stood again facing him. Her wide hips separating a tiny bit between her thighs. Balo: "Why doesn't she speak? I'm gonna get bored if I can't hear a voice." Kom: "Teach her. She's yours. If you stop whining like a baby." Balo: "This is not making up for losing the love of my life Kadir. Thick ass means jack shit to me if I've lost my soul mate!!" Kom: "Honestly, you think you're the only one that lost their soul mate?!! You had the chance to love and marry her!! Many of us go through life watching it from afar. Get the fuck off that couch, take this woman and we're meeting at the altar at midnight. I'm about sick of this! I'm not going to beg you! You're a Komander by BLOOD. You have no

choice. Suck it. The fuck up. Do you understand?" He growled. Balo: "Mxim." Kadir walked out, muttering. Kom: "Fucking ridiculous." Balo: "You're not gonna stand there and stare at me. Sit, lady." She sat down and looked at the floor. Balo: "Do you not talk at all?" She looked up him. Balo: "Oh fuck no. We're not having that." He threw the blanket on the floor. Balo: "Follow!"

Lubby was in the kitchen, silently making breakfast for the children before school. Luks: "Bibi. Hey." Lubb: "Hi." Luks: "You good?" Lubb: "Fantastic." Luks: "You haven't said a word since last night baby. What's up?" Lubb: "Nothing. Should I organize a driver for the kids? Thulani isn't home." Luks: "I'll drive the kids to school." Lubb: "Oh." Luks: "Talk to me." Lubb: "About what Lukhanyo?" Luks: "My whole name. Wow. So you're really mad. Listen, this is a new thing that I can't even explain. All I know is, you've been having these dreams for over a year now, and Spho is... not as ordinary as you and I. What you saw wasn't a hallucination." Lubb: "Cool." Luks: "Please say-" Lubb: "You led me to believe I was crazy! You took me to doctors!" Luks: "I didn't know!! I recently just discovered it too." Lubb: "Well isn't that convenient." He hopped over to the sink to wash the pan. Luks: "Seriously, Lubby can yo-" Lubb: "For a YEAR. I wasn't allowed to drink alcohol. A whole big bum year!! Do you know how that feels? Of course you don't because you didn't stop. You went in. Hard." Luks: "You said you liked your new lifestyle-" Lubb: "And you believed me? One big bubbly WOW. Lukhanyo I like to drink. You really think I built a bar in my own house the size of two RDP houses just for decor? Must be hectic." Luks: "Well I'm s-" Lubb: "You think I have a wine cellar with high shelves needing ladders, space as big as a warehouse, just for the giggles? Another Haha." Luks: "Okay, Lubby. I get your-" Lubb: "You think I invested in a Vineyard because I have money? That almost made me broke by the way. But I did it. You know why?" Luks: "You love alcohol. Just get the last one out so I can talk." Lubby scrubbed the pan. Luks: "Okay. I just want to-" Lubb: "You think I bought shares at SAB because I like water and veges?" Luks: "I'M SORRY!! DAMN." Lubb: "Nobody said yell, sir." Luks: "Lubby, I know this isn't enough for you but you gotta trust me." Lubb: "Fine." The kids came to eat breakfast. Luhle: "Hi daddy." Lubb: "Hello my angel cheeks. How was your night?" Luhle: "So good." Lutha: "You were snoring." Luks: "You slept in his bedroom again?" Lutha: "She kicked me off the bed. I slept on the couch." He ate his cereal. Luhle: "We were talking." Luks: "Angel, I told you before lights out means sleep. I don't need you tired during the day and I certainly don't want you up during the night. Am I understood?" Luhle: "Yes daddy." Luks: "Chumani. Your game is tomorrow. You ready?" Chuma: "Yes sir." Luks: "Bambi?" Lubambo was hanging on Lubby's arm. Luks: "You can't be carrying

a child on that ankle." Lubb: "If it makes you feel better I'm carrying him on my arm." Luks: "Okay. Bambs, breakfast boy. You have a piano rehearsal today at three." Lubb: "Luhle's recital at 5." Luks: "What recital?" Lubb: "Ballet. We were practicing for weeks." Luks: "So what is a recital for?" Lubb: "To showcase the dance moves. It's an event. Luhle has a solo. You can't miss it." Luks: "A solo? Baby you didn't tell me about this." Lutha: "She's shy." Luks: "But how did you know?" Lubb: "I'm on the SGB plus I snooped." Luks: "Sweetie, why didn't you tell me?" She shrugged. Luks: "Come on Luhle. I want to see you dance, my angel. Why didn't you tell tata?" He picked her up. She hid her face. Luhle: "You don't like it." Luks: "Since when? I love it." Luhle: "You don't watch me practice." Luks: "Haibo Luhle. That doesn't mean I don't like it." Luhle: "You don't have to come Tata." Luks: "I'm coming. I want to see you do your thing. Lutha is gonna be there. Daddy and also Bambi and Juni. Your mom is gonna be there too." Luhle: "What about your other baby?" Luks: "Uhm.. Lubby?" Lubb: "You're doing great. Keep going." Luks: "Okay. First the other baby's name is Lam. You can call him Lammy bear. Secondly, you don't need to worry about him taking your place. I love you so much baby cakes. If you want to invite him, then it's fine." Luhle: "Maybe next time." Luks: "Okay. What must I bring?" He put her down to eat. Lutha: "A camera." He gulped the milk from his bowl. Luks: "Is there a chance you can not act like a neanderthal son?" Lutha: "Sorry." Luks: "So the girls, should I fetch them for school or Lungelo's got it?" Lubb: "He's your bestie." Luks: "Don't even act like you're not besties with my girl's ex." Lubb: "Maybe because I'm not. Call Lungz. I need a shower." Luks: "Lubambo please come eat." Bambi: "I wanna shower with daddy." Luks: "You literally just took a bath. Come eat. We leave in 5 minutes lady and gentlemen. Stuff those mouths. Lubabalo say something." Lubb: "Go eat. I'll see you for piano." Bambi: "Are you coming Tata?" Luks: "Wouldn't miss it, boy." The family hurried up and got ready to leave for school.

I'd woken Chris up at 7 for school but didn't really wanna take him. Unfortunately for me, he wanted to go. Me: "I'll come fetch you at 12 baby." Chris: "No mama. You can come at 2." Me: "Your school day ends at 12 young man." Chris: "We stay till 2 to help Teacher Susan with the garden." Me: "But you have your garden right here." Chris: "I do. But Teacher Susan teaches us about other flowers and we planted a tree yesterday. I'm excited to see if it grew." Me: "You're smarter than that." Chris: "Indeed. Jake placed a bet that it would. I told him no. He owes me money." Me: "Sweetie, no. I thought I told you to stop this." Chris: "You told me to stop selling tips mama. And I did." Me: "But this is gambling. And it's illegal. Chris: "Are you sure?" Knowing he has access to the Internet and his genius girlfriend Julie, lying about this would

make me the bad guy. Me: "Well... no but it upsets me. I just want you to be a child. If you want to earn extra money, we can work out some exercises for you." Chris: "Exercises mama? Like Lammy does?" I stopped a giggle. Me: "No. More grown child exercises. Like reading. Learning." Chris: "Okay that sounds better." I helped him wear his shirt. Chris: "Lam is awake." Me: "How could you know that? He's in the bedroom." Chris: "Everytime he wakes up, he hums mmmm. Listen." I listened and indeed I could hear a very subtle "mmmm" from the bedroom. I tip toed to the door of the room to listen. "Mmm. Mmmm." That definitely was his voice. I walked in and he stared at me. Lam: "Dada." Me: "Oh? Wow Lam. Good morning to you too." I picked him up and was almost attacked with a horrid smell. Me: "What were you eating!!" Lam: "Dada." Me: "He fed you? What did he feed you?" I undressed him, to get ready for the bath. Chris: "Mummy. Can I watch cartoons?" Me: "Yes sweetie. I just want to wash your brother quickly okay?" Chris: "There's a car outside." Me: "Please check from the window and don't open the door." He dashed out the room. I got Lam into the bath tub and washed him. Me: "Much better. You pulled a real stinker titty man." Lam: "mmmm." He mumbled. His mouth shut but still making this sound. Me: "You look upset. What's wrong?" That's when I heard the voice in the lounge. "Where's your mom?" Chris: "She's bathing Lammy. Come sit with me." Me: "NO!! Christian who is that!!" Luks: "It's okay. It's me." He walked in the bathroom. Luks: "Uhm... hi." Me: "It stinks I know. But he's a baby so it's cute." Luks: "To who?" I stared at him. Luks: "I'm kidding." He laughed. Luks: "I just dropped the kids at school. I wanted to take you to breakfast." Me: "I need to finish Lam. Chris has a bet at school he cannot miss. Once I finish, I'll drop him off and we can go." Luks: "Or I drop him off and you finish here with Lammy." Chris: "Yes please. Thank you! I'm going to school mummy. Bye!" Me: "Hold on sir. Get back here." Chris: "Yes mama?" Me: "behave yourself okay? Have an amazing day. I look forward to seeing you after school. I missed you." Chris: "Me too." He looked at the floor. Me: "Baby what's wrong?" Chris: "You told me to tell you." Me: "You can tell me anything." Chris: "Well.. I haven't seen you in a while. I know Lam is a baby and you have to bath him and feed him because he's hopeless by himself but I wanna spend time with you too. Like our garden dates. Like before." Me: "Of course sweetie. We'll do that today and any other day you want okay? I'm always ready to be with you. Always." Chris: "Thanks mummy but now Lam wants to take a poop. He's making the face. I'll see you later okay? Love you." Me: "I love you too angel." He ran out. Me: "Lukhanyo please drive safely with my child. No speed above 100km per hour." Luks: "100!? Like a granny?" I haven't forgot that normal speed to him is 140km/h and speeding is 200. Me: "Lukhanyo!!" Luks: "I'm kidding. I drive with kids all the time. I'll be safe and back here in two days." I smiled. Luks: "And Lam's taking a poop." The water

around him started turning brown. Me: "Oh baby!" He stared up at me. Me: "Why is his poop mustard and liquidy? He didn't sleep last night. Lakhe brought him here at 5am. I think he gave him some candy." Luks: "Or he's probably teething." Me: "Lam is only 7." Luks: "That's the age of teething babe." Me: "Or maybe he has a tummy bug." Luks: "Why are you avoiding this?" At this point, I had Lam at arm length above his bath water. Me: "Because...he's a baby." Luks: "You're scared he's growing up? Spho, you can't stop this. We'll go to the doctor and check but I can assure you everything is okay." Me: "Well. I'll have to let Lakhe know we're going to the doctor. He might want to come." Luks: "Great! It'll be like a super date." Me: "You're cool with this?" Luks: "Definitely. Lakhe and I are co-dads. Great dad's. Maybe we'll share notes. I can help him prepare for having Lam over during this uncomfortable period of the baby's life. I've done it 9 times before so I know." Me: "You're perfect, you know that?" Luks: "Only on the 7th try." He kissed my lips. Luks: "And hold him closer to you. You don't want him to panic." I nodded. Luks: "You're a great mom Spho. Stop overthinking." He walked out. I drained the water, ran a clean bath again to bath him. Once I'd managed to dress him, I called Lakhe. He was probably already at work. Psychopath. Lakhe: "Yes ma'am." Me: "Hey. So you're getting Chris his bike okay?" Lakhe: "No hardcore labor first?" Me: "No. He's a sweet little boy. He puts other people first and is so kind. He deserves something nice." Lakhe: "Are you crying?" Me: "No. But do you think I can learn too?" Lakhe: "Learn what? Why are you crying?" Me: "To ride a bike silly! I'm not sure if I still can." Lakhe: "Uhm.. Okay. That's okay. But why are you crying?" Me: "I think Lam is teething. Lukhanyo says so. He thinks we should go to the doctor to check though. Do you wanna come?" Lakhe: "With him? And you?" Me: "Yes." Lakhe: "This is not weird?" Me: "I want you both there. You cancel each other's ego's out. I need a balance." Lakhe: "I'm only doing this because you're pregnant. And pregnant women like the weirdest things. It is also bad luck to make them unhappy. So okay." Me: "You're so sweet. Thank you." Lakhe: "You're still crying." Me: "Only because Lam's poop is like mustard and liquidy and he keeps humming the sound mmmm with his mouth shut. I can't get through to him." Lakhe: "Spho, Lam is 7 months old. Stop freaking out. He just needs a hug from you. Once you're done, take him to his baby gym. That always calms him down." Me: "Okay. I think Lukhanyo is back. He'll call you with the appointment time." Lakhe: "Can't wait." He hung up. I couldn't wait. I wanted to know my baby will be okay and also how the plans for the braai are going. I was also curious about another thing... would Lukhanyo invite his ex wife?

After our breakfast date, Lukhanyo drove me to the doctor. Lam was in his seat in the back. Luks: "He seems a little better." Me: "Yeah. It was probably a tummy ache. He still looks upset though." Luks: "He's a man. He'll be fine." Me: "Anyway, how's Lubby?" Luks: "Driving me crazy. We need to sit him down and have a chat." Me: "How about tonight? Dinner at my place?" Luks: "Can't do tonight baby. I have to be with Lubambo for piano class at 3 and at 5pm Luhle, Babalo and Buhle have a ballet recital. After that I'm taking them out for dinner." Me: "Oh that's so sweet! You know I've wanted a baby girl for the longest time." Luks: "Maybe this one will be a girl." He held my tummy. Me: "No he's definitely a boy." Luks: "I create beautiful good little girls." I laughed. Me: "Not happening." He parked the car at the doctors complex right next to Lakhe's car. We got out the car and walked to him. Lakhe: "Titty man ka Tata." Lam: "Dada!" Lakhe: "That's my boy." He looked at Lukhanyo. Lakhe: "Hi." Luks: "Hey." Why were they acting so shy? Me: "So you two catch up and you'll find me inside." I went into the building with Lam. Our appointment was in 5 minutes time. I booked us in and waited. Lakhe walked in and sat down followed by Luks. The receptionist stared at us. She: "Brother?" Luks: "Boyfriend." She stared at Lakhe. Lakhe: "Husband." She: "OH." Me: "Ex-husband." She sighed in relief. She: "Well, you may go in." We went into the doctors office. Lakhe: "I think just me and her will be fine." Luks: "I'll stand next to you for support. Don't worry." Lakhe: "It's not necessary." Luks: "I insist." Lakhe: "Very well." Me: "Anyway, so Lammy has been a little sick I think. He keeps humming to himself and he poops mustard liquidy poop that smells really wild. He doesn't even sleep anymore." Doc: "Lets see." He assessed the baby. Doc: "Doesn't seem to be sick. How often is the liquid poop?" Lakhe: "This whole week." Me: "Poor thing! Why didn't you tell me?" Lakhe: "It's just poop. It's not really a big deal. He was fine. I changed him every two hours." Doc: "His temperature is just fine. No fever, no tummy ache. He's teething. Look at his gums." I peeped. Lakhe: "There's two little bumps. Oh my God. That's so cute!" I had tears in my eyes. Me: "Doesn't it hurt?" Doc: "It's uncomfortable for him. I'm gonna give you something for it and his sleep. Also a couple of snacks he can gum on to sooth it." Lakhe: "You're crying again." Me: "He's growing teeth Lakhe!" Lakhe: "Yeah, it's suppose to happen so that he can eat solids." Me: "But he's a little baby." Luks: "Yes. He is. But he's making way for the coming baby. He's trying to help." Lakhe stared at him. Me: "Okay." I wiped my tears. Doc: "Great. Take this." He wrote down his prescription. Doc: "You'll get it at the pharmacy. You might want to get him a teething toy as well." Me: "Thank you doctor." We made our way out. Lakhe: "Why are you here?" Luks: "Supporting my girlfriend." Lakhe: "No. You're not." Me: "So nobody is getting the medicine?" Lakhe: "Lukhanyo?" Luks took the paper and walked to the pharmacy. Lakhe: "How are you feeling?" Me: "Fine.

How's the braai prep going?" Lakhe: "We're still looking for a venue." Me: "We can do it at my house?" Lakhe: "Too many kids. Maybe mine." Me: "Too big." Lakhe: "I'll put up signs like you once suggested. Your boyfriend might not like it though." Me: "You haven't spoken about it??" Lakhe: "No." Me: "Are you two trying to play me? Is there a braai or you're just faking this getting along?" Lakhe: "Why are you yelling?" Me: "Because if it's fake and you're playing me a fool I'll be MAD!!!" Lakhe: "Spho, calm down. Please. Look. We're not playing." Me: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "I swear. Just calm down." Luks: "Got them. Everything okay?" Lakhe: "So how's my house for the venue?" Luks: "We'll do it at my brother's complex. Everyone will be assigned their own house if they decide to sleep over." Lakhe: "I've got enough rooms for sleep overs but it won't be necessary. We all need to go to work on Monday right?" Luks: "Fine. But you're still attending my function." Lakhe: "What do I bring?" Luks: "Nothing. Just a smile." He grinned. Me: "What function?" Lakhe: "Oh he didn't tell you? Lukhanyo is slaughtering a cow. It's not barbaric." Luks: "You're a vegan?" Lakhe: "Not a chance in hell." Luks: "Good." Me: "Okay. Lam needs to go to baby gym. You coming?" Them: "Yes." Me: "Perfect." I gave Lakhe his son. Me: "I signed him up at a new one because the previous wasn't really hygienic to my knowledge. When you're done, please ask for the cctv footage of that hour and they'll send it to our emails. I'll see you guys later. Have fun. Goodbye Titty man. I love you so much." I kissed Lam's cheeks. Lakhe: "Guess I'll go buckle him up then." He walked out. Luks: "Did you really just pair me with your ex?" Me: "You did say you want to." I kissed his lips. Me: "Enjoy." Taking his car keys. Luks: "Wow." We walked out. I got in the Maserati and drove off. Lukhanyo got in the passenger seat of Lakhe's car. Lakhe: "This doesn't make us friends. Don't even for one second think I like you." He drove off. Lukhanyo texted on his phone till the given address. Lam started crying as he parked. Lakhe: "Don't." Luks: "Don't be dramatic Masilakhe. He's in pain." He took the baby. Lakhe: "I'm his father." Luks: "Okay then. Here." He gave him the baby. Lakhe held him trying to lie him down. Lakhe: "Lammy." The baby screamed. Luks: "Do you need he-" Lakhe: "Just pass me the medicine!!" Luks: "Masilakhe. I'm not here for you." Lakhe: "Then what the fuck are you here for!" Luks: "I don't know!! But I'm here and Lam needs to stop crying. I've done this before. Let me help you!" Lakhe: "Do it." Lukhanyo took the syringe. Luks: "Look. You need a clean syringe like this. Make sure to push the plunger to the end so there's no air. Place it on the medicine bottle opening and suck it till the dosage. Hold him a little lying down." He placed the syringe inside the mouth. Luks: "Must touch his inner cheek and done." Lakhe: "Thanks." Luks: "He's your first kid. You'll panic easy. Mine could barely breath on his own for the first 3 years of his life. That'll toughen you up." Lakhe: "Why couldn't he breath?" Luks: "Asthma. The worst kind. He'd literally just stop breathing. I'd

have to watch him struggle to breathe like his own lungs were against him and there's nothing I can do about it. Felt like a sick joke God was playing." He smiled. Luks: "We're late for class. Let's go." They got out of the car and into the building. A tall lady greeted them. She: "Who is this cute munchkin?" Lakhe: "Khayalam Sobukwe. We call him Lammy bear-" She: "Lets all welcome Lammy bear and his daddies! You're our first homosexual couple! We love variety to show our babies, love comes in different ways!" Luks: "WE'RE NOT-" She: "Lets begin!!!" A song started playing.

I was at a spa day for once to relax. I needed a gentle body scrub. I asked Fez to join me and he came over. Fez: "This is the first time I've seen you relax, lady. It's a great sight. So what are you running away from?" Me: "Masilakhe and Lukhanyo. They're hiding something and secrets make me angry. I don't wanna snap." Fez: "Hiding something? Aren't they supposed to hate each other? Why do they have a secret together?" Me: "I don't know! Men are just unexplainable. I walked out to them having a silent glare at each other the other day and they said they're planning a braai. But everytime I ask about details they mumble." Fez: "Maybe they're in luuurv and don't want you to find out." I stared at him and we laughed out loud. Me: "The two most macho'est men alive, falling in love? Wow." Fez: "But Luks isn't macho. He's just mysterious." Me: "Apparently he's a thug. Maybe they're in some thug deal?" Fez: "Unlikely. Ta Luks is reformed. Or so he says. I think he's not. He's still a bad boy. It's in his walks, his attire, the way he talks... oooohh, that rough voice in Xhosa. The way his tattoos just glimmer in his rolled up sleeves. He moisturizes Spho. Do you know how rare it is to find a moisturized Xhosa man?" I couldn't stop laughing. Me: "Doesn't Sandile moisturize?" Fez: "He does! I'm sure he uses Nivea. Along with Bhuti Lakhe. But with Ta Luks? Ahhh." He batted his eyelashes. Me: "So you have a crush on my man now? You had one on Lakhe too. Until you saw Sandile." Fez: "I still have a crush on him. He banks different. And he's so serious!" I laughed. Me: "Banks different?" Fez: "Spho you've seen your baby daddy's house. It's iNkandla in a suburb. He hires private chefs for special occasions. Such a honey pie." I shook my head. Fez: "I need some romance to think about once in a while. And I love how these ones take care of you." Me: "Still problems with Gio?" Fez: "Yeah. Now his mother is here. His brother out of ICU. So she's staying with us. Not a picnic at all. Everything I do is wrong in her eyes. She hates my cooking, my cleaning and compares me to his ex, Mary." Me: "He's dated a woman???" Fez: "Yes. A trans woman. And she loved her because she wasn't too manly looking." Me: "This lady is homophobic Fez. What does Gio say about this?" Fez: "He asked me to accommodate her and try to lean into her suggestions because he doesn't

want her any more upset." Me: "Hayi kodwa Fez. Not only did this man make you miserable the whole time you've been with him, he's changed you, He's hit you and now he let's his mother bully you?" Fez: "I can take it Spho-" Me: "Well you shouldn't-" Fez: "That's easy for you to say!! You have men lining up to date you. I don't!!" Me: "Okay. That's not fair." Fez: "I'm sorry. I'm fine. I don't want you feeling sorry for me or telling me to leave him. Gio will change." Me: "Abusers don't change." Fez: "I'M NOT BEING ABUSED." He said firmly. Me: "Okay." I backed down. I didn't want to fight with my only friend. Also, I didn't know how to help him. Me: "How's Boogie? He's started school?" Fez: "Oh. My. Gosh! I need to show you pics of his first day. Look. With his little lunchbox next to him. He's so cute!" Me: "He really is. I'm impressed." Fez: "And he made a friend. Neno. Here they are." Me: "Totes adorbs. Look at his cute necklace. You spoil him too much." Fez: "Blame his dad." We laughed the early afternoon away...

It was almost 3pm, I was home baking cookies for Chris when he comes back then we can have our garden date. Lakhe will hold on to Lam for a few more hours. Sibuh was fetching Chris from school and they'd stopped at his restaurant for some snacks. Lukhanyo walked in almost out of breath, he held my waist, swooping me in a kiss. Luks: "Sorry I'm late. Had to move up a meeting. Lam's class took a little longer. Now I have to be at home for Lubambo's piano lesson. After that, Luhle's recital." Me: "Breath." Luks: "I miss you so much." He kissed me again. Me: "I miss you too." I turned around to remove the cookies from the oven and let them cool off. Luks: "What's wrong?" Me: "You told me you were abusive to your ex wife during your marriage." I could see him cringe when he stepped away silently. Luks: "I did. And I'm no longer that person." Me: "Why are you friends with an abuser if you've changed?" Luks: "What friend?" Me: "Giovanni." Luks: "Giovanni is not my friend, he's my business partner and I have no knowledge of his personal life! Why would you accuse me of something like that?" Me: "He's beating Fez." Luks: "But how was I suppose to know that?" Me: "My friend is miserable because of him!" Luks: "Why is he still with him then?" Me: "He has no one else interested in him and he doesn't want to be alone. Apparently the dating pool for him is not that big. Now you need to halt your friend Lukhanyo. If I have to do it, he'll lose his hands. Tell him to stop hitting my friend." He just stared at me. Me: "Do you want some biscuits? How was gym?" Luks: "weird. Why do babies need to gym?" Me: "It keeps him busy. Did he cry?" Luks: "Not once. He was an angel. Now can you kiss me please?" I sighed. Luks: "What's stressing you?" I unbuttoned his shirt. Me: "You smell so good." Luks: "Oh yeah?" I nodded. Our faces so close but not touching. Me: "I want you." Luks:

"Not more than I want you, that's for sure. I just want it to be perfect and special. You're not just anyone to me." Me: "It's been wee-" He bit my lower lips. Luks: "You know I'd have your legs behind your head. Don't rush it." I went moist in a second. Luks: "You want me to sing in your ear while I stroke?" Me: "Now.." I breathed, pulling him closer. Luks: "Got to be patient..." Me: "No." I pulled his head down and kissed him again. His hands on my thigh. I parted my legs a bit. I was wearing a short summer dress. Luks: "Shhh..." I was breathing heavily, getting hotter by the second. Luks: "Now baby girl there ain't nothing more that I can say.. you know by now I want it more than anything... if I walk away and just let you leave, you'll be stuck in my head like a melody." He sang. Me: "No..." I faltered. His fingers traced my lace underwear. Luks: "So wet.." he breathed. I sucked on his lips. His finger sliding slowly into my panty, softly touching the clit. My breath hitched. Luks: "There she is..." he further slipped his finger down to my drenched entrance. Luks: "Turn around." His voice deep and dark. I quickly turned around, my back to him. He resumed with his left hand in my underwear. I could feel him rock hard on my ass. His breathing, in my left ear. Luks: "Making love to you is the only thing that's on my mind... always... I always want to fuck you." He whispered. His middle finger slipped inside me, slowly rubbed my inside. I was dripping on his hand. Me: "Don't stop..." I moaned. His second finger came in, the heel of his palm gently rubbing against my clit as he stroked in and out. Me: "Lukhanyo..." I was almost there. He pulled out his wet fingers, using them to circulate my clit again. Me: "Almost there baby.." he stopped and laced kisses on my neck. Me: "Please..." His hand started moving again, picking up a faster pace. I held on the counter. My orgasm building up. Me: "Fuck..." I breathed. His finger slipped inside again, palm rubbing on my clit, humping me gently, then faster. I almost exploded with a shivering climax, holding his hand tight between my thighs. My pussy throbbing, vibrating on his hand. I felt so light and tingly. He pulled his hand out. Luks: "How do you feel?" Me: "So good. Out of breath. That was incredible." Luks: "Good. Now I have to go..." Me: "You can't... not until I return the favor." Luks: "Hmm... Don't tempt me." I stroked his groin. Luks: "Fuck. Baby, no... I'm late." Me: "Fine then. But I can't wait to have you in my mouth." He kissed my lips. A car parked outside. Me: "Wash your hands sir. Chris is here." He went to the bathroom and thoroughly washed his hands. I also had to go wipe and change. Quickly running to my bathroom for wet wipes and another panty before Chris comes barging in. I finished up in time. Luks: "I'll call you." He kissed my lips again. Chris: "Mummy!!!" He came running. Me: "Hey angel!" I washed my hands. Chris: "Hello Tata Luks. You didn't button your shirt all the way up." Luks: "Oh, thanks for that Chris. I have to get going." He dashed out. Chris: "Where is he going? Did I offend him?" Me: "No baby. His son has a piano lesson." Chris:

"Okay did daddy bring my bicycle?" Me: "Not yet. But we can have our garden date first." Chris: "Okay but remind him." Me: "I sure will honey." Chris: "Or we could go visit grandpa. Not grandpa black, we already saw him at my cupcake sale. I want to see grandpa Khaya. He doesn't come over anymore. Does he not like me anymore?" Me: "Of course he likes you, baby. He's just busy with work. He's a doctor." Chris: "Yeah but Dr Uncle Siyanda is also a doctor yet he always came over." Me: "You're right. We'll pay him a visit." Chris: "Now? I'll put on my new shoes!" Me: "No. Not now. Later. When he's back from work."

At 4pm, Lukhanyo was getting ready to leave his house. Lubby was dressing Lubambo. Lukhanyo helping. Luks: "Everyone else ready?" Lutha: "Yes. Can we go? We're gonna be late and Luhle will get nervous if she doesn't see us." Lubb: "Lets Move." Soma drove the Range Rover; loading the kids in it. Lukhanyo drove the SUV Bentley; loading Lubby, Thulani and Soso. Luks: "Remind me why we gave the irresponsible twin my kids?" Soso: "I asked you twice before we left." A phone rang. Lubb: "Linkie bear." He answered. Lihle: "Where the hell are you guys!! The girls are panicking." Lubb: "We'll be there in 3 minutes with Lukhanyo's psychopath driving. Save me a seat in front. I charged both my iPads and camera. Everyone will be recording." Lihle: "No recordings allowed Lubby." Lubb: "I'm looking forward to hear them deny a disabled man of his wishes." Lihle: "You're not even- MXIM!" She hung up. Lukhanyo parked the car at school. Luks: "Soso, you got this. I need to go in." Lubb: "Why are you so jumpy? Relax, and get me out." Lukhanyo helped him. Soma parked next to him and everyone went in. Once seated, the principal greeted the parents and wished the participants well. The first duo, were performing together. Buhle and Babalo. Lubb: "My beautiful girls!!" He held his camera. After their two minute session, they left the stage. The principal announced the next act. "Luhle Mzinyathi." Everyone waited anxiously. Luhle stood in the audience next to the row of seats. Lubb: "You're supposed to be on stage, sweetie. We're waiting." Luhle: "I can't. I'm scared. Please help me." Lubb: "I would baby but my ankle is broken. Lukhanyo, get up there." Luks: "I love you mntanam but I'm not doing that." Luhle: "I knew you hated it." Luks: "I don't....Fine. I'll stand on the side and you can continue." Luhle: "I can't remember how." She sobbed. Lubb: "Lukhanyo!" Lihle: "What's going on???" She whispered. Luks: "My reputation is about to go down the drain." He stood up and carrying his daughter on stage. Luks: "Okay. First stop crying. You're a warrior." Luhle: "You're going to dance with me daddy?" Luks: "That's the contract I signed up for with God the day you were born. So yes. I'll always be there for you." Principal: "Are we ready???" Luks: "One second." He took off his

shoes. The song started in the background. "She was lost in so many different ways. Out in the darkness with no guide. I know the cost of a losing hand. Never thought that grace of God, oh I... I found heaven on earth. You are my last, my first. And then I hear this voice inside... Ave Maria..." it sang. The dance started on their tippy toes, swirling around, taking butterfly steps to the side, swaying and bowing with one foot forward. It was so beautiful, with not a single dry eye in the audience. After their two minute session, the rest of the ballet class joined in a group dance. Lukhanyo stepped aside behind the curtain to watch them finish. Luks: "You're doing great my angel." She smiled blowing him a kiss. He caught it and placed it on his heart....

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Chris couldn't stop talking about his grand dad and honestly I was just ready to take him there. Chris: "Mummy when is daddy bringing my Lammy and bicycle?" Me: "He said he'll be back soon baby. They'll be back by the time we come home. Remember we're not staying long at grandpa okay?" Chris: "Okay. That's fine." Sibu was taking a nap, I took his car keys and we drove quick to Khaya's house. His car was in front of the garage. Chris: "Look mama! I'm gonna borrow him my Mr Courage ne? In case he's lonely." Me: "That's so sweet of you my angel but what about you? Won't you miss Mr Courage?" Chris: "Yeah but I have Lammy bear. Besides, your child likes to pull my toy apart. I can't take it anymore." I laughed out loud. Me: "So basically, Mr Courage is on the run from Lam?" Chris: "He doesn't have a choice." We got out the car and walked to the door. Chris knocked first then pulled open the handle, pushing the door. Me: "Chris, you must wait for a response before-" Chris: "It's my grandpa's house mam-" He stopped in the middle of the kitchen staring at something. I jumped inside the house fearing what my child's innocent eyes have seen. What was I thinking bringing my child to a demon house? I picked up my son. Chris: "Mama. I thought you said granny was dead." Me: "She is." Chris: "Then who's that?" He pointed at the woman standing by the stove. I stared at her in disbelief. Gruesome looking demons, snakes, Satan; all of it I can take. Not the sight of my mother whom I grieved for months. Something inside me tore apart. My father appeared from the bathroom. Khaya: "Spho.." he said in a voice of regret. Khaya: "Spho, this is not what it looks like." I wanted to tell him exactly what it looked like. I wanted to tell him what it was inside me but I couldn't. I turned around and walked out. In the car, I was just shivering, staring at the steering wheel. I couldn't move. Me: "Christian call your father." My hands were on fire, my eyes bleeding. He spoke on the phone in the background and I barely heard what

he said. It was only 15 minutes later when he knocked on my window. Lakhe: "Spho? Open." I shook my head. Lakhe: "Yes you can. I know you can. Just clear your head. You have Chris in there with you. Please open." I unlocked the door. He opened it and pulled me out. Lakhe: "What happened?" Me: "She's there. With him..." Lakhe: "She? Who's she?" Me: "Mom." He looked at the house. Lakhe: "Okay. Let's go. Come. Sibü will come fetch his car. Come here, Chris." He let me in his car, then helped Chris in the back. Lakhe: "You hungry? I bet your favorite restaurant has a booking available." Me: "Not hungry." Lakhe: "Okay." He drove us home. Me: "He lied to me. Both of them. All of them. They lied." Lakhe: "I'm sorry about that." When we arrived home, I went straight to my bedroom and locked myself in. Chris: "Am I in trouble daddy?" Lakhe: "No. Why do think that?" Chris: "Mommy is upset because I asked her to take me to grandpa Khaya." Lakhe: "That's not why she's upset. You didn't do anything wrong. You're a good boy. You did great by calling me. Okay?" Chris: "Okay. Is she gonna be fine?" Lakhe: "She just needs to rest. How about you get some juice and a cookie then we can watch a movie." Chris walked to the kitchen. Sibü: "What happened." He stood in the passage, topless and barefoot, only wearing black trousers. Lakhe: "Uhm. I can't be sure." He whispered. Sibü: "Whispering is pointless, she can still hear you. Why is she upset?" Lakhe: "She said she's there. That's it. That her mom is there. I don't know if it's..." Chris: "Granny was there. I saw her." Sibü: "Your granny? Where?" Chris: "At Grandpa's house. She had eyes like Grandpa Black though." Sibü: "That can't be. So the woman we saw was her all along?" Lakhe: "What do you mean?" Sibü: "Months ago, when I came back, Spho and I went out to dinner. We saw her but we really weren't sure if it was her. We just left the place. How could she do that to her?" Lakhe: "I think I know." Sibü: "You think he woke her?" Lakhe: "It's possible. The body did go missing." Sibü: "I'll investigate this. I need to see Graham. Keep an eye on her." He walked back to his room.

Sibü stood at the church entrance a little after 6pm. The lights inside the building were on. He walked in and stood by the alter. Gray: "Don't even think about it." Sibü: "Pastor Graham. What a pleasant surprise." Gray: "You're in my church. What do you want?" Sibü: "You've been quite scarce lately, King-" Gray: "I am NOT a King." Sibü: "You were born a King." Gray: "And I am Not one now." Sibü: "Fine. You said Spho's mother died." Gray: "Because she did. Right here. I tried to save her but it was too late." Sibü: "Then how come Spho just saw her?" Gray: "That's impossible." Sibü: "You're saying your Queen is lying?" Gray: "No! But.... it can't be. I saw her die." Sibü: "What happens to Komander elites when they die? Miriam's body disappeared too, can I

expect to see her walking in the streets soon?" Gray: "Kadir is not supposed to wake people up from the dead! That's not how it's supposed to work!!" Sibü: "So he's not allowed, but he Can?" Gray: "You saw him do it with Sandile!" Sibü: "Sandile wasn't dead yet. Almost but not quite. Why is Spho's mother still alive? And why is she not visiting her daughter?" Gray: "Unless it's not her." Sibü: "You insist on speaking in riddles? Okay." He grabbed him and choked Graham to the ground.

Lakhe was cuddling Chris on the couch. Lakhe: "You hungry?" Chris: "Yeah." Lakhe: "So what do you wanna eat?" Chris: "Chicken." Lakhe: "Okay, you want me to cook chicken?" Chris: "You can't cook chicken daddy." Lakhe: "Says who?" Chris laughed. Chris: "Mommy cooks, not you." Lakhe: "Well I'll have you know, I'm a good cook." Chris: "I don't doubt that daddy but I think I want mommy's chicken." Lakhe: "Your mom is not okay right now." Chris: "Okay. We can Google it then. Can you follow a recipe?" Lakhe: "That I can do." Sibü walked in. Sibü: "Lakhe, can you take Chris for a few hours? Kadir is on his way." Lakhe: "Are you serious? Why the hell is he coming here?" Sibü: "We need to speak to Spho-" Lakhe: "I'm not letting him speak to her! He lied to her!!" Sibü: "Okay, I get that you're-" Lakhe: "No Sibulele!! Not this time. Kadir can't sweep in here and try to fix his messes! Why would he do something like this if he loved her?" Sibü: "He's a demon." Lakhe: "Good for him. He's not allowed in this house." Sibü: "I'm not happy about this eith-" Lakhe: "Then tell him to stay the hell away from her!!!" Sibü: "Damn man. Calm down." Lakhe: "You don't get to tell me to calm down Sibulele! You don't!! You weren't there when he broke us apart." I walked out of my room. Me: "I don't want him here. I've locked in the house." Sibü: "Need me to do anything?" Me: "Yeah. Keep him away from Lukhanyo." I held his hand, transferring into him. He couldn't feel it. It was numb, pouring into him. Sibü: "I'll do that." He walked out. Lakhe: "Not that I care but how sure are you that he will keep him safe?" Me: "Put a Komand spell on him. He won't disobey anything I said." Lakhe: "Smart." Me: "What did I hear about a chicken?" Lakhe: "I'll cook. You need to relax." Me: "I'm absolutely fine. Where's my baby?" Lakhe: "With Sandile and Liz. Apparently they wanted to practice. With my baby." Me: "That's cute." Lakhe: "Is it? I kinda feel urgh about it." I picked up Chris, he was munching on a biscuit. Me: "Why?" Lakhe: "He wanted to give some of his hotel shares to Liz." Me: "So? You gave them to me when we were together." Lakhe: "Because I trusted you and you were about to be my wife and the mother of my children. Sandile doesn't want to get married. He doesn't want children. I swear I think I saw a vasectomy appointment in his diary a few months ago. He doesn't want mistakes. He made it very clear." Me: "A whole vasectomy??

That's extreme." Lakhe: "Exactly. Sandile rarely falls in love but when he does, he wants everything to be perfect and gives it his all. Literally. But when he gets his heart broken, he loses a part of himself. I'm afraid, this time he might not have much to lean on emotionally." Me: "He has me." Lakhe: "Spho, I mean for himself. I can't let him lose everything." Me: "Oh no.. what did you do?" Lakhe: "Well, I kinda nudged someone with alot of money to play with to make him a offer." Me: "Lukhanyo?" Lakhe: "Euw no. His twin." Me: "What's the Euw for?" Lakhe: "Like I'd ask Lukhanyo for anything." Me: "Anyway, what you wearing on Saturday? You're gonna slaughter a whole cow huh?" Lakhe: "I am not. I'm just a guest. Just gonna put on some old pants and a shirt." Me: "You can't. You need to be in traditional attire." Lakhe: "I don't own anything traditional. Are you serious? I must wear traditional?" Me: "Yep." Lakhe: "I'll just ask Lubby." Me: "You really like Lubby, don't you?" Lakhe: "I don't but he's more tolerable than the thug. He's stiff Spho, he doesn't have a relaxed bone in his body. What were you thinking?" Me: "You're the stiff one. I'm surprised you even know the word relaxed. Lukhanyo is gentle, playful and just sweet." Lakhe: "I am relaxed." Me: "You're clenching your fists right now." Lakhe: "Do you blame me?" Me: "Jealous? Do you think your brother will sell to him though?" Lakhe: "That's why I'm taking him to the ceremony. I need them to like each other. Do you think they will?" Me: "Hard to say. They're both straight males." Lakhe: "I mean as friends. You're good at pairing people together. I just need them to be friends. Then business partners. Then I can relax." Me: "Are you and Lukhanyo friends?" Lakhe: "No." Me: "Then I'm not that good. It will happen naturally. Lubby and Sandile are alike. They like the same things, they're both crazy, they'll hit it right off. They're both walking in crutches currently so it's fate. They don't have a choice but to be friends." Lakhe: "That's true. Plus Sandile is quite likeable. He's a dream." I laughed. Me: "You? Call your brother a dream?" Lakhe: "What? He's a cool guy." Me: "You usually don't care." Lakhe: "I always care. My brother is my best friend." Me: "So Lukhanyo got to you obviously." Lakhe: "They've known each other for 8 years only. They met as adults. I grew up with mine. It's impossible to like someone that much. I mean I've lived with Sandile all my life, and we can't stand each other after two days." Me: "They're identical twins. They were connected in the womb way before earth. Besides, you're different people with different personalities. They're family orientated and you're more business orientated with a hint of family." Lakhe: "A hint? I want the whole damn kilogram Spho." Me: "Okay, How's your dad?" Lakhe: "Probably drunk. I'm taking him to rehab. I can't deal with that." Me: "That's a good decision." Lakhe: "A good decision would be his daughter in law giving him back the company he built." Me: "Not a chance." He smiled. Me: "You need to take care of your family Lakhe. I know it's a little annoying to always have to fix things but they're your family.

Do you think those twins are always that happy? No. They fix things as a family. Stop shutting yours out." Lakhe: "Fine. How do you want this chicken? Fried or grilled?" The person who wanted chicken was fast asleep on my shoulder. Me: "Take him. I'll make dinner and after that, you leave. I'm fine." Lakhe: "I'm not leaving until I'm sure you're fine. And you hold our child, I'll cook." Me: "You don't have to-" Lakhe: "No I don't. But I want to. And you can't chase me away." I shook my head and went to the lounge with Chris.

Sandile was at his place watching TV while Liz fussed over Lam. Liz: "He is so cute baby. Look at him!" Sands: "He really is. All Sobukwe men are handsome. Until nap time. You might want to give him a minute." Liz: "A minute to what? He's fine." Sands: "He's sleepy." Liz: "I'll put him to sleep." Sands: "Let him be Liz." Liz: "I'm trying to help." Sands: "Okay." She picked up the baby, cuddling him. Lam started wailing. Sandile increased the volume. Liz: "Could you not?!" Sands: "Told you to leave him alone." Liz: "Now what?" Sands: "Let him be." Liz: "But he's crying!!" Sands: "Yoh. Ndikyekile ke." Lam screamed. Liz: "Sandile!!" Sands: "What? You're the one that wanted a baby." She put Lam down and let him be. He couldn't stop screaming. Liz: "Maybe his diaper?" Sands: "His diaper is fine." Liz: "Can you do something!!" Sands: "Lam." The baby looked at him, sobbing. Sands: "Stop that right now. Come here. Iza ku tanci?" The baby crawled to him. Sands: "What is this lady trying to do? Coddle you? Tell her you're not a teddy bear wena. You're Titty man." He placed him on his chest. Sands: "Watch the show and keep quiet." Liz: "That's it?" Sands: "Don't take it personally. Lam is sweet but he doesn't joke around with his sleep. Only myself, and his parents can put him down." Liz: "I just want to be good at this." Sands: "Why? You're good with Boogie. That's enough." Liz: "Boogie is kind of a dog Sandile." Sands: "You really want a baby?" Liz: "Yes." Sands: "Okay." Liz: "Okay means what?" Sands: "Okay means okay. Just one." Liz: "Really baby???" Sands: "Don't scream plea-" She squealed. Sands: "Jesus." Liz: "You're gonna make the greatest dad." Sands: "Nope. Masilakhe is the greater dad here. I am not even looking to compete." Liz: "You'll make a great dad. I trust you. I'm so excited baby!! Should I stop the contraceptives now? Can I???" Sands: "Breath. No, you can't. We need to plan this out first. A baby is a lifelong responsibility Liz. This is not a game." Liz: "Okay. I get it. So when?" Sands: "Just give me a minute to ease into the idea, then sort out my finances, get an appointment with the doctor and we're good to go. A year with a few months. Tops." Liz: "That's long." Sands: "No its not. Spho is about to have another baby. Lam is not even 1 yet. They'll need our help with the kids at times." Liz: "So we get more time with Lammy?" Sands: "And Chris." Liz: "Okay!!" She cuddled next to him. Liz: "Your brother is still mad at me?" Sands: "He's not

mad at you. He's just naturally like that to everyone." Liz: "When do I meet Spho?" Sands: "Anytime baby." Liz: "Maybe I should do a lunch. Then I can also get to know your brother? And I can bring my dad." Sands: "Why do you care about Lakhe liking you?" Liz: "I don't." Sands: "Your dad wants to meet him?" Liz: "Kind of." Sands: "He won't. Lakhe won't give him the chance of day." Liz: "Why?" Sands: "Your father rejected Spho's business proposal." Liz: "I thought they were divorced." Sands: "He loves her. And that's the end of it." Liz: "Okay." Sands: "I'm sorry." Liz: "Don't be. My dad did act like a douche. Well, he always does anyway. I don't really blame Lakhe. Besides, Spho would have hated working for him." Sands: "Then why are you still working for him?" Liz: "What else can I do Sandile? I've only ever worked for him. I don't think he'll allow me in another company since he's grooming me to take over his. Not that I'll make any major decisions until he dies. I'm just a face." Sands: "Look, I'm not about to meddle in your family affairs but if you're unhappy, Liz, you don't have to stay there. There is so much opportunity out there for you. Just avail yourself to it." Liz: "I guess... look he's sleeping." Sands: "Yeah..." he looked at the baby. Liz: "Let me take him to bed." Sands: "Leave him." Liz: "He's probably unco-" Sands: "You don't listen. Lam will scream this entire building to the ground. Let him be." Liz: "Why is he so aggressive?" Sands: "He's like his dad when it comes to sleeping. Do not disturb. At all." Liz: "But he's so cute." Sands: "He really is." His phone rang. Sands: "Check who that is for me." Liz grabbed his phone from the table. Liz: "Your brother." She gave it to him. Sands: "Mr Sobukwe." Lakhe: "Bring me my son." Sands: "He's asleep." Lakhe: "The minute he wakes up. Don't forget to come home. Spho has been asking for you. You sleep out now?" Sands: "I sleep at my house." Lakhe: "Yeah well. You need to come home. Siya will be here at 8pm to check your leg and clean your wound." Sands: "Yoh hayi bhuti. That thing hurts." Lakhe: "Fine then. We'll just let your leg fall off!" Sands: "Geez. I'll be there." Lakhe: "Sibu will come fetch you." Sands: "I'm grown, I can get there myself. Liz will drive." Lakhe: "Sibu is coming to fetch you." He hung up. Liz: "Guess I'll get your things ready then." She walked to their room. Sands: "Baby.." Liz: "It's fine Sandile. You should be with your family." Sands: "I'll speak to him." Liz: "Dont." Sands: "I will. You're my girlfriend. I love you. He will get used to it and will accept you. Uyandiva Liz?" Liz: "Huh?" Sands: "I'm the one that loves you. Whatever anyone else thinks shouldn't even be your concern. I'm your man." Liz: "I know that Sandile. Just that it feels like sometimes everyone is against our relationship. My dad doesn't like you, your brother doesn't like me." Sands: "Well, Fuck them."

Lukhanyo drove his children to the restaurant he'd booked earlier. Once sitting down on the reserved table, the rest of the family arrived. Thulz: "You did quite well there. You're a natural Ta Luks." Luks: "Wanna keep those teeth in your mouth?" They laughed. Lihle: "I'm proud of you. You were great." Luks: "Thank you. Since everyone is here already, there's a few things I'd like to discuss." Soma: "Jesus, Ta Luks can we get a drink first?" Luks: "No you can't. Chuma and Junior have their first career day on Monday. Chumani wants to be a doctor." He stared at Remy(Lihle's boyfriend) from across the table. Luks: "Will you assist?" Remy: "I'd be happy to. I think I have a pair of scrubs that will fit him." Luks: "And teach him the content he needs?" Remy: "Will do." Luks: "Good. Junior?" Jun: "A designer daddy." Luks: "What do designers wear Junior?" Juni: "I was hoping Spho could help me." Luks: "Spho is not a designer." Juni: "I know. I want her to be my model." Lubb: "Damn.." he mumbled. Lihle: "Who's Spho?" Lihle: "Daddy's girlfriend." Lihle: "Lubby has a girlfriend??" Lutha: "Nope. Other Lubby." Luks: "Ungandiqheli kwedin. I'm not your age." Lutha: "Sorry Tata." Lihle: "You have a girlfriend?" Remy: "You didn't notice he isn't paying attention to you tonight?" Lubb: "Salt Remy, Salt." Lihle: "He never pays attention to me." Remy: "When do we meet her Lukhanyo?" Luks: "Anyway, Junior how about Lubby works as your model. He's not going to work Monday and he loves fashion almost as much as you." Juni: "He's temporarily disabled dad. I prefer Spho. It is known to be a challenge being able to dress a pregnant woman stylishly. She can pull it off. I need her. Ask her please?" Lihle: "Pregnant??" Juni: "Yes mummy. 7 months." Remy: "WOW. I mean I knew you were deep..." Luks: "What happens in my private life is not any of your business. Any of you. Lubby, stop whispering in Junior's ear, you're not taking him to her again." Lubb: "I was just saying I like his shoes tonight. Damn." Lihle: "Wait... is Spho the person you keep drawing at night?" Juni: "Yes! Isn't she beautiful?" Lihle: "Kind of creepy that you obsess about a person you barely know until you can't sleep Junior." Luks: "It's just a drawing. And he's done now. Right?" Jun: "Yes! I can't wait till she sees it." Lubb: "I want to buy it for Bafo as a birthday gift." Remy: "Spho... That name sounds so familiar." Luks: "No it doesn't. You already have Lihle. Calm down." Thulani hid his face laughing. Lihle: "Seriously?" Remy: "Uncalled for." Lihle: "When do we meet her Ta Luks?" Luks: "Sunday." Lubb: "What's happening Sunday?" Luks: "We have a braai. We introducing the kids to each other. She has two." Remy: "This should be fun." Lubb: "Yes, you're invited Remy. God, Lukhanyo why do you have to do this to him?" Luks: "I'll send the address as soon as Lakhe confirms." Thulz: "You're friends with him now?" Luks: "No." Soma: "I saw you carrying a baby, walking with him. Who exactly are you dating, him or his ex?" Luks: "Why were you following me?" Lubb: "You ran out the house like you're on fire. I told him to." Remy: "I knew her name sounded familiar! She

was married to Sobukwe? Nobody was allowed in his room after those burns. The entire floor closed off. It was tragic." Lihle: "How do you know him?" Remy: "It was all over the news. They're divorced?" Luks: "Yes." He drank his juice. Soma: "And you're friends with him?" Lubb: "Friends is an understatement. They text almost everyday. He spent all morning with him." Luks: "I attended ONE baby class and went to work Lubabalo." Lihle: "I'm confused. So you can attend baby classes with your girlfriend's ex but barely acknowledge Remy?" Luks: "I acknowledge him." Lihle: "You treat him like a second class citizen!" Luks: "Am I supposed to be his best friend?" Lihle: "You seem to be Lukhe's best friend though." Luks: "It's Lakhe. And we're not friends. Spho is pregnant. The last thing I want to do is stress her. She needs to be comfortable and helping Lakhe with the baby while she relaxes makes her happy. End of discussion." Lubb: "So these lamb chops seem like a good choice. Might want to pair this with some red Bordeaux." Luks: "You're not drinking." Lubb: "Lukhanyo, I will fight you to the grave. Do not test me." Luks: "You're not drinking Lubabal-" Lihle: "Why do you have to be such a bully? Or do you select the people you want to be good for? We're just not good enough for your reformed side?" Remy: "Babe-" Lihle: "No Remy! I'm tired of this. This pretend game we're playing where Lukhanyo is the ring leader and we follow what he says." Luks: "We're not gonna do this in front of the kids." Lihle: "The kids KNOW. Your new family doesn't. WE know you. And you've bullied us enough Lukhanyo. Let's go Remy." Luks: "And where do you think you're going? Did you suddenly forget we're having dinner to congratulate our children? Why do you have to bring your insecurities to the table when we're about to eat?" Remy: "Now that I'm not going to listen to-" Luks: "I don't care what you want to listen to. You will sit, Eat and sort your problems out when you get home. Do you not care about your kids?" Lihle: "WOW." Luks: "Thought as much." He flipped threw the menu. Luks: "Who's ready to order?"

I was curled up in the sofa with Chris when Siyanda arrived. Siya: "Hey." Me: "Hey." Lakhe: "Hi." Siya sat on the opposite couch. Lakhe: "You hungry? I'm about to dish up." Siya looked at me. Me: "He's talking to you." Siya: "Why?" Lakhe: "Because you're a guest. Do you want to eat or not?" Siya: "No thank you. I just had dinner. Thanks. Where's Sandile?" Me: "Surely on his way. Sibu went to fetch him." Siya: "Cool." We sat quietly for a while. Siya: "So how's the baby?" Me: "Doing great. He kicks alot more often now." Lakhe: "I didn't know that. How come you didn't tell me?" Me: "I think I did." Lakhe: "No you didn't. You just told me he kicked you and that's it. Didn't say it happened often. Siya, you want some juice?" Siya: "Why is he so nice?" He whispered. I shrugged. Siya: "Just water please." Lakhe brought the water. Sandile walked

in on his crutches. Sibü behind him with Lam in his arm. Me: "Let me go and bath my babies while you guys get to it." I took Lam and Chris to the bedroom closing the door behind me. Lakhe: "Where do I help?" Siya: "Okay, you're making me nervous. What's going on?" Lakhe sat down. Lakhe: "I'm nervous." He spoke in a low tone. Sibü: "Why?" Lakhe: "Spho says, she saw her mother. As in alive. In her father's house. And Chris confirms this. I'm not sure what this means but I didn't have the strength to go and check. I had to make a decision on either helping Spho or going to confront what they saw. I chickened out and chose the easier route. I feel like a coward." Sibü: "When you arrived here, Spho was indescribably upset. Chicken out is not the word I'd like to hear. That could not have been the easiest route. You managed to diffuse the situation. There's nothing to be nervous about. You're nowhere near a coward." Siya: "Spho's mother is dead. That's what Graham said when Sandile and I took her there. She was dead." Lakhe: "Siya are you sure?" Siya: "I was a demon before. When I walked into the house, she was hanging by a thread. She couldn't have survived that attack..." Lakhe: "Unless?" Siya: "I can't say. I'm not allowed to reveal any of the Komander sworn secrets." Lakhe: "Sibü? You're under oath too?" Sibü: "No. But Graham can explain it better." Sands: "Graham isn't here now, is he?" Sibü: "Remember the banging sound you were hearing when I was driving home?" Sands: "Oh Mans. You locked him in the boot?" Sibü: "You want to hear this or not?"

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Sibü let Graham out of the boot. Gray: "What the hell man!!" Sibü: "Relax. Keep walking." Gray: "What are you trying to do!!" Sibü: "Spho doesn't know about your little secret. She won't see you." He pushed him inside. Sibü: "Yet." Sands: "Finally." Gray: "Good evening." Siya: "He put you in a boot? Sibulele why would you do that?" Sibü: "He was refusing to come with me. I had to make a decision and Sandile needed to be picked up. Why is this now my fault? If Graham hadn't been a hard head he would've gotten in the passenger seat and saved us the fuss. Sit." Lakhe: "Graham. You said Spho's mother is dead." Gray: "Because she is." Lakhe: "She saw her." Gray: "Spho can see things ordinary human beings can't. Maybe she just saw an image of her mom's spirit because she died in Khaya's house." They stared at him. Lakhe: "See, I didn't tell you where she saw her." Gray: "Uhm... I just assumed." Siya: "What do you know Graham?" Gray: "I don't know anything. I swear." Lakhe: "Graham." He warned. Gray: "I really just gues-" Sibü held his neck. Sibü: "Spit the truth or lose your tongue." He let go. Graham massaged his neck. Siya: "TALK." He hissed. Gray: "Kadir..." he choked. Lakhe: "What about

him?" Gray: "He has duplicates. When you join his...group, as an elite. He cuts a piece of your flesh, and drains some of your blood." Lakhe: "So he doesn't resurrect the elites, he duplicates them?" Gray: "Nobody can resurrect a dead body except God. Kadir only duplicates. He can create you in another person who is still alive. That's only if you're dead. The new person can do everything and anything you do, even love and hate the same people you did." Sands: "Just when you thought he doesn't get deeper." Lakhe: "He sent my blood and flesh back to me." Gray: "Only as a warning. That's not his only samples of you." He looked at Siyanda. Gray: "He still has you." Siya: "You live with me Graham. All this time, you didn't even bother to tell me this??" Gray: "What purpose would it do? You can't get it back." Sands: "Wait, so Graham can talk about this and you guys can't. Why is that? Isn't this a Komander secret? How does he know about it? Something smells anchovies." Lakhe looked at Graham. Lakhe: "How do you know about it." Graham looked at Sibulele. Sibulele: "Time to go." He grabbed him and pulled him out the house, driving off with him. Sands: "Did I say something wrong?" The bedroom door opened. "Anyone still home? Somebody bring me Lam's teething toy." Lakhe: "Get to work." He took the toy to Spho. Siya started on Sandile's leg. Sands: "Do you think Graham is hiding something?" Siya: "Yes and no. I don't know anymore. Maybe he knows all of this because he has visions and studies alot about this demon. But there's unexplainable loopholes in his story. Things that no ordinary human know. No matter how much they study it." He tied up on Sandile's thigh. Sands: "Why do you need to make another incision again!!" Siya: "It's to check the poison is really out. There might be excess left behind. I want to make sure it doesn't manifest and spread through your body. Sit still." He sterilized his equipment. Sands: "What if Graham is working with Kadir?" Siya: "Not possible. They can't stand each other." Sands: "You're feeling different about him now. Are you mad?" Siya: "I'm not mad. Just disappointed. I just wish he didn't bother to tell me at all. Now I'm gonna spend the rest of my life worrying about me being duplicated in an unsuspecting innocent human and turned into a demon again." Sands: "So what do you wanna do?" Siya: "I don't know yet." He made two incisions on the leg. Siya: "Does that hurt?" Sands: "Nothing I can't handle." A bit of blood oozed out the openings with a grayish puss-like substance. Sands: "That's poison?" Siya: "Excess of it. It's not entirely harmful short term but the longer it stays in your body the more poisonous it becomes." Sands: "So remove it!!" Siya: "That's what I'm trying to do but you gonna have to stay still Sandile." Sands: "Fine." Siya: "Should I call Lakhe to hold you down?" Sands: "No. I can take it." Siya: "Sure?" He prepared the needle. Sandile closed his eyes. Sands: "Sure."

Lubby and Lukhanyo arrived home that evening. The kids had left with their mother. Lubb: "You did act like a piece of shit tonight." Luks: "Really? So storming off before dinner in public is something I should've let slide?" Lubb: "You could have been a little polite. Haibo Bafo. You blatantly ignore Remy every single time and when you're called out on it, you're rude to him. What did he do to you?" Luks: "I don't like him." Lubb: "Do you think Masilakhe likes you yena? Because he doesn't. At all. But he tolerates you and speaks to you properly because he wants what's best for the mother of his children." Luks: "So I don't want the best for Lihle?" Lubb: "Well... apart from the fact you kill every man that tries to date her, and you've kept this one alive but you're still mean to him, No. No you don't want what's best for her. It upsets her." Luks: "You don't like him as much as I don't. I don't know why you're his advocate." He pulled out whiskey, pouring it in a glass. Lubb: "I don't like him but I love her, She needs to be happy Lukhanyo!" Lukhanyo poured a drink ignoring him. Lubb: "I'm sorry." Luks: "You gonna apologize every time you tell me how you feel about her??" Lubb: "I need to video call Luyanda and his mom. Check if their flight was fine." He walked to the bedroom balancing on his crutches. Lukhanyo sat in his lounge with the glass in his hand. His phone lit up with a message from Spho. Photo of Lam in his penguin pajamas captioned: "In case you need to smile." He responded: "I love you." Spho: "I love you too." He got out his seat and walked to the bedroom. Lubby stared at him. Luks: "Want a drink?" Lubb: "Am I allowed?" Lukhanyo gave him the whiskey. Luks: "I may have been acting a bit like a douche." Lubb: "a bit?" Luks: "Okay alot. And I hate that you all think it's because I met Spho. It's not. I never thought I'd get over Lihle and maybe I'm not entirely over her but a day goes by without thinking about her now. Even when I saw Remy today, I didn't want to punch him. I actually didn't care. There's no manual but I guess I'm going about it the wrong way." Lubb: "Big of you to admit you're wrong. You need to apologize to Remy. The guy is helping raise your kids." Luks: "Fine whatever." He took a sip. Luks: "You still love her. Why." Lubb: "We're not gonna do this." Luks: "We've never really spoken about it. You always had to protect my feelings. I don't understand... after everything, you still love her." Lubb: "I don't want to talk about this." Luks: "I do." Lubb: "Mxim." He threw the alcohol aside and took out his laptop. Luks: "I know you hate me. The love that you have for me is mixed with hate because she gave me another chance to try and forget about you." Lubb: "Get out." Luks: "Lubabalo I'm trying to apologize. I don't know anymore. Whether she loved us both. I just don't know. But she was ready to forget her whole life and family just for you." Lubb: "JUST GET THE FUCK OUT!!! GET OOOUUUTTT!!!!" He screamed. The laptop came flying and

smashed into pieces as soon as it connected with the wall. Lubby: "GET." He breathed. Lukhanyo walked out.

Within half an hour he walked into his father's house. An AK47 hanging on his left hand. Zakes: "Uh-oh. Now what happened?" He pulled the gun from him. Zakes: "What did he do." Luks: "I need a mission." Zakes: "What you need to do is calm down and tell me what's going on." Luks: "Nothing. I just need to distract my mind." Zakes: "Last time you looked like this, Mamngwevu had dumped you. Did the new lady leave you?" Luks: "Tata." He warned. Zakes: "Fine. We're expecting new merch. They delivering in two hours. Hey, you're friends with that Sobukwe boy? Tell him I need two of his ships." Luks: "I'll buy you a ship." Zakes: "No, I want his ones. They come recognized, and have workers already. Our new clients don't want to do business with a high risk. And new ships will take too long." Luks: "I'll make a plan. What you need ships for?" Zakes: "I'm expanding outside SA. It's been 15 years already." Luks: "As long as you're not thinking of trafficking human beings Tata." Zakes: "Jesus Christ, am I that cruel?" Luks: "Only God knows. What we bringing in?" Zakes: "Best you not know." Luks: "Tata." Zakhe: "I'm serious. Leave it alone. I just need a storage for a truck." Luks: "I have a building in mind. It has underground parking. Super secure and the owner is probably out the game." Zakes: "It's not gonna cause trouble?" Luks: "Hmm. No." Zakes: "Fine. Let's go." They collected their weapons and drove to the meeting point. Zakes: "Now you want to tell me what's going on." Luks: "Want advice." Zakes: "You came to the wrong man." Luks: "He's the only one I know that had a twin that looked like him." Zakes: "This man did not like his twin. They were nothing alike." Luks: "Then you're the right man to talk to." Zakes: "Okay. I can't get out of this conversation by pretending to be busy. Talk." Luks: "Everytime I try to ask Lubby about Lihle he explodes. He doesn't want to acknowledge their relationship ever happened. Like he's hiding it. I've tried to talk about it but he just.... has a meltdown." Zakes: "He was in love with her. And you, have a murderous reputation. Why are you trying to talk about this?" Luks: "Because I'm trying to get over it. I'm trying to move past it but if he's going to apologize everytime he expresses how he feels and then I try to talk about it, and then he snaps. I don't know anymore." Zakes: "Just leave it alone Lukhanyo. You've all moved on. This family has gone through enough." Luks: "He hasn't moved on. Tata, I don't want to lose my brother. He's falling apart. How do I help him?" Zakes: "Your brother needs an exorcism." He parked the car. Zakes: "Try and drive like a human being today. Lukhanyo, I'm not trying to be mean but it's best that neither of you are with uMamngwevu. She loves both of you. Whoever she's with is bound to hurt the other. It's proper like this. Lubby will

find happiness again, he'll fall in love. Just let him be. Once he's ready. He'll reach out." They got out the car. The truck arrived. Zakes greeted the driver and opened the truck. 5 boxes inside. Zakes: "How much?" Driver: "R8 million." Zakes: "In the car boot." They exchanged keys. Lukhanyo was in the driving seat of the truck to check any tags. Zakes: "Ready to go?" He climbed in. Luks: "Keys?" Zakes handed them over. Luks: "Five boxes for R8 million? That can't be fire arms." He drove down off. Zakes: "They're not."

The next morning I got Chris ready for school. Sandile and Lam were in the lounge watching TV. Chris was quiet today unlike him. Me: "What's wrong sweetie?" Chris: "Nothing mama." Me: "Come on. Talk to me. What's going on?" Chris: "Well... yesterday you were upset at Granny. Why?" Me: "They lied to me." Chris: "Didn't they say sorry?" Me: "No, they didn't." Chris: "So you can't forgive them?" Me: "No. Why is this bothering you?" He looked at the floor. Chris: "Mummy, if grandpa brings another child, are you going to take him to live with us too? Like me?" Me: "No. I'm not taking another child Chrissie. I love you. You're my first. Okay?" He nodded. Me: "What's wrong?" Chris: "I had a bad dream mummy. That there was another child in grandpa's house. A little girl with afro and big eyes. She had blue eyes mama. Her eyes were scary. And her teeth were crooked." Me: "But it's just a dream baby. Nothing to worry about. I certainly won't take another child. You, Lammy and this one in my belly are all I need." Chris: "What happens when you marry Tata Luks? Are you gonna take another baby?" Me: "Uhm..." Lakhe: "I'm here." He yelled from the kitchen. Me: "We'll continue this conversation in the evening okay? I love you Chris. Ndiyakthanda mntanam." Chris: "I love you too mummy." He ran to his father. Now I needed to get Lam ready. Lakhe: "Hey." Me: "Hey." I took out the baby's clothes. Lakhe: "You okay?" Me: "I'm fine. Just distracted." Lakhe: "Okay.. I planned a family dinner for us. If it's okay with you." Me: "Your parents despise me." Lakhe: "Without them. Just me, you and the kids. I thought it would be nice that they are with us together formally at least once a week." I hugged him. Lakhe: "Twice a week?" Me: "Don't push it. This is sweet of you. Thank you. I feel like I'm failing Chris." Lakhe: "I got him. Don't worry. What's wrong?" Me: "Nothing. I'm just anxious. Not something I'm used to." Lakhe: "You just need to relax. Okay? You're already doing great. Amazing mom, great Boss, you're winning." Me: "Thanks Lakhe. I appreciate that." Lakhe: "Okay great. So get ready for tonight. I want everybody dressed up by 6." Me: "I'll try my best." I went to fetch Lam from Sandile. Me: "What will you be doing today?" Sands: "I've got maintenance over at the hotel going over everything. I wanted to change a few things so we're gonna have a meeting about how much it will cost me and all that." Lakhe hid his smile fixing Chris'

shirt. Me: "That's great. Proud of you." Sands: "Awww." He blushed. Me: "Lakhe are you driving him?" Lakhe: "He better be in that car within 2 minutes-" Sands: "I am temporarily disabled, have a heart!!" Lakhe's phone beeped. Sandile's too. They both checked it then looked at each other. Lakhe: "I'll see you later. Sandile let's go." He carried Chris to the car. Sandile following swiftly behind on his crutches. Sibú was still asleep. He arrived this morning so I was expecting him to be sleeping throughout the day. I went to bath Lam and dressed him up quickly. Sibú: "Where's everyone?" He was looking at his phone, fully dressed. Me: "I thought you'd be sleeping! You arrived this morning." Sibú: "Where's Lakhe? Sandile?" Me: "They left about 15 minutes ago to drop Chris off and go to work." He had his phone on his ear. Sibú: "I just got the message. When? I'll be there in 10 minutes." He hung up and dashed out the house. Me: "Well goodbye I guess." Why were they all suddenly running away?

Masilakhe, Sandile, Sibú, Sergio and the rest of the team stood in the underground parking lot of the warehouse staring at the mysterious truck. Lakhe: "Who in the fuck." Sands: "Tried opening this shit? Who parked this here?" Serge: "When I got here this morning it was here." Lakhe: "Where is the footage!!" Serge: "It was cut off." Lakhe kicked the door, screaming. Lakhe: "Someone is trying to set me up. What the fuck is this!!!" Sibú: "Calm down. I'm sure we can open this. Where are the tools?" Lakhe stared at Sergio who sprung into action to fetch the tools. Sands: "How the fuck did they gain entry? Bull, do you know anything about this?" Bull: "No. I don't. I don't even have entry to this place." Lakhe: "Who does." Sands: "You, me, Sibú and Serge. Since it wasn't me..." he looked at Sibú. Sibú: "Was with Graham and went to work, went home with Kamva after that." Sergio dragged the toolbox to Lakhe. Lakhe: "Was it you?" He sneered. Serge: "No sir." He shivered. Lakhe grabbed the largest crowbar. Lakhe: "Stand back." Sibú held on to the door to help. The others stood back. "What the fuck do you think you're doing to my truck." Lukhanyo walked in. Lakhe: "WHAT THE FUCK!!! HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE!!!" Sibú: "Hey!! Calm down!" He grabbed the tool from him. Luks: "Same way you stole my private jet." Lakhe marched to him. Lukhanyo pulled out his gun. Luks: "I don't mind shooting you. In fact it'll give me pleasure." Lakhe grabbed his neck. Lakhe: "You took my woman. Try to take my kids, Now.. you want to take my warehouse? That's where I draw the line. Fucking shoot me and I'll tear your face off." He spat. Luks: "Calm down Lakhe. You'll give yourself a stroke. It's just a truck." Lakhe punched him in the face. Lakhe: "Just a truck?! JUST A TRUCK!!! You invaded my fucking privacy!!!" Lukhanyo threw the gun on the floor and punched him back. Sands: "Hey!! Sibulele do

something!!" Sibú: "Let them fight it out." Sandile dropped his crutches and hopped over to the two fighting, pulling them apart. Sergio helped him. Sands: "What the hell!!" Lakhe: "Take your filthy truck and get the fuck out of here!!! You are NOT going to conduct criminal business on my property!!" Luks: "You USE this property for criminal business. Don't act shy here. This is where you kill People." Lakhe: "Lukhanyo I swear-" Luks: "What?? What you swear? Fucking pussy." Lakhe: "I will fucking KILL YOU." Luks: "I'm fasting for that day. I will eat you alive." Sands: "What the fuck is wrong with you two? Can't you get over yourselves-" Lakhe: "Look at what he did Sandile!! How did he get in here?? What the fuck is in this truck!! Look at the wheels, that's blood dripping there! There are dead people in there!!! He's a fucking psychopath!!" Sands: "This coming from a guy who saws heads off?" Lakhe glared at him. Lukhanyo pushed himself loose and stared under the truck in a panic. Luks: "Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. No!!" Lakhe: "Don't even pretend!!!" Luks: "SHUT UP!!!!" He screamed dialing a number. Luks: "Oh shit. Hello? Fondin Uphi?? Now damn it!! Now!!" He looked at the phone. Luks: "Hello??" Lakhe: "What the hell is going on?" Lukhanyo stared at him. Luks: "It has a tracker." Lakhe: "No. NO. LUKHANYO MZINYAAATTH!!!!!!!!!" Luks: "Screaming at me won't help you!!" Lakhe: "You stole someone's truck and came to park it in my damn warehouse!!" Luks: "I BOUGHT IT." Lakhe: "TAKE IT BACK!!!" Sibú started searching the truck with Sergio. Lakhe: "Does this door open? What's in here?" Luks: "The wheels. Check the wheels." Lakhe: "WHAT IS IN HERE-" Luks: "I don't fucking know!!" Sibú: "Got it!!" Luks: "There has to be more than one." They searched again. Lakhe was fuming. Sands: "Lets go." He whispered. Lakhe: "What?" Sands: "This is not your fight. You need to leave." Lakhe: "This is my warehouse Sandile. I'm not leaving. After this is done, I need to fight Lukhanyo without you interrupting because undiqhel i-poes." Lukhanyo looked at him. Luks: "Mxim vha." Sergio: "Got it. Should I leave with them?" Sibú: "You're not going anywhere." Lakhe: "Destroy those thing now!" Sibú: "This is their last known location. They'll trace it straight here. I'll redirect it. Stay off each other's throats. You have kids. Both of you." He walked out. Lakhe: "Get your filthy truck out of my warehouse." Luks: "Make me." Lakhe: "Lukhanyo." He warned. Luks: "Haibo Andifuni Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Fine. Have it your way." He stomped off. Lakhe: "Sandile!" He yelled while walking out. Sands: "You know he's gonna snitch on you right?" Luks: "He won't. He can't explain why he owns an empty warehouse in a sketchy part of town." He spat out bloody saliva. Sands: "You have a bruise the size of my hand on your face. Get that checked and cleaned. Spho should not even sniff any of this. And get this truck out of here." He walked out

I was late for work. Lam was being impossible as usual but this time he was joined by the Unborn kicking me relentlessly. I had to sit every few minutes and wait for them to calm down. Me: "Khayalam. Please baby. Put that down." Lam: "Dada!!" Me: "I know that but-" Lam: "Dada!!!" Me: "Lam. NO. Put it down!!" Lam: "Dada, mama! Dada!!" Me: "What?" I froze. Lam: "Dada." He looked at the door. Lakhe was standing there looking at him. Lam bounced up and down excitedly. Me: "Did you hear him?" Lakhe: "Calling me? Yeah." Me: "He said mama." He was focused on his son. Me: "You okay?" Lakhe: "I'm fine." Lam was taking a step toward him holding onto the table, finally he let go and took two steps on his own then fell. Lakhe: "Get up. You're almost there. Come on." Lam cried holding his hands up. Lakhe: "You're not gonna give up on me. Come. I'm waiting King. Get here." Still sobbing, the baby pushed himself up, bum in the air, he rose and took another step. Lakhe: "That's it. Closer." He took a step back. Me: "Hayi Lakhe!" Lakhe: "He needs to learn how to walk." He caught the baby and picked him up. Lakhe: "Hello." Lam was just out of breath and energy by then. Me: "Why did you come back?" Lakhe: "I missed my son." He stared at me. Something was bothering him. Me: "Is that a bruise on your face? Who hit you?" He looked at his child without responding. Me: "Masilakhe! Were you fighting with Sandile? What happened?" Lakhe: "I wasn't fighting with Sandile. I'm fine. Can I take him with me? I need a distraction." Me: "Not until you tell me what happened to your face." Lakhe: "I bumped it. I need to go." I gave him Lam's bag. Me: "You know you can tell me anything right?" Lakhe: "Yes but this isn't something. I'll see you tonight." He walked out. So at least Lam is taken care of. Now I need to find out what's wrong with the one in my tummy before he explodes. "He's ready to come out." Kadir said behind me. I literally boiled. Me: "You have some nerve. Showing up in my house." Kom: "I'm sorry. I know you saw her bu-" Me: "Get out." Kom: "It's not her. That's all I wanted to say." He disappeared.

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I was honestly just over this day quite earlier than I liked to admit. I wanted to fetch Chris and take him shopping. Before that I went to Lukhanyo's office. I needed to see him. I hadn't spoken to him since last night. I've never been to his office because he always comes to mine so I decided to bring him some lunch. Is he even in? Seemingly he's always out and about. Thulz: "Spho. Hey. What are you doing here?" He greeted me at the door by reception. Me: "Hi. I'm looking for Lukhanyo. You're Junior's dad right? How is he?" Thulz: "Fantastic. He finished your drawing. Can't stop talking about it and excited to show you." Me: "I would love to see it." Thulz: "I'll ask him then. Uhm.

Lukhanyo is in a meeting, come wait in his office." He held my hand carrying the lunch basket for me. So sweet. Mzinyathi men were really romantic. In the way to the office, we bumped into one of the other twins. I think Soso, because he wasn't as hostile to me as his brother was the day they left my house. Soso: "Spho. Hi." Me: "Hello." Soso: "What's going on?" He asked Thulani. Thulz: "Taking her to boss'mans office. He's in a meeting." Soma: "I'll take her." This was the hostile twin. He appeared from behind me, taking the basket from Thulani. Soma: "Follow me." He gave me his arm and I hooked my hand in it. Me: "Thank you Thulani. Lovely seeing you both." Soso: "You too. Soma, be nice." This psycho ignored him and just led me to the large office, closing the door behind us after we entered. It was gorgeous. The furniture inside it sleek and modern. Floor to ceiling glass window overlooking the city. I could almost imagine his halo when the sun was setting and he was sitting in his desk. I smiled to myself. My boyfriend's office. Soma was standing in the corner gawking at me quietly. Me: "Okay. We have a problem." Soma: "No we don't." Me: "You hate me. I can see it in your eyes." Soma: "I don't hate you Spho." Me: "Then why did you bring me here." Soma: "I'm loyal to my brother and he asked me to always look after you when he's not around. I plan to do that for as long as I can. The same as he does looking after my wife and family." I nodded. Me: "I know you don't like me ever since you saw what you saw. But I'm not half as bad as you." Soma: "I don't practice..." Me: "Witchcraft. Say it." He shrugged. Soma: "You said it." Me: "What if I told you, I can touch you and tell you your darkest secrets." Soma: "I call bullshit." Me: "What if I could touch you and you saw Skhura again? Your best friend." He was rigid. Soma: "How do you know Skhura?" I smiled. Me: "There's a lot I know. I'm a witch remember? Come here." He stood frozen in the same spot. Me: "Like I said, I'm not half as bad as you are Sonwabise." Soma: "My name is Somangaye." I laughed. I could feel him shivering from across the room. Me: "Are you scared? You shouldn't be. This isn't even my form yet. I'm just trying to talk to you." I moved closer to him. Me: "Hold my hand." He held both my hands, staring into my eyes. Me: "Ostende illi vita portal. Loquimini veritatem suam manifestant. Siam meam ipse viderit." His body went cold. Tears streaming down his face. Soma: "Skhura? It's you. It's really you. I'm sooo sorry. I shouldn't have let you go there alone. You died... because of me..." he cried. Soma: "My God... Skhura." He dropped to his knees. Me: "Dimittere eum." I kneeled next to him. Me: "See Soma? I'm not half as bad." Soma: "Bring him back!!!" Me: "I would if I could... but he's dead." Soma: "I just saw him!! I could smell him!! Why did you do this? Why???" Soso barged in the office. Soso: "What the hell is going on here." Soma: "I don't wanna do this anymore." Luks: "And then?" He walked in. Soma got up and rushed out. Soso: "What did you do to my twin?" Me: "I'm sorry. I realize he wasn't entirely ready-

" Soso: "FOR WHAT." Luks: "Yeyi. Yeyi!! Lower your voice." Soso: "Nx!" He stormed out. Luks: "What happened?" Me: "I showed him his friend. The one that passed. I thought he could handle it-" Luks: "Hayi Spho! Why would you do that!!" Me: "He thought I was a witch. I was trying to explain to him I'm no-" Luks: "I was shook for DAYS when you pulled me through that portal. Why didn't you just let it go?" Me: "That's easy for you to say. Everyone in my family has welcomes you with open arms. Whereas your family hates my guts!" Luks: "They don't! And why do you even care?? You're dating me not-" Me: "Are you fucking serious right now?" Luks: "We're not gonna argue about this baby. Come on." Soso walked back in with his hands on his hips. Soso: "He locked himself in the bathroom. What did you do to him?" Luks: "Nothing. Soma is being dramatic." Me: "He's not." Luks: "Baby-" Me: "No. Don't try to defend me. What I did was out of line. Your brother hasn't healed from the death of his friend, Skhura. I let him see him, through me, and he couldn't handle it." Soso: "How is that possible? How can he see a dead person through you?" Luks: "No, we're not having that conversation-" Soso: "Lukhanyo. My brother has locked himself in a bathroom and I need to know why. Spho, are you a witch?" Me: "No." He stared at him. At least he wasn't hysterical. Soso: "Then what's going on? I need to fix him." Me: "I'll do it. It's my fault. Where is he?" He pointed me down the passage and followed behind me. Luckily this floor was only for execs and the other employees couldn't see what happened. I pushed open the restroom door. Me: "You might wanna stay out." Soso: "Fuck no. That is my brother, I'm not going anywhere!" Me: "There's someone else in here." Lukhanyo banged on all the doors. "It's me, Josh!!" Luks: "GET OUT." A shaky tall guy walked out and washed his hands then left. I looked at the two. Lukhanyo was leaning on the far wall with his hands in his pockets. Soso stood next to me like a brick wall. I kneeled in front of the locked cubicle door. I held my right hand on it. Ice and smoke formed around my hand. Me: "Soma...It's me, Spho. I don't wanna hurt you. Can you do me a favor?" Silence. Me: "Just hold the door. Touch it with your hand. I promise it won't hurt." Still no response. Come Soma, my guy. You're doing great. Come closer." I listened closely. He was moving. Me: "There you go. Right there." He held on the other side of the door. Me: "There. Can you feel me?" Soma: "I can." Me: "What do you see?" Soma: "Angel. I see an angel." Me: "Who does it look like?" Soma: "Skhura." Me: "He's always there. He's always watching over you. You're not alone. He knows you did the best you can to save him. But his purpose is to save you. Do you hear me?" Soma: "Spho..." he cried. Me: "Yes?" Soma: "Get me out of here.." I stood up and opened the door. He hugged me tight. Me: "You don't need to be afraid. The darkness that consumes you can be cleared just by opening your heart. Look up to the heavens and see your angel looking after you for so long. You've been through everything and

God still looks out for you. You've failed many times, and still woke up. You've broken chains designed to hold you back but you succeeded. Challenges made to destroy you yet you survived. Because of him. Nobody loves you more than him. He will tear down the skies, break down mountains and burn the oceans if he sees you hurt. Believe in him Soma. Believe that he's holding your hand when you feel weak." He looked at me. Soma: "What are you?" I just stared at him. I feared that if I tell him more he might get hysterical again. Luks: "Lets go man. You're taking the day off." Soso: "I'll take him home. I'll be back." He said the last three words staring at me. Right then I knew he would want answers.

Fortunately, or rather to Lukhanyo's irritation Lubby stumbled in while we were in the office. Lubb: "Hey hey!" Luks: "You're supposed to be home, resting!" Lubb: "Hi pumpkin. Looking extra fabulous today. Did Lukalike tell you Junior wanted you in his career day on Monday? Are you busy?" Me: "He didn't tell me. I'm sure I can make time." Lubb: "Now that's a lady. And you sir-" He looked at his brother. Lubb: "What the fuck happened to your face?" I've never in my life witnessed a change in tone, mood and atmosphere that quick. He was ready to fight right then and there. Luks: "I was helping out at the storage. One of the boxes fell on me." Lubb: "If I check the footage from the storage, will it correspondent to your story?" Luks: "Yes." Without another breath taken Lubby turned to walk out. Luks: "Haibo Lubabalo, you don't trust me??" Lubb: "First off," He turned back. Lubb: "You're not even supposed to be in that storage let alone working. There's workers there stationed to do the work. So who hit you?" Then it clicked. Me: "You fought with Lakhe?" Lubby chuckled and stormed out angry as he was on crutches. Lukhanyo went after him. I just sat there wondering why they could be fighting. Or maybe they really couldn't stand each other and I was forcing things because I wanted to it to be perfect. Instead I was making them miserable. Luks: "Why are you crying?" I just shook my head unable to even talk. Okay that was weird. Luks: "Baby we didn't fight. It was a minor disagreement, we're fine. I swear." Me: "I shouldn't have forced you together. I don't want you to go fighting him. Just cancel everything. I don't want animosity around the kids. I just can't do that to them." Luks: "What do you mean cancel everything?" Me: "I mean the braai is off Lukhanyo. We're not gonna do this pretend thing. You and Lakhe will never be friends; so it's fine." He sighed and sat next to me. Luks: "I would've died a horrible death in that building. When we went to fetch Sandile. Your grandfather hit me with some force and I fell. Unconscious. The building started to burn, I only woke up when I was surrounded by flames. I was sure I'd burn alive. I'd made peace with it. The only prayer I had was that

you don't feel guilty about it. I prayed that if you loved me enough, I'd make it home so you never had to cry. Then Lakhe appeared in front of me. He walked through fire, to come fetch me. He saved my life." Me: "Why didn't you tell me this before?" Luks: "I knew you'd worry yourself sick and in tears. Sandile needed your attention, I could wait a while. Yes Lakhe and I fought this morning but it wasn't about you. It was just men stuff." Me: "Okay." I got up. Luks: "Where you going?" Me: "To fetch my children." Luks: "Please don't be angry. I'll fix this." He held my waist. Me: "I said cancel the braai. I thought I was bringing everyone together so that we can all raise our kids in a healthy environment but since the both of you prefer fighting, hating each other and acting ghetto then go ahead. I tried." I walked out.

Later that evening, Lukhanyo walked into Lakhe's office. Sands: "Wow. You're brave." He looked up from his paperwork. Luks: "I need to talk to you Masilakhe." Lakhe ignored him. Luks: "Can you stop being childish for a minute?" No response. Sands: "Just talk. He won't reply but he hears you-" Lakhe: "Don't encourage him. Lukhanyo is a mosquito that thrives on irritating you. All you have to do is switch off your lights, ignore him and sleep. He'll go away." Luks: "Fine." He sat on the couch and pulled out a packet of crisps, opening it and throwing a few in his mouth. Sandile withheld his comment. Lakhe breathed his nose, continuing with his work. After the snack, Lukhanyo pulled another packet of jelly beans. Lakhe stared up at him. Luks: "Want some?" Lakhe looked back at his laptop. Luks: "Hello? Yes. This is Luks speaking. I'd like to order-" Lakhe: "Get out!!!!!!!" He screamed. Sands: "I thought we were ignoring-" Lakhe: "He's ordering food!!! He wants to camp here! What the fuck do you want!!!!!" Lukhanyo hung up the phone. Luks: "I want you to listen to me-" Lakhe: "Did you move your fucking truck?" Luks: "No." Lakhe: "We have nothing to talk about." Luks: "Spho is upset that you hit me. She cried." Lakhe stood up, fuming. Lakhe: "YOU MANIPULATIVE SON OF A BITCH." Luks: "Don't talk about my mother." Lakhe: "What the hell is wrong with you!!! Spho is pregnant! Are you gonna run to her and tell her you're trafficking human parts???" Luks: "I didn't run and don't lie. Those aren't human parts." Lakhe: "That truck is leaking blood in MY WAREHOUSE." Luks: "Our warehouse. Hear me out-" Lakhe marched to him. Sandile stood up quickly standing between them. Sands: "He's not worth it." Luks: "I just need a few more days. I'll pay you. I can unclog the backlog of your business for you. You've been at a dead end for months. I know you want to drain it and be over with but it's not easy in our line of work. Think about it. I pay you and help you, all you give me is a few parking spaces and access." Lakhe: "If you make the mother of my children cry again, I'll rip out your tongue." He stormed out.

Sands: "Why do you like to provoke him?" Luks: "I don't. Trust me." Sands: "I see it different." Luks: "You see it the same as everyone else. Only Lakhe knows I'm not provoking him. He needs me as much as I need him." Sands: "My brother has resources way above yours. He doesn't need your help." Luks: "Yet he didn't decline it." He walked out.

I just needed to be alone with my children. I'd taken Lam and Chris to the beach that afternoon. Lammy was happy as a penguin, all he did was giggle and bounce. Chris played with him in the sand and I watched them share a juice box. See, they didn't deserve to be around hate and hostility. I had to keep Likhanyo and Lakhe apart. Actually, I needed to just let them be. Chris is a sponge so he soaks up everything around him. "Hi." I looked up. Me: "What do you want." Lam: "Dada!" He pointed. Lakhe: "My boys. How's their mom?" Me: "Fine." Lakhe: "So you were crying again?" Me: "No." Lakhe: "Your boyfriend says so." Me: "Can you both stop this thing of pretending? Honestly just leave it be. I get it now, you hate each other. So stop entertaining each other." Lakhe: "I can't stop entertaining Likhanyo because he's gonna be around my kids alot. I need to get used to it and accept him. I'm getting there, slowly." Me: "You fought." Lakhe: "Men fight all the time." Me: "What was this one about?" He stared at me. Lakhe: "Hm?" Me: "You heard me!" Lakhe: "Don't worry about it." Lam finally made it to his father's lap. Chris sat on top of me. Chris: "Here you can have my juice daddy." Lakhe: "Thank you my boy. This is sweet of you." Chris: "Share with mommy kaloku." Lakhe: "I'll get her her own. So she can share with her tummy baby." Chris: "Okay then, leave some for Tata Luks." Lakhe: "I'll buy him his own too." Chris: "Do you like him now?" Lakhe looked at me. Chris: "I'm right here Tata." Lakhe: "Only just a tiny little minuscule bit." Chris smiled. Chris: "That's great. Wait, Manis que? What is that?" Lakhe: "It means different." I stared at him. Lakhe: "Are we still on for dinner?" Me: "I'm not in the mood." Lakhe: "You don't have to be. I'll get a chef to come cook us dinner and a few artists from Nosi's group to perform for you. A private concert. I know you love their work." Me: "I'm tired Lakhe." Lakhe: "Throw in a masseuse before the show? She'll give you a full body massage." Me: "I'm still in a relationship." Lakhe: "He suggested it. Shocking, I know. Apparently, it helps the kids be familiar with both their parents constantly showing them love. At least he's not a piece of s-h when it comes to parenting." Me: "I don't want pretending anymore. Stop trying to both look perfect in my face and then scratch each other's faces off when I'm not there." Lakhe: "I promise. Have I ever broken a promise?" Me: "Yes. Leaving me when I needed you the most. I've forgiven you now. Just don't make the

same mistake a second time." The once blue skies turned purple grey, crackling with thunder. Me: "Time to go home." Lakhe: "I'll find you there."

Lakhe walked in Lukhanyo's house. Lubby stared at him. Lubb: "Some thick nerve, you have. It has hips." Luks: "Lubabalo." He warned. Lubb: "Haibo. Kanti I'll shove this ankle deep in his throat, kunyiwe once and for all. What does he want!" Luks: "I can handle it!" Lubb: "No, you cant! You have a bruise! SOMA!!" He screamed. Luks: "Nobody is home to help you. Sit. Lakhe ufunani?" Lakhe: "Sphe is going through the last trimester of her pregnancy. She's going to sometimes merge with the baby's spirit. Which means, she can turn into him. At any given time she gets upset." Luks: "That can't happen." Lakhe: "Exactly. We have to figure something out. I don't want her hurt Lukhanyo. Take the warehouse, do whatever the hell you want, just... please. Please don't let her be unhappy. I can't watch her turn into..." he looked away. Lakhe: "So take the warehouse, it's yours. But I have to warn you that she can see, beyond the naked eye. We can have the braai here and introduce the kids to each other and so forth. We just need to get her through this last part." Luks: "No. I violated your space. I'm sorry. I'll take the truck out and stay out of it." Lakhe: "Don't be dumb. The owner of that thing is combing through the province looking for it. Why did you steal it?" Luks: "I didn't know it was stolen. My dad bought it from someone." Lakhe: "That someone has fucked you over Lukhanyo. Find them and deal with it immediately. You can't have any loose ends." Luks: "I plan to teach him a lesson." Lakhe chuckled. Lakhe: "You can't teach this lesson. Kill him. Chop off his DNA and burn the body. That's the only way, you can guarantee he's gone for good." He walked out. Lubb: "Well... that was alot. And very unexpected. Very detailed. Quite wild to be honest. Crazy." Luks: "Yeah, he is a bit of a nut." Lubb: "So you didn't tell me you're working with your father again." Luks: "OUR. And I was just helping him. I don't think he knew the truck was stolen." Lubb: "Yeah but now it's YOUR problem. See how he did that?" Luks: "Can you just be quiet please?" Lubb: "Of course not. I need to tell you, you fucked up. Also, what is Lakhe talking about? Baby spirits and all?" Luks: "Lubby. I can only deal with one thing at a time please. I kinda feel bad for him now." Lubb: "Uwoah. Mxim. It was you who said you'll fill me in but at every point I must wait." Luks: "Lubabalo. Alot of things are happening at once. When everything settles down, you're my first priority." Lubb: "Well, thank you. That means alot to me but I'm still ready for gossip." Luks: "No gossip here. Move it along. Finish cooking my dinner please and make sure to put less to no garlic. You use too much garlic." Lubb: "I am disabled! Give me a break!" Luks: "Finish cooking my dinner is all I'm saying." ...

At home, I was resting with Lam sleeping on my tummy. Chris was playing on the floor with his Mr Courage. There was a knock on the door. Me: "Come in." Three women and a man dressed in all white walked in. "Good evening, Mrs Sobukwe." Lakhe walked in. Lakhe: "Kitchen is that side." They shuffled to the kitchen, leaving only one carrying a massage bed. Lakhe: "I don't think we'll be needing that. Spho, where are you more comfortable?" Me: "What is going on?" Lakhe: "I want you to relax. I promised you dinner as a family and a masseuse." Me: "Yeah, but I can't move. Lam will be hysterical." Lakhe: "You don't have to move." He looked at the masseuse. Lakhe: "You can begin." He held Chris' head. Lakhe: "Hey. I got you something." Chris: "Is it a chocolate cake?" Lakhe: "Maybe. But you'll have to come outside and see." Chris jumped up and ran out, Lakhe following him. Chris: "So Where's my cake." Lakhe: "I got you a bike. Look." Chris: "And no cake?" Lakhe: "I'm confused. You wanted a bike." Chris: "But now I want a cake daddy." Lakhe: "So I bought a bike for nothing?" Chris shrugged. Lakhe: "No Chris, you don't get to do that. I went to alot of trouble getting you this bike." Chris: "You went to one shop dad." Lakhe: "Okay, what's the problem?" Chris: "Gary fell." Lakhe: "Who's Gary?" Chris: "Gary is my friend. He fell off his bike. His arm broke." Lakhe: "But, that's what happens sometimes. He's fine right?" Chris: "Yeah.." Lakhe: "Tell me why you're afraid." He picked him up and set him on his lap. Chris: "When I broke my arm, my mommy died. Then I came to stay with you and mommy, I don't want another mommy now." Lakhe: "Ohh. That's why. Okay, bunny you won't lose us by breaking your arm. What happened to you was an accident. I'll always keep you and your mommy safe from now. Nothing will hurt you." Chris: "Okay." Lakhe: "I'll teach you how to ride this bike. Then you won't fall, but if you do, you'll get back up and all will be well." Chris: "Promise?" Lakhe: "I promise." They walked in the house. Lakhe: "Have you seen Sandile?" Me: "Nope. He's probably with his girlfriend." Lakhe: "Hmm." Me: "Please let them be. Why don't you like her?" Lakhe: "She's using him." Me: "No she's not. You're just scared she might take your place in his life and it won't happen. Sandile needs to be happy too. Being in love suits him." Lakhe: "Hmm." Me: "Stop that." Lakhe: "It's just not gonna end well but I'm not getting involved until I need to save someone from their death." He touched Lam's foot. Me: "You're starting something that you won't be able to finish. Leave this child." Lakhe: "Lam???" Me: "Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Fine. I need something to do. Chris?" Chris: "I'm not your project daddy." Lakhe: "You actually are. Let's go." Chris got up. Me: "No." Lakhe: "You say something?" Me: "I said, No." Lakhe pulled Chris behind him. Lakhe: "Okay. We'll just let-" Me: "Make them leave. Everyone in this house, make them go." Lakhe: "Spho, what's going on-" Me: "LEAAAAVE."

Lakhe: "All of you, get out. Now." Me: "The kids-" Lakhe: "I'm not leaving you here alone." Me: "I can't protect you anymore." I cried. Me: "Please." He took the baby, holding Chris' hand taking them to the car. Blood started rushing out my nose and mouth. The baby in my stomach was gnawing his way out of me yet holding on to me and my strength. Lakhe: "He's coming? Now?" He started shaking. The look on her face, merging into a Komander spirit, then back to her, fighting it's way out. Me: "Lakh..." She choked, strangled and tortured. Lakhe: "Fuck.." he held her hand. Khaya walked in the house. Khaya: "Get out. You need to leave." Lakhe: "I'm not leaving." Khaya: "This is not the time Masilakhe." Lakhe: "She's about to give birth!" Khaya: "This child will kill you. And that's going to hurt her and your children. I can take it from here. The Unborn is ready."

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Lukhanyo and Lubabalo sat in their lounge watching TV. Lubb: "Will you rub my foot?" Luks: "I'm not doing that. I'll take you to the hospital tomorrow to change your ankle." Lubb: "I'm talking about massaging it?" Luks: "Andifuni ke." The gate rang. Luks: "Expecting anyone??" Lubb: "Nope. But it would be nice if they could rub my foot." He opened the gate. Luks: "Even if it was a serial killer?" Lubb: "Bitch please, my name would scare them. Hey its your friend." Lakhe walked in, with the baby in his arm, Chris on his other. Lakhe: "She's in labor. I'm trusting you to hold my children. It doesn't look good." Luks: "I have 4 nannies. I'm coming with you. Leave the kids here." Lakhe: "I'M NOT LEAVING MY KIDS WITH STRANGERS!!" Luks: "Hey!! Calm down. Lubby?" Lubb: "I'll be here. I'll take care of them. Go." Lakhe stared at Lukhanyo. Lakhe: "I can't. It has to be you." Luks: "You need to trust -" Lakhe: "The Unborn is coming. Only one King can survive. I want you holding Lam. He needs you. Spho prepared you, she touched you, your spirit. You need to do this." Luks: "Lakhe..." Lakhe: "I might not come back. I need to know you can do this. Please." Luks: "You'll be back." He took the baby and gave him to Lubby. Luks: "You need to have faith, in yourself, in Spho. And most importantly in the strength of your son. I want to help." Lakhe sat down with his head in his hands. Lakhe: "I was a King. A full dark blood King. The amount of power I had would've killed any mortal human on sight of me. I made souls shake. I can't say I hated it. It was an amazing feeling but I got so consumed in it, I hurt her. I hurt her so bad. And she still helped me. She pulled me out of it and saved my life. Still I spat in her face after it. But she didn't give up on me. Now I want to help her and the only way I can do that is if I give my life for hers, she won't let me. That's the type of woman you have Lukhanyo." Luks: "So you think you

can drop these kids off here and go against her will? Then I'm in shit? What am I gonna tell your kids?" Lakhe: "It's either me or Lam. I can't let it happen. I refuse it." Luks: "Nothing will happen to Lam or you. Let me get you some food. The Unborn is a reasonable being. And futhi stop calling him that, what will you name him since he'll no longer be unborn?" Lakhe: "Uphambene Lukhanyo?" Luks: "No. You want pasta?" He walked to the kitchen." Lubb: "When the women give birth, we wait and get ready to be called. Don't take offense. Just eat and relax." Lakhe: "This is not an ordinary baby!!" Lubb: "Since I don't know what's going on, I don't know what you expect to hear from me but every child is extraordinary to their parents." Lakhe: "Do you even know who Spho is?" Lubb: "My brother's girlfriend." He smiled. Lubb: "Sorry, it just happens." He covered his mouth. Lubb: "Say everything works out, what do you name the baby?" Lakhe: "Mehluli." Lubb: "That's deep. Wohlule ntoni?" Lakhe: "Me."

Khaya held his daughter. Khaya: "Stay with me. Hold on to me mntanam. I'm right here." She let go and went limp, losing consciousness. Sibu: "What are you doing?" He stood at the door. Khaya: "You shouldn't be here. The Unborn is coming." Sibu: "You're wasting your time. The Unborn has two more months to go." Khaya: "Spho? Wake up honey." I opened my eyes and stared at him. Khaya: "How are you feeling?" Me: "I'm okay. What happened?" I sat up. Khaya: "You're in labor." Me: "Don't be silly, I've got 2 months to go." Sibu: "Told you." He walked to his room. Khaya: "Spho. You were in labour. I saw you. Look at all this blood." Me: "He was probably just adjusting himself inside. What are you doing here?" He stared at her in disbelief. Khaya: "I came to talk to you." Me: "About what?" I stood up holding my bloody dress. Khaya: "About what you saw. Spho, it's not what it looks like." Me: "I don't want to hear it." Khaya: "No. You have to. That is not your mother." I cackled. Khaya: "Please hear me out." Me: "I'm actually not interested Tata. I thought you and I were done with secrets. I thought we were fixing our relationship and moving on despite our opposing sides. Then you drop this bomb. What next can I expect from you?" Khaya: "I wasn't keeping a secret-" Me: "Then how come I don't know about it!" Khaya: "I didn't know how to tell you because I myself was getting used to it!! How fair would it be to impose a stranger that is an exact copy of your mother to you while you're still grieving and I can't even explain how!! What was I supposed to say?" Me: "You could have at last sent a text. 'Hey Spho, so your mom is still alive.' How about that???" Khaya: "You're being rude." Me: "I'M being rude? ME?" Khaya: "She. Is. Not. Your. Mother." Me: "The who is she!!" Khaya: "It is her younger sister! I thought she'd died years ago turns out she hadn't. I don't think Zama even knew she was still

alive." Me: "How then did she find her way to you???" Khaya: "She didn't find her way to me." Me: "I'm still struggling to understand that she just magically appears months after my mother has died. Not once did my mother ever mention her. Not even ONCE. How did she find her way to YOUR HOUSE." He stared at the floor. Me: "I am currently in disbelief that you actually believe this lie you're telling me." Khaya: "I'm not lying Spho." He looked at me with tears in his eyes. Me: "How did she find you then?" Khaya: "Kadir brought her. After the accident which we thought had killed her; he took her overseas. She's been living there till now. She has no memory of her family or anything before that accident." I could tell he wasn't lying but I still couldn't believe it. I refused to. Me: "Where is my mother's body?" He stared up at me with wide eyes. Me: "WHERE." Khaya: "I don't know. But Spho you can't interfere with the Elite burial grounds." Me: "burial grounds?? I DIDN'T bury her. You stole her from Me, or you've suddenly forgotten that?" Khaya: "The elites are buried separately from just any nobody." Me: "Was Miriam an elite?" Khaya: "No." Me: "Interesting." I went to the bathroom to clean my face and change my dress. I needed my kids back. I wonder what happened with me. I can't give birth before Queen Mother appears. She needed to guide me through this. Especially about turning the Dark King to Pure blood. A flashing image of Graham caught my eye. I haven't seen him in a while. Perhaps it's time to talk to him. And right now is a better time than ever. I walked out the bedroom. Khaya: "Spho, this is serious. You can't just walk out like nothing happened." Me: "The baby isn't coming soon. He was adjusting. He's fine now. I need to speak to Graham." Khaya: "I won't let you wander around alone. You need someone with you at all times. What if he decides to "adjust" while you're driving?" Me: "I'm taking an Uber." Khaya: "You're not serious." Me: "as a heart attack." Khaya: "Sibulele!!" Sibulele: "Andizi. She says she's fine." Me: "There. Now I can go?" He walked out first. Khaya: "I'm driving you." Me: "Fine." I got in the passenger seat as he drove out to the church. I was hoping at least he'd be at church. Unless he's at Siya's house. The drive to the church was quiet. Grateful for that but I like messy. Me: "So when you're looking at her, do you see her or my mother since they basically look like twins." He looked at me and back on the road. Khaya: "Don't do that." Me: "I'm curious. She lives in your house. Cooks in your kitchen. And sleeps in your bed. Is she living as herself or as my mother in your heart?" He stopped in front of the church building. Khaya: "She is living as your mother in my heart. I feel like I'm given a second chance to be with her." I wasn't expecting that. I got out of the car and walked into the church building. The atmosphere was heavy and different. Right above the alter I could see her again, hanging from the ceiling, her eyes carved out. When I blinked; it wasn't there anymore. Graham needed to tell me what was going on. Me: "Gray?" Silence. Was he

hiding from me? Me: "Graham??" Gray: "Down here." I went down the stair to the basement where he was. Me: "Hi." Gray: "Hey." He was building a wooden piece of furniture. Me: "I haven't seen you in a while." Gray: "Uhm... it's been a week." Me: "Still. You don't come around anymore. How's Niny?" Gray: "He's great. He has a new friend." Me: "Oh? Who?" Gray: "It's a puppy. Loves him like crazy. He named him Toochles." I smiled. Me: "And you? How are you?" Gray: "I'm fantastic. How are you?" Me: "I'm great. Graham. I saw that woman hanging on your alter ceiling again. Who is she?" Gray: "What are you talking about?" Me: "Don't play dumb with me. You know what I'm talking about. Did you kill her? Why is she in your energy?" He continued being busy. Gray: "I don't know. Maybe she used to be in my congregation and she died. We've had a few suicides over the years." Me: "That one isn't suicide. It's sacrificial. Tell me what did you do?" Gray: "I didn't do anything." Me: "Look at me." Gray: "I can't." Me: "You need to be honest with me. I can't help you if you lie to me." He looked so stressed. Me: "Come here." Gray: "No." I held his arm and was almost thrown back by a vision. He quickly pushed me away. Gray: "I'm so sorry. I didn't want this. I didn't choose." Me: "What did you do?" Gray: "I'm sorr-" Me: "Just tell me. I swear it's gonna be okay." He dropped to his knees, and immediately ran out of breath, his eyes turning red, him trying to gasp for air. The Unborn was choking him. This was not possible. This baby couldn't harm him. Gray: "First... dark... King." He gasped, clawing at his throat, failing to breath. Gray: "I ...was... him." He dropped to the floor, breathing again, his hand on his chest. I was frozen to the core. Me: "How is that possible?" The calm in my voice shocking me. He looked at his lap, unable to respond. Me: "You were brought to me by Queen Mother. She knew you were a Dark King and you've turned to Christianity but can't help me with my son? Neither of you thought to tell me this?" Gray: "It's not that simple Spho-" Me: "Isn't it? Is telling me the truth not simple?" Gray: "It's not like that Spho. Alot had to happen, bad things had to happen. Things I still can't get over. They made a choice for me that I still can't live with. I was an infant!" He coughed. Me: "What happened." Gray: "I don't know. I don't have enough information about it. The only thing I remember is what I had read. It says, I wasn't known to be a dark King before my birth. The day of my birth, it became night during the day. My mother knew something was wrong but they didn't believe her. My father had ran. He never told her he was next on the throne. Never told her he was a demon. She thought he was a normal human being. Queen Mother appeared next to her, hours before my birth, my mother was unconscious. She told her what to do, my mother panicked, she thought it was evil spirits trying to take her baby away. When they arrived at the hospital, patients started to die. One after the other. Nobody knew why. When I was finally born; everything went back to normal. My mother was

discharged the same day and we went back home. It is said, Queen Mother appeared that night again, to warn her. She didn't listen, until my father appeared and wanted to take me." Me: "What happened next?" Gray: "I don't-" He choked again. Me: "He won't let you go until you tell me everything." Gray: "My mother... wouldn't let me... go." He spat out blood, trying to breath again. Gray: "I killed her." He wiped his mouth. Gray: "My spirit, killed her. To give way for him. And I killed him too. The baby that is coming out of you, is not a baby by spirit. He comes out of you a King. A grown full dark King. It is only his body that will be the infant. He will kill you and everyone you love." I was shaking. A part of me believed it, another part refused. I was in between. Me: "How did you turn?" Gray: "Queen Mother collected me. It is not written what happens after that." I squatted down to his eye level. Me: "Where is it." He tried backing away, I grabbed his ankle. Me: "WHERE." Gray: "This isn't you, Spho. Please.." Me: "I will not repeat myself." Gray: "I'd rather you killed me." He cried. Me: "Say no more." Black smoke surrounded his neck, tightening it's grip. Khaya: "SPHO!!!" HE stood at the door. Khaya: "Sphosenkosi!!! You can't do that!!" I stood up and walked out. Khaya: "Graham?" Graham lay still, and unconscious on the floor. Khaya: "Damn it!" He pulled out his phone and dialed for an ambulance, while trying CPR. Khaya: "Yes, that's the address. It's right around the corner, yes. The large church with red bricks." He hung up. Khaya: "You can't die like this Graham. You're the only one that can help her. Don't let go!"

Back at Lukhanyo's house. Lakhe still sat in the couch staring into space. Lubby: "Peek a boo." Luks: "Stop that." Lubb: "I'm not even playing with you." Luks: "Exactly stop peeking a boo with the baby, he's not interested." Lubb: "Lammy, are you not interested in peek a boo with me?" Lam stared at him. Lubb: "I guess not. What do you want to play?" The gate opened. Lakhe jumped up. Luks: "Can you calm down???" Lakhe: "I have to go-" Luks: "You want us to wrestle again like we did an hour ago?" Lakhe: "I don't want to hurt you Lukhanyo. I told you I don't want to fight in front of my children. But I need to go!" Luks: "You'll be called when you're needed. Sit." Lubb: "I hear a stinky." Luks: "For the last time, you can't hear smells." Lubb: "Well, this one I can hear through my ears. It's blasting." He held the baby in the air. Their kids walked in. Lutha: "Daddy." Luks: "Hi. Who brought you home?" Lutha: "Grandpa. Who's that?" Lulle: "The man that was mean to daddy, the one I told you about." She said, crossing her arms. Chuma: "The one daddy bought a phone for and he screamed at him instead of saying thank you?" Lulle: "YES." Lakhe: "I apologized to your dad." Bambi: "Who's that?" They all looked at Lukhanyo. Luks: "That's his baby." Bambi: "Why is my daddy holding him?"

Zakes: "Because they share the baby Lubambo. Grow up. Your fathers are going to have more children after you. Masilakhe Sobukwe, good day. It's a pleasure to finally meet the mighty man himself." Lubambo sniffled behind. Lubb: "Jesus Christ, Zakes!! He's just a child." He handed the baby to Lakhe, picking up his own son. Luks: "You have a broken ankle Lubabalo." Zakes: "How is this child going to grow up if you keep babying him like that?" Lubby hopped to the bedroom. Luks: "You know better than to come between him and that child kodwa Tata." Zakes: "They're the same age. Ndibethe ke." Lakhe's phone rang. Lakhe: "Yes?" He answered. Lakhe: "What do you mean she disappeared?" He looked at Lam in his arms. Lakhe: "Is he okay? What should I do? Okay." He hung up. Luks: "What is it?" Zakes took the kids to the play room. Lakhe: "Spho has disappeared." Luks: "YOU SAID SHE WAS GIVING BIRTH!!! I TRUSTED YOU!" Lakhe: "That's what was happening when I left the house!" Luks: "Then where is she!! Where is the baby!!" Zakes: "HEY!! What the hell is going on?" Lakhe: "I need to change the baby." Lukhanyo led him to the nursery and locked the door behind them. Luks: "TALK." Lakhe: "I need Sandile." He put the baby down, undressing him. Luks: "Masilakhe. Where is Spho?" Lakhe: "Sandile is the only one who can know where she is!! He is the only one that can connect to her. Khaya says she didn't give birth. Apparently, she just got up and they went to Graham, the pastor. The Unborn strangled him, he's in ICU. She walked out the church and he can't find her." Lukhanyo paced the floor, hands on hips. Lakhe: "I need to find Sandile." He placed a clean diaper under the baby, after wiping him and fastened the straps. Luks: "Lift up your eyes." Lakhe: "What?" He looked at him. Luks: "She kept murmuring something in her sleep once. Something like lift up your eyes." Lakhe: "And what else." Luks: "I'm trying to remember." Lakhe: "You need to try harder." Luks: "She was praying Masilakhe. I can't remember." He sat down to focus. Lakhe called Sandile. Lakhe: "Talk to him." Luks: "Sandile?" Sands: "Hey. You're having a get together without me?" Luks: "What do you know about; Lift up your eyes?" Sands: "Unto the hills. And trust in the Lord. Where is Spho?" Luks: "She's disappeared." Sands: "Shit." He hung up. Lakhe: "What did he say?" Luks: "He knows what it means. He just hung up." Lakhe stared at his baby. Lakhe: "Yabona Lukhanyo. This is the moment I can properly say; it's about to get real. Kuzonyiwa straight." Luks: "Why?" Lakhe: "You're gonna have to trust me. We don't like each other but you're all I've got. And I'm all you've got. It's time to put our shit aside." Luks: "What's going on." Lakhe: "She went to fetch Rex."

I knocked on Sandile's apartment door waiting for him to open. I knew he was inside, I could hear him getting up and wobbling to the door. Why

couldn't he just tell me that this treatment is taking long and he's still in pain? He opened the door. Sands: "Mummy. I was just looking for you." Me: "Really?" Sands: "Well, no. I knew you were coming here." Me: "That why you chased your girlfriend out?" Sands: "I didn't chase her out. She had a meeting I persuaded her to go to." Me: "Sit." He sat down. I kneeled in front of him. Sands: "It's not that bad, I swear." Me: "Just hold on to the pillow and let me help you like I should've in the start." Sands: "You don't have to-" Me: "Every week, Siyanda has to come draw out poison from your leg and it's agonizing. This will happen for the next six weeks. Even then you'll still be in pain. I need you well before then." I bit into the swelled area, sucking out the rest of the poison. He screamed with such excruciating pain, tearing through the pillow, tears running down his cheeks. I spat out the venom with blood into a glass that filled to half its capacity. Me: "That on its own could've killed you if Siyanda missed one day." He sat there shivering and cold. I went to the kitchen, to fix him a mixture that would put him to sleep and numb his pain. Me: "Why were you looking for me?" He struggled to find his voice again. Sands: "Uhm. Lakhe and Lukhanyo called. They said you disappeared." Me: "Did I, now?" Sands: "They think you went to fetch Rex." Me: "Now why on earth would I do that?" I gave him his medicine. Me: "That'll put you to sleep and kill the pain. You'll limp for a few more days, two maximum and you'll be fine after that. No venom. No swelling. No crutches. You look positively radiant already." Sands: "Thank you." He gulped down the potion. Sands: "You're so good to me. I don't deserve you." I helped him get on the bed, as he was dozing off. Me: "I'm exactly what you deserve." He fell asleep. Me: "You'll be fine, my little angel." I got up, taking the glass with venom and walked out.

By the time I got to my house. My father was in the kitchen with Lukhanyo and Lakhe. Me: "Where are my kids?" Luks: "Spho! Where have you been? I was worried about you!" Me: "Why?" Khaya: "After what you did to Graham?? You disappeared! Where were you?" Me: "I went to Sandile. Why do you look stressed? I can't visit my people?" I went to my bathroom to bath. Khaya: "It's as though she doesn't even remember what happened!" Luks: "What did happen?" Khaya: "I found her in the basement with Graham. She had switched to the Unborn. She wasn't controlling herself." Luks: "And then?" Khaya: "I told her to stop and she got up and walked out?" Luks: "Without harming you? If she was the Unborn at that point, what would stop her from getting you out of her way?" Khaya: "I'm not a pure blood." Luks: "So? He is the king isn't he?" Lakhe: "No. He isn't." Luks: "He is the Unborn King. That's what he's called." Lakhe shook his head. Lakhe: "He would've killed you if he was."

He said to Khaya in the weakest voice. Lakhe: "Of all the rules, I'd forgotten just one." He put his hands in his pocket. Luks: "Pray tell." Lakhe: "The Dark Kingdom cannot be stable without a King. Rex is trapped in a portal, Kadir never took the throne, Sibuh rejected it, the Unborn hasn't been born." Khaya: "No." Luks: "NO WHAT?? What's happening now?" Khaya: "Masilakhe left the throne. He is not supposed to be here." Luks: "And you can't go back, can you? So what do we do?" Khaya: "Oh, he can. He has to. Or he'll have to kill his son. Otherwise the son will kill the mother."

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The house was still for a second. Luks: "Can't kill your son, man. That can't be right." Khaya: "Can't let him kill his mother either." Lakhe: "We can't talk about this here." Luks: "There's nothing else to talk about, take the throne. You've done it before. You told me you liked it." Lakhe: "It's not that simple! I hurt her badly when it happened. I can not hurt anyone else. I don't want to." Luks: "You Won't!" Lakhe: "You weren't there Lukhanyo! You weren't there when I couldn't hold my son because he burnt my hands. You were not there when I lost my temper and hurt the woman I love. I was the one who was an uncontrollable animal, ME. I am not going through that again. There has to be another way. I cannot be a King Komander ever again." Sibuh: "I'll take the throne." He walked in. Sibuh: "It is my birth right anyway. That way, you won't have to kill anyone and the Kingdom is stable until of course Spoh kills us all." Khaya: "You're not strong enough to sustain the kingdom. You're not a full dark demon." Sibuh: "I am the first born son of Kadir Komander, who is a full dark blood son of Rex Komander, a King. I can turn by the next moon." Khaya: "I'm not letting you do that!" Luks: "Well sir, you need to make up your mind. We don't have any other options now." His phone rang. Lakhe: "Yeah. Sibuh can't do it. Spoh won't forgive us." Luks: "Yes, he can. You'll teach him." Lakhe: "Lukhanyo what the fuck do you think this is?" Khaya: "He's right. You can train Sibuh-" Lakhe: "I am NO LONGER A DEMON." Khaya: "You still have the qualities and the strength." The phone rang. Lakhe: "Is there anywhere you need to be Lukhanyo?" Luks: "No." Lakhe: "Do you mind attending to your phone? My family and I are pretty serious about this, and you can leave." Luks: "Eshee. Awusephole." His phone still rang. Lakhe glared at him. Luks: "What is it." He answered. Zakes: "We've got a window. We can move the truck. I need access into the warehouse." Luks: "How long is the window?" Zakes: "The owners are having a meeting, they'll continue looking out this evening." Luks: "I'm on my way." He hung up. Lakhe: "Uyaphi?" Luks: "Yoh. Uyalinda vha? I'll be back by evening." Lakhe: "You're not leaving Lukhanyo.

We have a fucking crisis!" Luks: "Is it mine?" He stood up. Sibu: "Lukhanyo, if you walk out that door, don't bother coming back." Luks: "You're serious? I have a family to take care of-" Lakhe: "You're not poor!! You have enough money!! There is absolutely no reason to go out there and do what you're about to do!" Luks: "Taking care of my family is protecting them. This has nothing to do with money!" Khaya: "You heard Sibulele. You walk out that door, don't come back. You'd have proven your loyalty. It's either the streets, or your woman." Luks: "Fine." He sat down, typing on his phone. Lakhe: "Let us know when you're done." Luks: "Mxim." The phone rang again. Soma: "I'm doing this for your brother, not you. When I come back, you're telling me everything and not leaving a single detail behind." He hung up. Luks: "I'm done. And just so you know, this is making my family suspicious and nervous." Lakhe: "That would be your own doing." I was finally done with my bath and tired of their bickering in the lounge. I dressed up in a simple tracksuit and walked to them. Me: "Nobody needs to be King. Everything is under control. Let Lukhanyo go to his family. Why are you keeping him hostage?" Lakhe: "You know what needs to be done Spho." Me: "Yes, and it doesn't involve him. If the Dark Kingdom is unstable I'll be able to put it down permanently. Now; why would I want any of you there in the front line? Now that this discussion is done I was thinking of ordering in for dinner. Can I have my kids back?" Lakhe: "They're safe. Lubby said you have his babysitting CV or something." Me: "Okay. But I want them back now." Lakhe: "Perhaps tonight you can just rest. I'll take the kids home, you can have some time alone." Me: "I believe I've made myself clear that I want my kids with me. Ask Lubby to bring them." Luks: "Lubby has a broken ankle; I'll go fetch them." Lakhe: "No, I will-" Me: "I need the two of you to stop this nonsense. Right now. Lubby has a driver for sure, let him know he can bring the kids. That's it. Even Chris behaves longer than you two. Jesus." Lukhanyo took out his phone making a call. Me: "So what do you guys want for dinner?" Khaya: "I actually have to get back home." Me: "Why?" Khaya: "Uhm..." Me: "Ohh.. your wife is waiting for you. Send my regards. Is there anyone else who's leaving us?" Khaya: "Spho that's rude." Me: "What's rude, is you not introducing me to her but you claim she isn't my mother." Khaya: "You were angry at me. Probably still are, why would I want to bring someone who will agitate you further?" Me: "So she's agitating?" Khaya: "No she's perfect but you won't see that because you're still upset." He walked out. Sibu: "I need to check on Sandile." Me: "He's asleep. I went to him earlier, to ease the pain on his wound. He needs the rest." Lakhe: "will he be okay?" Me: "He'll be fine by morning. Liz is probably home with him." I ordered some food on UberEats. Luks: "He's on his way." Lakhe: "Didn't you have somewhere to be?" Luks: "You were the one who asked me to stay. Kanti undifunani?" Lakhe: "Just thought your family needed you." Luks: "I sorted it

out. You ready for tomorrow?" Lakhe: "Yes. Looking forward to it." Luks: "Have you slaughtered anything in your life before?" Lakhe smiled. Lakhe: "Yes." Luks: "Good." He chuckled. Sibü: "I hope we're still talking about animals." He hissed. Luks: "What else would we be talking about, King?" Lakhe: "Hehee. Yoh." I came back to the lounge. Me: "So what's up?" Luks: "Nothing love." Lakhe: "We're just discussing tomorrow's festivities." Me: "What's happening tomorrow?" Lakhe: "Lukhanyo is having his cow slaughtering thing. I'm a guest." Sibü: "Must be nice." Luks: "You're welcome to join us Sibü. I will need your help for sure." Sibü: "I'd be glad to join you. What do I bring?" Luks: "Nothing much. Just a smile." What the hell was going on here? Were they being polite? I don't know but it was weird and I didn't think I trusted it. In the kitchen, I started cleaning up. Lakhe: "Hey." He stood next to me. Me: "Hey." Lakhe: "Want to tell me what happened with Graham?" Me: "Graham has been lying to me since we met. He kept secrets from me. He cannot be trusted. What happens to him is self inflicted. He knows that." Lakhe: "Spho... what did he lie about?" Me: "He was the first dark King." Lakhe: "WHAT." Me: "Yep." Lakhe: "How did he-" Me: "Change? Who knows if he did? He says Queen Mother took him, which is wild because Queen Mother or him never mentioned this before and every time I asked for advice how to change my child they both claimed it's impossible. But now here we are." Lakhe: "So they lied? Why?" Me: "Boggles my mind." Lakhe: "Did he mention anything else?" Me: "He said he read about what happened to him as a baby. So it's written somewhere. Probably the second book." Lakhe: "Did he say where it was?" Me: "I didn't ask. I left." Lakhe: "Spho, your dad says Graham is in ICU." Me: "He was perfectly fine when I left him in church. Isn't that his safe place? Or is that another lie?" I took the juice and glasses to the lounge. Me: "You know I don't respond well to secrets and lies. Sad that people prefer to learn the hard way. Anyone want some cookies?" ...

Saturday morning.

I'd woken up with my babies next to me. Last night went a bit south. Lukhanyo looked very stressed or probably irritated even though he said he was fine. Something was bothering him. Sibü went out with his girlfriend. Lakhe also left, but he was okay; going to check on Sandile and possibly spend the night with him. He was avoiding his house I guess but he wouldn't tell me why. Maybe they had a fight with Miya but she didn't say anything to me. Wait, why would she? Ndingenaphi? Anyway; Chris was awake. Me: "Hi sweetie." Chris: "Hello mummy. Are you feeling better now?" Me: "Yes I am." Chris: "Daddy said you're having the baby? Where is he?" Me: "The baby?"

Well... we decided he isn't ready yet. So he's gonna wait a little while longer okay?" Chris: "Ohh. Can I go to Jake's house today?" Me: "I'll call his mom and ask. For now, you and I are gonna have a nice picnic right here on the bed." Chris: "Lam is awake. I'll go pick the flowers." He ran out. How did he do that? How does he always know? I went to pick up Lammy bear. He was all smiles today. It was to be a great day. Me: "Good morning angel." I went to make some breakfast with him sitting on his swing chair. Me: "You could come in." Tar: "Good morning." I turned to look at him. Me: "Morning Tar. How are you?" Tar: "I'm great. You?" He walked in. I wasn't expecting any less but today he wasn't in his signature suits. He was dressed in tight fitting stone washed jeans, a bit ripped on the left knee and gripping at his ankles. A crisp white Nike sneaker and a white t-shirt. It didn't happen today, the drool I usually get when I see him. Or maybe because he's dressed casual? Or I was over the stupid crush? Perfect. Me: "I'm great. What can I do for you?" Tar: "Tommy just reached out, he's happy with the progress so far and he's ready to deposit the first payment." He could have emailed me. Why was he here? Me: "I'm very ready for that payment. I need to pay off my new car so they deliver it." Tar: "I'll speed it up. You'll have it by Tuesday." Me: "Thank you." Tar: "I've got the first draft on the contract for the sports day, have you spoken to Lubby yet?" Me: "I haven't. I'll speak to him when I see him, probably tomorrow. They have a ceremony today." Tar: "Tomorrow is best. I want to finalize that contract and have it on his lap by 8am Monday." Me: "That quick?" Tar: "I ain't playing around. Lubby is a billionaire with an incredible influence even with his bad reputation, any businessman eats out of his hand. I want to tie his company on yours to accelerate your influence." Me: "Oh. Okay. That's amazing. I'll have to talk to Lukhanyo about it as well though. I don't want to step on his toes." Tar: "Do that." Me: "Joining us for breakfast?" Tar: "I shouldn't." Me: "Do you have anywhere to be on this Saturday morning?" He smiled. Tar: "I'll see you another time Spho." Me: "Alright." He still stood there, unmoving. Me: "Might as well just sit." He chuckled, walking out to his car. That was weird. Me: "Pumpkin?" Chris: "Yes mummy." Me: "Come on in. I need you to eat." I laid out the trays on my bed. Chris brought the flowers and we all sat, Lam on my lap. I had to distract him with a cheese griller otherwise he'd destroy the whole set up. Chris: "Is Tata Luks joining us?" Me: "No sweetie. He and daddy have a date." Chris: "Without me?" Me: "I'm sure they miss you terribly but they need to get to know each other." Chris: "Since Tata Luks and daddy are now friends does this mean that Tata Luks is now joining our family?" Me: "Well, yes. For now, daddy wants to see if he's a good fit." Chris: "So if he is a good fit, does this mean his kids come too?" Me: "Yes love." He stared at his plate. Me: "Have you met them?" He nodded, his cheeks flaming red. Me: "Okay. And they're nice right?" Chris: "Yes." Me: "So you don't mind having them around?"

Chris: "Are they coming here?" His eyes shot up. Me: "No. Not yet. What's going on?" Chris: "Nothing." Me: "You got yourself a friend there?" Chris: "They're all twins. I can barely focus on one face mama. They all look the same." Me: "There's only two sets of twins there." Chris: "Two teenagers the same age. Chu and Juni. The boy and girl twins; Lutha and Luhle. The two girl twins; Bubu and Bubbles." He laughed. Chris: "And then Bambi. He's 6. He also has a twin but he lives in London. Lukha is also 6 but he lives with his dad." Me: "You remember their names?" Chris: "Yes. I was there the whole of yesterday." Me: "So, how are they?" Chris: "They're okay." Me: "Just okay?" Chris: "They have the best playroom mama. It has all kinds of games, they music things to play with and there's a big screen TV." Me: "You have a big screen and a whole race track in your fathers house." Chris: "Yes but there's no music room. They even have computers. Chuma helped me search for a place to buy tomatoes I can plant. Later you have to take me." Me: "Okay. What else did you do?" Chris: "Do you think I can put pink polish on my nails?" Me: "Polish? Like nail polish?" Chris: "Yes." This was a moment I wasn't ready for and really testy for my parenting. Me: "Why do you want your nails painted pink baby?" Chris: "I think it's nice. I like it. Can I?" Lakhe would strangle me. Me: "Would it make you happy?" Chris: "Very much." Me: "My angel. You do realize other boys will make fun of you if you have nail polish on right?" Chris: "Why would they? It's pretty." Me: "Well, nail polish is seen as a girl thing." Chris: "Says who?" I was stuck. I needed help. My 5 year old son wants pink nails. Me: "Okay. I'll find you pink nail polish but I need to you understand that this should be something that makes you really happy. Nobody else's opinion should matter. Whatever nasty things they say, you shouldn't pay attention to. You'll have pretty nails." Chris: "Perfect. Let's go."

Lakhe woke up in the spare room of Sandile's apartment. Lakhe: "Morning." He mumbled. Sands: "Good morning to you too. And what possessed you the need to spend the night uninvited in my house?" Lakhe: "I missed you." He popped a slice of bread in the toaster. Sands: "Try again." He took a sip of coffee. Lakhe: "Miya is driving me insane." Sands: "There it is. How come? Thought you loved her." Lakhe: "I care about her. She's amazing. Just getting on my nerves." Sands: "Talking about marriage didn't she?" Lakhe: "I don't see myself getting married, Sandile. I just got divorced less than a year ago. I don't want to do it again. But if I say this to her, she'll think I don't want her and I'm using her." Sands: "You know your problem could be solved by a candle light dinner and talking right?" Lakhe: "My girlfriend is very dramatic. That won't work. She'll be convinced that I'm trying to leave her." Sands: "Obsessed?" Lakhe: "Beyond. I just need her to calm down." Sands: "Right. But

now you don't have a place to sleep or clothes to wear. Guess who's the dramatic one." Lakhe: "I'll get Sarah to fetch my clothes for me. You don't want me here?" Sands: "You're welcome here anytime but you're gonna need clothes. I'm not going anywhere with you smelling like expired vinegar and an old mayo sandwich." Lakhe: "At which point did I ever smell like that?" Sands: "If you go two more days without clothes, you might. I'm trying to prevent that." Lakhe: "Mxim." He called his assistant. Lakhe: "Sarah, I need clean clothes." Sarah: "She's not here. She left for a shift an hour ago." Lakhe: "Perfect." He hung up. Lakhe: "You're ready? I'll shower at home and we'll go straight to Lukhanyo from there." Sands: "I'm nervous." Lakhe: "Why? Your wound still painin'?" Sands: "No. Never mind. Let's go." Lakhe: "Let me know if you're uncomfortable." Sands: "I'm not uncomfortable. It's just that... are you okay with this? This is the family of the man currently dating your ex. Are you okay?" Lakhe: "I'm fine. It's nothing I can change. I have to get to know the man who will be around my kids." Sands: "If you want to leave anytime, tell me and we're out." Lakhe: "Thanks but we're adults. He can't be that bad, can he?" Sands: "I hope not." He took his cellphone and crutches. Lakhe: "What's that around your shoulder?" Sands: "My gentleman tote." Lakhe: "Your what?" Sands: "It's a shoulder bag I can put my keys, phone and wallet in. And my smokes if I need them." Lakhe: "You have pockets. And that is a purse." Sands: "I prefer the tote, it's not a purse." He walked out leaning on his crutches. Lakhe locked the apartment and they drove to his house.

Thulani was getting the kids dressed and ready. Everyone of them in printed traditional pants and white shirts. Luks: "Everyone is ready? We've started." Lubb: "Where are your friends?" Luks: "Everyone who's supposed to be here is here." He stormed off. Lubby operated his new wheelchair over to Soma. Lubb: "He's mad." Soma: "That his new friend didn't come? It's weird how close they've become." Lubb: "Co-dads." Soma laughed. Soma: "How's the ankle?" Lubb: "It's fine as broken ankles go, I guess. Nothing extravagant." Soma: "There's someone at the gate." Lubb: "I don't know any red Porsche. Do you?" Soma: "Nope. Khanyo, someone at the gate." Luks: "Are you two going to just sit there gossiping like old women all day?!" Lubb: "Jesus Christ, all he said was there's someone at the gate. Hold on to your panties." He opened the gate. Luks: "How difficult was that Lubby?" Lubb: "Very. I might have broken my wrist." Lukhanyo walked away, fuming. Soma: "Why do you do that to him?" Lubb: "He needs to calm down. Hey, look, it's his friend. Maybe he'll be less grumpy now." Luks: "You're late." Lakhe: "I didn't know we were working on a time schedule. Good morning. You've met my brother, Sandile." Luks: "Yes. We're acquainted. Lubabalo get off that chair and come greet our guests."

Lubb: "Why do I get yelled at?" Lakhe: "It's fine. Where do I put this?" A collectors box of Cuban cigars and another of Courvoisier cognac. Lubb: "Unnecessary." Luks: "You need to get out of that chair Lubabalo." Lubb: "I can't find my crutches-" Luks: "They're on the couch. Come here." Lubby got up and took his crutches walking to them. Lubb: "Hi." Lakhe: "Morning. You've met my brother Sandile." Lubby stared at Sandile. Sandile stared back. Luks: "Not sure what this is about but let me get you a drink, Masilakhe. Come." He walked to the kitchen. Luks: "This is our aunt, just call her Dabawo, not sure where her daughters are. That over there is Chuma's mother, my first born son, her name is Sibongile." Sbosh: "Hi." She smiled. Lakhe: "Hello." He shook her hand. Luks: "That is Namhla, my ex wife's cousin. Also Thulani's girlfriend." Lakhe: "Hello." Namhla: "Hey." Luks: "That is Sindiswa, my brother Stuja's wife." Sindi: "Yoh. Ndiyababona aba bamumutheke amacala, andinothula mna; umhle bhuti. Haibo. Khawuzijonge. Ina, jonga. Ta Luks, ngubani lo?" (I see the others are caught off guard, I can't be quiet; you're handsome. Wow. Look at yourself. Here, look.) Luks: "Voetsek. Let me introduce you to the men of the house." Lakhe: "Thanks. Lovely to meet you all." He followed Lukhanyo. Luks: "So my ex wife is acting up. She'll be here in the afternoon." Lakhe: "Your ex wife?" Luks: "We share 9 children so yes, my ex wife is coming but with her caveman boyfriend." Lakhe laughed. Lakhe: "I know all about caveman boyfriends." Lukhanyo glared at him. Luks: "At least I don't try to act perfect." Lakhe: "Right." He scanned the house looking for his brother. Sandile was still standing in a stare contest with Lubby. They clearly didn't like each other at all but the staring was just drama. Luks: "This is my dad, you met him yesterday. This is my uncle, Ta Smig. This is our family advisor, Tata uVuyisile. The first batch of twins; Soso and.... where is he? Right there, that's Soma. Hide your car keys. He disappears in front of your eyes. You know Lubby- where is he? Lubabalo!! Dear God. This is Stuja, and that is Thulani. Right there is Sinethemba. Sne where is your sister?" Sne: "She wasn't feeling well. But uyeza." Luks: "Utheni?" Sne: "Something about vomiting." Lakhe: "He has a sister?" Luks: "His mother married my ex wife's dad." Lakhe: "Oh." Luks: "Anyway, that's everyone for now. We don't drink hard liquor on family functions. Beer for now is fine. Corona or Heineken?" Lakhe: "Either one is fine. Make it two." He walked to Sandile. Lubby walked away. Lakhe: "What was that about?" Sands: "Not sure. So you met the family huh." Lakhe: "Most uncomfortable moment of my life. I was cringing hoping nobody asks me how I know him because how weird would it be if I said, he's dating my ex wife?" Sands: "Yeah, I don't think you'll have that problem here. Nobody really cares." Lakhe: "I care. I care about looking like a failure. Looking like a fool. The man who's with my ex wife is showing me around like I'm his son." Sands: "Okay now you're being dramatic. Firstly; you're not a failure. Lukhanyo

himself is divorced, his ex is dating someone else and they welcome him as well. They just care about protecting their kids; nothing else. I know this is hard, and we can leave right now. Just say the word." Lakhe: "Nah. It's fine. So he puts all his feelings aside; just to protect his children." Sands: "Clearly. He may be a thug and piece of candy floss with strawberry flavor." Lubb: "Are you gossiping about my brother?" Sands: "I don't gossip." Lubb: "That would be smart." He put down the beers on the table. Sands: "I don't drink Corona." Lubb: "What do you drink?" Sands: "What do you have?" Lubb: "Corona." Lakhe: "I'll just go buy your beer-" Sands: "Then what's the point of calling a party if you can't even afford variety of beverages." Lubby slowly turned around and walked away. Lakhe: "What the fuck was that about?" Sands: "Stating big facts, no printers." Lakhe: "You just insulted a billionaire. I love you so much." He laughed and sipped his beer. His brother stared at him. Lakhe: "What?" Sands: "This is the first time, you've been happy to tell me you love me." Lakhe: "What you talking about?" Sands: "I don't mean to sound gay but any time you've told me that, it was an emotionally draining moment, when I've done something out of character again and you had to remind me of who I am. This is the first time it's out of pure love." Lakhe: "If that is the first time you hear me say it without pain then I'm the problem." Luks: "What did you do?!" He walked to them. Lakhe: "What happened?" Two men were carrying out 24 packs of all beers. ALL. Lakhe: "Oh, that." Lubby appeared in his automatic wheelchair. Lubb: "I can afford hell itself and anything I desire. If you want to play, let's play. Just don't let Satan take off with you." He drove his wheelchair away. Lukhanyo shook his head and followed him. Sands: "Well, he's dramatic." Lakhe: "Leave him. He'll be fine." The gate opened. Lakhe: "Who's that?" Sands: "I'm sitting right where you're sitting. I see what you see. How am I supposed to know?" Lakhe: "Even the ocean doesn't have that much salt in it." Sands: "I'm just sayi- Damn. Who is that??" Lakhe: "I think that Lukhanyo's ex wife and her new boyfriend. She's brave." Sands: "For putting up with Lukhanyo for many years ne? Yeah. A real hero." Lakhe: "For bringing a boyfriend to his house." Sands: "Ohh that. Oh yeah. Superhero of mine she is. Love her." Lukhanyo walked to her. Luks: "Finally you're here. I need your help in the kitchen. Remy, you look nice. The dudes are over there." Lubby gasped. Soma dropped a glass. Luks: "What the hell is wrong with you two today!!" He stomped. Lubb: "That's the first time he's ever been nice to Remy!" He whispered. Soma: "I know! What changed." They both looked at Lakhe. Lakhe: "What?" Lubb: "Nothing. Hi Linkie bear. Love your shoes girl." Lihle: "You bought me these shoes." Lubb: "I know. Because I love them." Lihle: "Right. What's up with your twin?" Lubb: "Oh he's in a mood. His bestie bomb is here. His name is Masilakhe Sobukwe. There he is." Lihle: "Thanks Lubby." Lubb: "You're welcome." Lihle: "Isn't that-" Lubb: "His new

girlfriend's ex husband? Yes it is." Lihle: "Is that why-" Lubb: "He's nice to Remy so you can be nice to his new girlfriend? Probably." Lihle: "Hm. Thanks Lubby." Lubb: "You're welcome." Soma: "Dude!" Lubb: "You know I can't lie." Soma: "You barely tried." Lubb: "Yoh hayi ke." He walked away. Lihle went over to greet the guests. Lihle: "Hi. I'm Lihle." Lakhe: "Mrs Mzinyathi. Nice to meet you." Lihle: "Actually just Lihle is fine. Thank you. You are?" Sands: "Sandile Sobukwe. His Brother." Lihle: "Right. I hear you're Masilakhe?" Lakhe: "I am. I can finally put a face to the name. I heard alot about you." Lihle: "Oh really? Enlighten me." Lakhe: "A beautiful woman. They down played that." She laughed. Lihle: "Why are you trying to flirt with me?" Lakhe: "I'm not trying if you're smiling." Lihle: "If you're trying to provoke Lukhanyo, you're well on your way to a big fight." Lakhe: "I'm not scared." She folded her arms. Lihle: "You're one of them, aren't you?" Lakhe: "Of who?" Lihle: "Them. Thugs. I can see it in your eyes. You have a knack for control and danger." Lakhe: "Is that why you're attracted to me?" Lihle: "Nowhere near it. I'm happy in my relationship. You on the other hand need to check your ego." Lakhe: "My ego? I lived better thinking I don't have one." She chuckled. Luks: "What's going on here??" Lihle: "Just chatting to the guests Lukhanyo. Geez." Luks: "Did I not ask for your help?" Lihle: "I'm not your maid." Luks: "I asked you to help me Lihle. Not to take over. Clearly I'll be doing the work with you assisting." Lihle: "Okay. Fine. I'm coming." She followed him to the kitchen. Sands: "I have a feeling we might not make it out here alive." Lakhe: "Because of Lukhanyo? Even he can't justify being overly protective of his ex. How will he explain it to Spho?" Sands: "Why are you trying to get us killed? We're surrounded by a gang of thugs. And besides, I'm not worried about Lukhanyo. He makes his intentions very clear. What I am stressed about is the lone wolf that's staring you down from the corner. No doubt he will kill and bury us both then come back to eat dinner like he did nothing wrong." Lakhe: "Who are you talking about?" Sands: "Far right corner." Lakhe looked up. Lubabalo was staring at him with a look of pure danger and walked away. Lakhe: "Uhm. That was weird." Sands: "Yeah. Stay away from that woman."

I'd found a shop that sold pink nail polish and took the softer shade. Chris: "No mummy. The other one." Me: "Isn't that bright love? I think this one is prettier." Chris: "It is? Will it show on my nails?" Me: "Yes honey it will." He agreed and I bought the small bottle with remover as well. I texted Lakhe as we're walking around the shopping mall but he didn't respond. I really wish he did so he can speak to his son. I tried him again but to no avail. Lukhanyo would know what to do. He has like 9 kids. I'm sure one of them has wanted something different. I couldn't disturb him though because he was busy. It was going to be a long

day. Once we got home, my boy was ready with his hands. I trimmed his nails neatly and applied the pink shade on his nails. It wasn't noticeable from afar but it was there. Chris: "Oh my! It's so pretty mummy, look!" He had the biggest smile on his face. Was it my fault? Had I coddled him too much? Does this mean Chris was gay? Alright then. No problem I guess. I'll have to handle his dad. He'll just have to deal. Me: "What else shall we do today?" Chris: "I'm gonna be reading in my room. Love you mummy." And off he ran. I'm confused. Me: "What's going on love? Are we not interesting anymore?" I asked Lam. He stared up at me and then at my boob, opening his mouth. Me: "So you're using me? Okay. Let's go make lunch." On my front door, I heard a knock. I already knew it was my dad. I could smell him. What he wanted, I didn't know and he was with someone. Me: "Come in." They walked in. Great. Mom lookalike. Me: "Now you've decided I'm no longer upset." Khaya: "Just give me a chance." Me: "I did. And you kept a secret from me for who knows how long." Khaya: "Fine. I'm sorry. Spho, this is your aunt Z-." Me: "That is a Komander robot, That does all you ask And is no relative of mine." Khaya: "Do you see why I kept this from you? You're kind to everyone BUT your own family. You treat us like garbage." Me: "Garbage? Tata, I am nothing but honest with you every time. I welcome and forgive you every time. When you do something like this, I must still be kind? Hayi Tata. No. That is not fair. I don't want her in my house. I have a right not to want her in my house. You want to replace mama, then fine go ahead but don't involve me in it. I don't want this woman near me." Khaya: "She is your famil-" Me: "THAT IS NO FAMILY OF MINE." I roared, my eyes ablaze. Me: "Get her out of my sight." ...

Hours later ...

Lakhe: "The ceremony is going quite well. Not that I have anything to compare it to." Sands: "Ever wondered why our family never did traditional ceremonies like this?" Lakhe: "Never really cared. I only knew things like this existed when I got to varsity." Sands: "I think it's because of dad's estrangement to his family." Lakhe: "Probably. You ever wondered? How he was like? His dad." Sands: "All the time. It would have been a nice change of scenery to see how other people live. To visit grandparents and the works." Lakhe: "Yeah well, be glad you grew up with a billionaire daddy." Sands: "We. You and I both." Lakhe: "Why are you beefing with Lubby? You two are basically the same. Spoilt rotten and insane." Sands: "I am nothing like that clown." Lakhe: "What happened?" Sands: "Nothing. I just don't like him." Lakhe: "I find that hard to believe. Weren't you the one that came here some

week ago to chill with them." Sands: "I came to Lukhanyo. He was there by default." Lakhe: "They're twins. He'll always be there. I think there's a third one too." Sands: "That can't be right." Lihle: "Might be a good idea for you to drop that topic." She gave them their plates. Lakhe: "Couldn't stay away?" Lihle: "Just leave Lukhanyo's family dynamics alone okay? Especially, the third. Don't go there. Friendly advice." Lakhe: "Fine. I'll do that if you joined us." Lihle: "That's not happening. I'm not your friend." Sands: "I need the toilet." He got up and took his crutches to the bathroom. Lakhe: "Your boyfriend. He's also a thug?" Lihle: "Nope. Surgeon." Lakhe: "Aha. So you're bored. Nothing to be ashamed of really." Lihle: "I'm not bored. You're full of yourself." Lakhe: "Weird because I haven't said a word about myself yet. Do I intimidate you Lihle?" Lihle: "Not even the slightest." Lakhe: "Then why are you worried?" Lubb: "She's not worried, she's happy." He appeared from nowhere. Lubb: "Angel face; Remy is looking for you." Lihle: "Lovely to meet you Masilakhe." Lakhe: "Likewise." She walked away. Lubb: "What do you want from her?" Lakhe: "Why are you pressed? She's not your ex wife - oh wait... she is but you can't really say it out loud?" Lubb: "I have done nothing, absolutely nothing to you. I opened my business relationships to let you in, I support your work, I invite you into my home and all you can do is constantly spit in my face and challenge me?" Lakhe: "Look man, I'm not challenging yo-" Lubb: "So what is it then Sobukwe? Because I know it's not her you want. Ufunani?" Lakhe: "Man calm dow-" Lubb: "Don't fucking touch me. And don't you dare tell me to calm down in my house. I'm waiting for you to miss one more step and I'll set this house alight with your mouth." He walked away. Luks: "Why do you have to provoke him?" Lakhe: "I'm sorry." Luks: "Sorry is not gonna cut it Lakhe. Leave." Lakhe: "Jesus Lukhanyo, all I did was talk to a lady. How is this a big deal? It's not my fault your brother is still in love with her." Lukhanyo grabbed Lakhe by the chest. Sands: "HEY!! Let go of him!" Lubby stood in front of Sandile. Sands: "Do not even try to piss me off. You won't be able to buy this type of hell anywhere. Move." Lubb: "Get the fuck out of my house." Sands: "We'll leave when we're ready." He sat down. Sands: "Lukhanyo let go of Masilakhe. Andifuni uphuma esmilweni. You're not gonna invite us to your house and act like animals once we're here. Ftsek lookaka." Lukhanyo let go. Luks: "You've got 5 minutes." Sands: "Awww, till what?" He laughed and grabbed a beer. Lakhe: "Sandile maybe it's time-" Sands: "We're not going anywhere until we're good and ready." Lakhe stared at his brother, confused. Lakhe: "Wait... where are your crutches?" Sands: "I suddenly don't need them." He looked at Lubby....

The Mzinyathi house was now tense. Everyone was unsettled and paying close attention to any sign of incident. Sands: "So, I say to Sergio, look here you need to make a decision my guy, it's either this or he runs you down." Lakhe is in stitches. Sands: "He says to me, 'Sandcastles, I saw him; I really saw the devil.' I'm like; 'I know that and I need you to listen to me. For him not to come back-' and he let go." Lakhe screamed, laughing. Lakhe: "Let go of what???" Sands: "He shat himself Lakhe. Sergio shat himself when he saw you change." Lakhe: "That's such a lie Sandile, it wasn't that bad." Sands: "Yoh heee. Stop laughing, this is serious." Lakhe: "And he hasn't been back since?" Sands: "Well apart from..." he looked at Lukhanyo standing in front of them. Luks: "When are you leaving?" Sands: "You think it's a good idea for my brother to drive when he had something to drink? Besides, Your girlfriend won't be impressed with you if the father of her kids died. Lihle, would you be impressed with Spho if Lukhanyo died in her house or protection?" Lihle slowly shook her head. Sands: "Makes sense. See Ta Luks? You can't win. Oh and your brother in law is at the gate. Aren't you two close?" Sibub drove in. Lubb: "Who the fuck opened that gate." Sands: "I did." Lubb: "You don't have-" Sands: "the remote? Pin? This remote? Your birth date backwards? What?" Lubb: "You don't have the fucking right!!!!" He yelled. Sands: "Right..." Sibub walked in. A deafening silence swept over the house. Sibub: "Did I miss the party?" Sands: "Not at all Mans. Lubby, here's what's gonna happen next... Since you're unsure. We are not going anywhere yet. We are here to celebrate with you and you're going to be happy about it. We're a family, aren't we Lukhanyo?" Lubby glared at Lukhanyo. Luks: "Yes. Sure." Lubb: "He is no-" Luks: "Yes he is! That's the end of it. Welcome Sibub. I'll get you a drink."

In the bar, Soma, Soso, Lubby, Thulani and Stuja stood around Lukhanyo as he made the drink, staring him down. Soso: "Man, what the fuck is going on? We're not going to be bullied in our house. What the fuck is that about? Awunode ucenge amadoda for icherrie fondin-" Luks: "Andicengi mntu. And don't call Spho icherrie. You KNOW that's the last thing you could describe her." Thulz: "Then tell us kwenzekani? Look at you making a drink, your hands are shaking." Luks: "Just stay away from them. All of them. Leave it alone. It is not worth it. That's an order-" Lubb: "A very cowardly order! I will fuck them up." Luks: "You will listen to what I say, you hear? Leave them alone!!" Sibub: "Problem?" He appeared. Soma: "This is a family meeting man. You're interrupting us. That's rude." Sibub: "I thought we are a family. No?" Luks: "Don't mind them. Here's your beer." Sibub: "Thanks. I want to talk to you about something important. Regarding our other activity the other day at the beach." Luks: "About Gray?" He whispered. Sibub: "Yes." Luks followed him out

the back. Lubb: "What the fuck is that about? Who the hell is Gray?" Soma: "He's doing deals without us? With his enemy?" Soso: "That's his girlfriend's brother. Not an enemy." Soma: "That girlfriend's brother worked for that ex husband over there and his brother for years. They're best friends. He is an enemy!" Lubb: "Who the fuck is Gray? Why would Lukhanyo compromise his safety and get involved with these lunatics? I have a feeling that Gray has all the info we're looking for." Thulz: "How do we find Gray then?" Lubb: "Steal Lukhanyo's phone. It probably has some information on Gray's full name." Soma: "I don't think so." He paged through a phone. Lubb: "How did you..." Soma: "He left it right here. There's no sign of Gray, none of Sibu or any of them. Look. He doesn't communicate with them at all. So how do they find him?" Soso: "Through Spho for sure." Soma: "You can't tell me that one of them has to be around her all the time, if so who's with her now?" Lubby smiled. Lubb: "I need to go to the garage to get some ice." Soso: "You can't drive with that ankle, I'm coming with you." Soma: "No fair! I get to ride with him this time." Soso: "Next time. Let's go Lubby before Lukha realizes we're missing." They walked to their car. Sands: "Awww. Leaving already?" Soso: "Don't react Lubabalo." Lubby got in the car and folded his arms. Lubb: "I knew he was a piece of shit when he walked through that door! He's not even funny." Soso: "I agree but that's Lukhanyo's people now. We've waited too long for him to tell us what's going on, and it's our job to keep him safe. Even if he doesn't want us to." He drove off.

I'd just put Lammy bear down for a nap. Chris was taking his nap too. I was about to lock up and join them but something was weighing on me. I walked out the house scanning the street. A black Range Rover was parked a few houses down. The windows tinted but I knew there were two men inside it. Not a threat really. I waved at them. A few seconds later the passenger door opened. Oh, great. My other half's other third. Me: "Hi Lubby." Lubb: "Pumpkin, Hello! Looking mighty cute today ma'am!" Does he have to be this happy always? Me: "Thank you Lubby. Lukhanyo isn't here." I chuckled. Lubb: "Are you serious? No man, you're hiding him! I know you're in there Baffles!" Me: "He really isn't, you're gonna wake the kids." Lubb: "But I can't find him. So where is he? He really doesn't want to be with me, does he?" A look of despair came on his face. He was genuinely upset. Me: "Come on in. Tell Soma to get out of the car now." Lubb: "It's actually Soso, but you're getting pretty good." Me: "If you say so." Soso got out of the car and they followed me into the house. Me: "I just took some cookies out of the oven. Would you like some?" Lubb: "That would be amazing, pumpkin. Thank you." They sat down. I got them a plate of cookies and milk for Lubby, juice for "Soso". Me: "I

thought you guys had the ceremony today." Lubb: "We do. They're still busy at home. Thank you." He munched on the chocolate chip cookie, dipping another in his milk. Me: "So where would Lukhanyo go?" Lubb: "Thought he came here to see you. He said something about Gray and walked out." Me: "Why would he be interested in anything grey?" Lubb: "I think it's a person not the color grey?" Me: "You mean Graham? Why would he...." I gave it some thought. Soso: "Who's Graham?" Me: "A pastor. What else did he say?" Lubb: "Nothing. Just mumbled something about Gray. Didn't think he'd be a pastor though. So maybe he went to him?" Me: "Graham is in ICU according to my dad. Lukhanyo wouldn't be allowed in there." Lubb: "Oh. Maybe he just wants prayers then once he wakes up." Me: "Lukhanyo won't get any prayers from Graham." Soso: "But he's a pastor." Me: "Not the kind you want to associate yourself with." Lam woke up again. Me: "Excuse me." I went to the bedroom to pick him up. Me: "Lammy bear. Come on sweetie. You need to rest." Lam: "Dada." Me: "He's not here baby." Lam: "Dada. Kissie." Me: "You want a kissie?" I kissed his chubby cheek. Lam: "Kissie." He sobbed. Chris: "Hmm?" He woke up too. Me: "Oh Chrissie? Baby!! You know your brother's name!" Chris: "Yoh umama ke." He took his brother to the window on the side of the room, they sat down and played together. Okay. I went back to the lounge. Me: "How's your ankle Lubby?" Lubb: "Hectic. I'm not enjoying it at all. These crutches hurt my hands too." Me: "Lets see." I held his ankle. Me: "You broke it. It wasn't sprained. Probably hurts like hell." Lubb: "Girl, I live on painkillers. I have to be high half the time." Me: "It will heal into its place in a few days." Lubb: "The doctor said 3 weeks off it and eve-" I snapped it back into place. He gasped in obvious shock and numbness. Lubb: "What. Did. You. Do." Me: "Does it hurt?" He looked down at his ankle. Lubb: "No." Me: "I put it back in its place. Stay off it for a few hours. At least 24. You'll be fine." Soso: "Are you a doctor?" Me: "No. My dad is the doctor." They stared at me. Soso: "We should probably go. Lukha might be home now." Lubb: "Yeah. Uhm.. it was lovely seeing you Spho. Thanks for the cookies." Me: "You're very welcome." Soso didn't even bother touching them.

Soso drove the car away from Spho's house. Soso: "Hospital?" Lubb: "No, I'm...I'm fine." Soso: "For the Gray guy. I'm still a doctor I can sneak in to ICU." Lubb: "Oh yeah. Sure. Let's." Soso: "How's your ankle?" Lubb: "On fucking fire." Soso: "You said you were fine." Lubb: "I am. It's nothing I can't handle." Soso: "Lubby, if you're feeling something man, talk. Don't just sit there. Something fucking weird is happening around here." He parked at the hospital. Soso: "Wait for me in the waiting area." Lubb: "You don't know his last name." Soso: "There can't be that many Grahams in the ICU. I'll find him." He walked away.

Inside the hospital, after he'd changed into scrubs. He chatted to one of his nurses. Nurse: "Dr T. What do you need nowww?" Soso: "I'm a little fuzzy. I'm looking for a Graham. ICU. I can't find his file." Nurse: "He was in theater yesterday. The pastor? Tragic what happened to him. Sickening that there's people out there who would attack a pastor in his own church. Imagine." Soso: "That's terrible. What are his injuries?" She chuckled. Nurse: "Take a look and be horrified for the next 10 years of your life." She gave him the file and walked away. Soso: "Jesus." He stared at the file walking towards the ICU. Soso: "What the hell happened to you Graham?" He whispered. There were not many doctors around the area. He managed to sneak in the room and stared at the white man laying unconscious on the bed. Soso: "I used to be able to wake people up from the dead you know." He chuckled. Soso: "Not really the dead but from unconsciousness." He stood next to the bed. Soso: "I had to connect to God. Feel his power take over me and give families hope. My patients would wake up sometimes. Others would die. I then learnt that sometimes it is much better to let go. To let God take his angels, unless they still had work to finish here on earth. You Graham, are an angel but you're not finished on earth. Which is why you've survived this attack. How is it possible that a strangulation has closed your airway, and you have to breath through machines. Why are your organs bleeding? How have you become paralyzed. This can't be it, Gray. I need to know who did this to you. I know it's not my brother. Lukhanyo may be strong but he's not an animal. You have an energy around you that feels so strong it's almost palpable. Is that why you survived?" The pastor made a sound. Soso: "You can't breath on your own. I shouldn't take this off you." A tiny nod and fluttering eyes. Soso: "Okay. Who hurt you?" He started to pull out the tube that is attached to the ventilator giving the patient oxygen. Graham choked and lightly gasped for air unable to breath. Soso: "Okay. I can't do this. You can't breath. I'll figure it out else where." Gray: "Ko..." Soso: "Shhh. Let me get this back into you." Gray: "Kom... Koman...Komander." and the machine loudly beeped. Khaya walked in. Khaya: "What the hell are you doing." Soso: "He needed to say something... I..." His hands shaking. Khaya: "You took him off life support?" Soso just stared in complete shock. Soso: "I...I..." Khaya: "He has less than 10 seconds to live if you're still standing there thinking." He folded his arms. Soso replaced the tube back into the patient swiftly and in time. Graham stabilized again and fell back to his unconsciousness. Soso was cold from head to toe. Khaya: "What were you thinking?" Soso: "I.. I thought he wanted to say something." Khaya: "And did he?" Soso: "No. Still unconscious." Khaya: "Congratulations. You almost killed a patient because you just thought. Please be advised not to come back in this room to this patient. Am I understood?" Siyanda walked in. Siya: "What's going on?" Khaya: "Is this one of your interns?" Siya: "No. He's not.

He's not even an intern. He's one for our top surgeons. I thought you resigned. Are you okay?" Soso nodded. Soso: "I'm sorry." He walked out. Siya: "And then?" Khaya: "He pulled out Grahams tube claiming Graham wanted to say something." Siya: "But Graham is unconscious." Khaya: "Exactly." Siya: "You think perhaps he's ..." Khaya: "A demon? No he isn't. He's a normal human being." Siya: "But what was he doing here?" Khaya: "You're a full human now, No longer a demon, I'm not discussing anything with you. Keep an eye on your patient." Siya: "I know there's good in you Tata. You didn't want Graham to die, that's why you brought him here and you keep him safe." Khaya stood directly in front of him. Khaya: "The only reason I keep him here with you is because I don't want him tattling his tail and telling anyone Spho almost killed him. That would be attempted murder. Do you think Spho is capable of murder, Siyanda?" Siya: "No." Khaya: "Who do you think is capable of this type of murder, Siyanda?" Siya: "The Unborn." Khaya: "Do you want to snitch on the Unborn?" Siya: "No." Khaya: "Do you think the cops will believe anything you just confirmed? I don't think so. Keep everyone out of here. The minute he wakes up, you call ME. Understood?" Siya: "Yes sir." ...

On the drive home, Lubby kept looking over at Soso who was abnormally quiet. He frowned at the road while he drove, clearly deep in thought. Lubb: "So are you gonna tell me what happened in there?" Soso: "Nothing." Lubb: "Seriously?" Soso: "He's on life support Lubabalo." Lubb: "Oh. It's that bad, huh?" Soso: "Yeah." Lubb: "I'm sorry I put you through that. I just... I wish I knew what was going on. I hate not having leverage on these ass wipes that are bullying us in our house." Soso drove into their yard. Soso: "Just let it go Lubby. They'll move on sooner or later." Lubb: "Yeah but not if Lukhanyo still invites them here they won't." Soso: "Well, we'll just let him know that we don't want to be near them and that's that. This is our home too. He can go to their place if he feels the need to be with them. Do you need help to get out?" Lubb: "No I got it." They got out the car. Soso grabbed the packs of ice they'd stopped to get on their way. Luks: "Where the hell have you two been!" Lubb: "Went to get some ice." Luks: "There's enough ice! You have an ice making machine." Lubb: "Oh." He walked passed him inside the house. Luks: "Soso?" Soso: "What he said." Luks: "Whats this about?" Soso: "He just needed to clear his head. Okay? Leave it." He walked into the house. Sands: "Everything okay?" Soso stared at him. Sandile smiled. Soso: "Everything is perfect." He smiled back. Soso: "I hope you're enjoying yourself." Sands: "I really am." Soso: "That's good." He walked to Soma. Soso: "Follow me." They walked in a single file to the far end of the house and closed the door behind them. Soso locked it. Soso: "I need you to be honest with me." Soma: "You know

everything about me. What more do you need? My bowel movement schedule?" Soso: "This is serious. What happened at the office, the day Spho visited. What did she say that made you break down like that?" Soma: "I didn't break down. I don't know what you're on about." He started for the door. Soma: "Give me the key." Soso: "Soma, I know this is hard and I need you to trust me. But something is going on in that family and it's not normal. Somangaye, please." Soma: "I can't remember." Soso: "That pastor was attacked inside his church. He is on life support. His organs are failing. It will be a matter of time he's brain dead and nobody will ever know what happened to him." Soma kept quiet, staring at his brother. Soso: "He managed to wake up from his unconsciousness. How, I don't fucking know but he woke up. I asked who had hurt him. He muttered Komander. Soma, do you realize how dangerous that person is? Do you realize that Lukhanyo and those three guys we don't know might be involved with Komander?" Soma: "That's impossible. Those imbeciles are cheeseboys. They don't know who Komander is. It can't be, Soso. And Luks isn't that dumb. Even he has his limits. Maybe this is the wrong Graham." Soso: "It's not. I know for a fact, it's not. Our brother is in grave danger. Soma... I'm pleading with you. Whatever you may know that she said when you were alone, I need to know." Soma stepped closer to him. Soma: "She didn't say anything. I just... lost myself. Open this door." His twin sighed in distress. Soso: "Promise me this conversation never leaves this room." Soma: "I promise." Soso: "Till death." Soma: "Do us together." They did their special handshake.

Something was bothering me about Lubabalo's visit. I couldn't put my finger on it. I couldn't even nap any longer. There was a car parking in my driveway. Dr Siyanda Kusile. He knocked on the door. Me: "Come in." Siya: "Hi." He walked in. Me: "Hello." Siya: "How have you been?" Me: "Good. You look great. Gained some weight too. Nice." Siya: "Just a bit." He smiled. Siya: "I'm looking for Sandile." Me: "Oh he's at Lukhanyo's house with Lakhe." Siya: "Okay, will he be back soon? I need to treat his leg today." Me: "You don't have to worry about it. I took care of it." Siya: "Uhm.. you took care of it? How?" Me: "I drained the remaining poison out of him. His leg is fine now." Siya: "It's supposed to take weeks." Me: "For a regular doctor, yes." Siya: "What did you do with the poison?" Me: "I got rid of it. Would you like a cookie?" Siya: "No thank you. You haven't been to see Gray. Why is that? He's your friend." Me: "I have nothing to say about him or to him." Siya: "Okay, what happened?" Me: "With what Siyanda? Did I not just say I have nothing to say about him?" Siya: "Right. Uhm... someone almost killed him. In hospital today. He pulled out the tube connected to the ventilator helping him breath.

Claims Gray wanted to say something but he's unconscious." Then it clicked. Me: "He wasn't looking for Lukhanyo." I thought out loud. Siya: "What?" Me: "Nothing. Just random thoughts." Siya: "Okay. Uhm. If you need anything, or Sandile. Please call me immediately." Me: "Okay." He turned to walk out the door bumping into an arriving Fez. I was not in the mood for this. Lubabalo tricked me into confessing who and where Graham is. But why? He seemed to be sure it wasn't the color Gray but it is a person and Lukhanyo was somehow affiliated with him. Which means Lukhanyo hasn't told him anything so why is Lubby looking for Graham? Or is it Soso? Fez: "Earth to Mommy!" Me: "Hey Fez." Fez: "Hi Ma'am. How are you? It's been a minute!" Me: "I'm fine. Just a bit tired." Fez: "I see that." He put Boogie down and undid his leash. Fez: "I just came to check on you." Me: "And tell me you broke up with Gio?" He looked to the side. Me: "Wow." Fez: "It's been great okay? He has changed. He hasn't hurt me. We're happy. He listens to me and he took his mom elsewhere so that she doesn't bully me any longer." Me: "Fez. If he dare touches you again; I will burn his hands to crisp." He laughed. Fez: "You're funny. Go take a nap, I want to cook you dinner." Me: "I mean it." I went to look at my kids. They'd fallen asleep again. Lam tucked in his big brother's arms. I went to bed.

The Mzinyathi house was now back to the normal ceremony. Everyone still on edge but carrying on as nothing happened. Soso sat quietly, drinking excessively. For the past hour, he'd gone through an entire 6 pack of beer. On the third beer of the second pack, Lubby grabbed the beer. Lubb: "No." Soso: "Gimm' back my beer." Lubb: "You're drinking yourself to the grave Sonwabise." Soma: "What's going on?" Lubb: "He needs to get to bed. He's been drinking non stop." Soma: "Why?" He asked Soso. Soma: "You barely drink this much. What happened?" Soso: "Lemme 'lone, Kay? Can'u do dat?" Luks: "The hell is going is going on over there?" Soso: "Hell is korrekt. Gimme my beer, lubalo." Lubb: "Not until you tell me what's bothering you. I'll even supply you more than just this." Soma: "That won't happen. He needs to talk and no bribing for it either. Get up, buddy." Soso: "I said lemme 'lone!!!" Lakhe: "Is everything okay?" Lubb: "Stay right where you are. This has nothing to do with you." Lakhe: "I'm just trying to help-" Lubb: "Why? Are you a psychic?" Luks: "Lubabalo!" Lakhe: "No, I'm not. I have tried to drown myself in alcohol though. I may be able to get through to him." Lubb: "You're not coming anywhere near-" Luks: "Just let him talk to Soso. You can see not even his twin is succeeding." Lubby threw the remaining beers against the wall, breaking all the bottles pouring to the floor. He stormed off. Sands: "If he gets any more dramatic I'm bringing a camera crew. Might as well be getting paid for it."

Sibu chuckled. Soma stared at Lukhanyo. Soma: "You've turned on your own family, allowed strangers to manage our problems. They ridicule us in our house. I hope you're very pleased with yourself. If this is what you call family" he shook his head walking to Lubby. Luks: "Anyone else who wants to insult me still?" Remy got up and went to fetch his medical kit. Lakhe: "Soso?" He stood in front of him. Lakhe: "What did you see." He asked in a low tone. Soso looked up at him. Lakhe: "Tell me." Soso: "What are you." Lakhe: "Just a human being like you Soso. I want to help you. Something triggered you." Soso: "You're not... You're one of them." His voice quivering. Soso: "You're one of them." He said more audibly. Lakhe swallowed. Lakhe: "You need to get to bed Soso. You're tired and drunk." Remy sat next to Soso assessing his eyes. Remy: "Lets go." He helped him up and to his room. Lakhe went straight to Sandile. Lakhe: "We need to leave. NOW." Sands: "Why? What's wrong?" Lakhe: "He knows." Siby: "knows what?" Lakhe looked around them. Lakhe: "He knows who we are." He whispered. Sands: "That's impossible-" Lakhe: "We're leaving. Get up." Sandile got up with Siby. Luks: "Leaving already? So soon?" He asked sarcastically. Lakhe: "Look, I'm sorry about today." Luks: "No need to be sorry. My family just hates me more than before now." Lakhe moved closer to him. Lakhe: "Keep a close eye on Soso. He was in contact with a Komander demon." ...