

He is hers. Always have been. Always will be...she said



•••Intro•••

ZANELE

Phew! Today is thsee day. I am going to marry the love of my life. Every girls dream, its been good 12 years waiting for this day. Going back to the day he asked my hand in marriage. It's still so fresh in my memory.

I took a last glance on the mirror. I look like a dream, this is exactly how I have always pictured it. The dress, make up, the crown, the veil, heels, the pearls, flowers and the shoes. I attended at the soft knock on the door. My aunt came in as summoned and softly closed it behind her. She shed a tear, rather tears of joy.

Aunty: Your mother would've been so proud

Me: She is proud, she's watching over me. I carry her along with me.

Aunty: The people are waiting

Me: I am ready.

She extended her hand. I placed mine on it and walked out. We stood at the door, butterflies!

The soft instruments made their beautiful melody and she walked me down the aisle. He couldn't stop smiling, I was looking at him under the veil. He shook hands with aunty, she placed my hand on him. She cried as she made her way to sit down.

We said our vows. Reception. And we called it a day. We moved to our new fully furnished mansion. The family and friends wished us all the best. My husband was all over me.

Me: If you want us to get to our new house in one piece you will stop kissing me

Him: I can't help it

I giggled as he tickled me.

Hi. My Name is Zanele Mkhosi, now Zulu. Am an orphan my aunt is my only family left. She raised me as her own since she has no kids. Mother never told me about my father. No one knew who my father was. At the age of 16 in standard 8 I met Nkazimulo Zulu who happened to be my boyfriend, fiancé, now my husband. We've stayed together against all odds. He always says "no one can break what God has brought together" judging by what we've been through. He's right.

ZIMASA

Lying here, not knowing what to do. Thinking of where I'm gonna go and submit my cv next. My previous employer is probably the reason behind the reason why I haven't been called to any interview. Why did I even put up her numbers as

my references? That woman hates me. If I was on life support, she'd pull out the plug and charge her phone. I shouldn't have crashed her car when she fired me but there's no undoing that now. She knows how to get on my nerves and I was pretty much fed up with her bullshit. I failed to sell that ugly match box, 3 months on listing but nobody wanted that old hag of a house. Who still buys a little house that needs massive renovations for a million? She is such a huge fat fucking dreamer. And then she had a nerve to tell me I don't know how to do my job, she called me all sorts of names. I lost it and I slapped her. It was an honest mistake, she was being disrespectful. It was only the 5th time I hit her and I was already on my final warning. And Just like that, I got fired. There is no fairness in this world. I tossed a little stone at her windscreen and that cheap thing broke.

I'm just glad that case is over with. I paid R30 00. R10 000 for the lawyer and R20 000 for the damage. It was all I had and now I am broke as a

mutherfucker. If it wasn't for Martha. I'd be homeless.

She gets in carrying grocery bags, followed by 2 guys. Our neighbours. They greet me,

Me: Hello.

Sabelo: You're always sleeping.

Me: What do you want me to do? Chase the air like you every morning?

Sabelo: If you want to.

Me: Oh please.

Sabelo: We'll see you later Martha.

Martha thanks them and they walk out. This soccer star wanna be is annoying. He thinks he's Neymar.

Me: You should've called.

Martha: I was about to when they showed up.

Me: Oh.

Martha: Any luck?

Me: Nothing.

I get up and help her pack the food into cabinets.

Martha: My son is starting school next month. I am gonna need help with the rent and groceries.

Me: Are there any vacancies at your work?

Martha: My work?

She seems a bit surprised.

Me: Yeah. The shifts are crazy but at this point, I'd do anything cause its good money.

Martha: Friend.

Me: Yes.

Martha: I'm not just a waitress there.

Me: What else?

Martha: Stripping.

Me: No!

I laugh.

Me: You do pole dancing half naked?

Martha: Yes.

Me: All the money you get is from miserable married men?

Martha: Yes.

Me: How come you've never told me?

Martha: I don't know. Its not something you can just say.

We've been friends for 4 months. We met when we were renting out this apartment. We just hit it off and here we are now, friends. Because I'd rather be homeless than to back to Alexandra, not after I told them that I was elevating in life and would never be like them.

I would be a laughing stock. They'd eat my name for breakfast, lunch and supper. And honestly I would rather be a stripper than go back there.

Me: Tell me when they need a new hoe.

Martha: They do.

I am employed!

I am Zimasa Hlongwane. That's pretty much it...

•••1 year later•••

ZANELE

Mulo: My mother is coming over

Me: Again?

Mulo: Yes. Please Cook something nice and prepare a room.

Me: Am working late today

Mulo: Okay. I'll ask Brenda to do it. See you later.
I love you

Me: I love you more

I put the jewellery on and made my face up.
Brenda came in with breakfast.

Brenda: Sorry for not knocking madam

Me: Its okay ma. How are you today?

Brenda: Am fine. Sir has asked me to prepare a room and food for your mother in-law. The thing is I can't. My son is not well at home.

Me: Sigh Okay. Just change the linen. She's gonna change it anyways. I'll buy food on my way back

Brenda: Thank you madam.

Me: Pleasure ma. Are you okay?

Brenda: Am fine

Me: Financially?

Brenda: Am still covered ma'am thank you.

Me: Knock off as soon as you finish up and take your son to the Dr.

I poured my coffee on a flask. I departed. When I got to work. All eyes were on me. I rushed to my office. Whew! Where's this girl!

She walked in.

Me: And then?

Lilly: You're in deep shit

Me: Huh?

Lilly: Mr Carlson is breathing fire.

Me: What have I done?

Lilly: The team has been dragging their feet.
Remember the deliveries to Zim?

Me: No, don't tell me they were delayed

Lilly: Your guess is right. 4 of them, worth 3.5 million. The clients pulled out

The door roughly opened. He had this deadly look I almost shit my pants. I stood up and extended my hand for a shake.

Mr Carlson: I don't need your hand. I need an explanation to why the hell my company has lost 3.5 million and 2 reliable clients!

Me: Am sorry Sir. Its been 2 weeks without reports I had no idea

Carlson: You better start acting like the CEO or else you'll be fired with immediate effect. In 5 years I've never lost clients nor that much amount of money. If you're having troubles at home please fix them!

Me: Yes Sir

He walked out. Woow!

I've never seen him this angry and I was now angry at the staff for not reporting for 2 weeks.

I called a meeting. Addressed them and sent out the drivers to drive to Zim and deliver after I had begged the clients not to take their business else where. Even promised personal visits. Well it worked on my favor. Exactly 6pm I knocked off, tired to the toe. I drove home longing for a bath and sleep. I noticed a different car as I parked. Oh dear Lord help me

I'll just cook there's no other way cause am not spending another second on this car.

I found them laughing in the patio. Smells like she cooked. I gathered all my strength and walked to them.

Me: Dumelang mma.

Her: Yey Mulo you should've seen how surprised she was... Oh hello

Me: Am sorry you found no food prepared for you to eat I...

Her: No wonder my son is so skinny. I had to make sure I come back as soon as possible to feed him

Mulo: Wine? Anyone?

Me: No babe thanks I had a long day I need a bath and rest

Mma: Are you pregnant?

Us: What?

Me: No no mma I just don't do well with wine when am tired

Mma: Mmmmmnmh

I left them there. Dear Lord Its gonna be one long ass week. She never liked me and probably never will. I soaked myself on hell water. The door knob moved.

Me: Its locked babe

Mma: Why do you lock? This isn't your house

Shit!

I quickly took a towel and hid myself. I unlocked.

She moved me out of the way.

Mma: You're enjoying his money neh.

Me: What money mma?

Mma: Look how fat you're getting, all this luxurious house to yourself, the cars he's bought you. What is it that my son isn't giving you?

Me: Where's this going?

Mma: You owe him

I chuckled.

Me: Owe him what exactly?

Mma: A child! You owe him a child!

Me: Mulo & I haven't...

Mma: I've always knew you were barren

She must be kidding me! Owe him? The cars he bought? Does he even know how much a car costs? She must not start with me. I went back to the tub...

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ZIMASA

If someone came up to me right now and asked me what am I doing here? I wouldn't answer them because I really don't know. Martha thought it was best remedy to get over my boyfriend that I'm going to break-up with next week because I deserve better. I deserve someone who's gonna treat me like a queen, love me like one and respect me like one. Not this soccer star that is on every tabloid with different women every week but me. But I love him. And I understand his reason for not putting me out there, I like privacy and being

known that we're together. We'll never find peace. Our relationship will have more than just us. We won't enjoy it.

I would stay a little longer to be polite but its chewing with his mouth wide open and talking and laughing with it still there. I have stopped eating. I can't down anything with this sight. Its all kinds of disgusting. And this is by far the the worst blind date I've been on. Mr “All bout himself” was better than this ill mannered disgusting human being!

I hate Martha more than ever right now. I've been trying to call her and sent her numerous texts but she's not here to save me. How did I even get to agree to this madness? I don't know what annoys me the most now, the meat stuck on his teeth or the dried mucus on his nostrils.

Simon: And there was this time when my mom and I went to visit my dad. I cried when they wanted me to sleep in my room. I ended up

sleeping with them, they couldn't even touch each other.

I just wish he can stop talking about his parents. My ears are burning of hearing my mom this, my dad that. Ugh somebody come and rescue me!

Simon: Are you full?

Me: Yeah. I'm just gonna get a takeaway. We should get the bill anyways.

Simon: Are you bored?

Me: No. I'm just tired and it's late.

Simon: If that's the case then cool.

He called the waiter. My cheeks feel like they are gonna fall off with this smiling.

The bill arrives. We split it, after he gives me the look. The look of “aren't you paying up?”

I get up and pull my dress down. A dress reserved for special occasions. I wasted it for this nonsense. We walk to the door and my uber is already here, thank God.

Me: Thank you for an amazing night. This is me

Simon: Pleasure all mine.

He leans in for a kiss, I give him a cheek. He opens the door for me. I hop in. He closes the door. I thought this night will never be over.

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I wake up and I'm on my couch, there's a bottle of beer in my hand. My head is not letting me breathe. I fight to get my body up and it's a full house. There bottles all over the floor. I just can't seem to stop letting Martha get to my head. I have been trying to quit drugs when I'm not working for the past month but somehow she always brings them back and convince me to take them.

I shake her foot hanging loose on the other couch.
She murmurs no.

Me: Who are all these people?

Martha: I don't know.

Me: Martha! Wake up!

Martha: Leave me alone.

Me: Aisuka marn. Wake your friends and tell them to leave. You know Sabelo is gonna kill me if he finds all these people here.

Martha: Sabelo is probably sloshed somewhere in those high profile clubs. His team won yesterday, there's no way he's gonna show up

Me: Even if that may be the case, get these people out of here. I need my space.

Martha: Fine.

I grab a clean gown and slippers and go to the bathroom. I need a very hot shower to bring my body back to life.

I jump a little and my body tenses up when strong hands firmly grip on my breasts, momentos breath hit my nostrils as soft kisses land on my neck.

Sabelo: Hi.

Me: Hi. I didn't hear you come in.

Sabelo: You were lost in a moment I guess.

he's gently massaging my nipples. I put my right foot on top of the other and rub it as the pleasure goes down to my clit. I feel him grow hard on my butt, we're the same height, he's the only short sexy man I've ever laid my eyes on. And we're perfect just the way we are.

His right hand lets go of my boob and slowly go down to my freshly shaved vagina. I open a bit for him to go in and he does. He starts from down and goes up to the clit that's now throbbing hard, one thing about this man, he's good at romance but horrible in fucking but I love him so I can stand it.

I squeeze my thighs when he slowly massages my clit and moan.

Sabelo: You love that, don't you?

Me: Its you that I love.

He chuckles and stops and turns me around. He hungrily kisses me, his dick is poking in between my thighs, he pushes it inwards and it rubs my pussy lips. He's made me cum just with this, he's sort of aware of his insufficient pleasure in penetration because he always makes sure that I cum before we have sex.

He pushes one leg aside and put his dick in, right on my clit and rubs it in circles. I am feeling the urge to pee but it won't come out. I hold on to him, he's kissing me and pinching my nipple with his free hand, I am grinding now. I am on my toes, I

am at the door of cuming, I push the penis down and it slips me.

Me: Fuck me without mercy babe.

I whisper. He pushes me against the slippery wall and try his best to do what I asked but its just not right. I am frustrated.

Me: I wanna be on top.

He pulls out and sits on the floor. I get on top and fuck him till I cum, sometimes when I am not tired, this is how I get to have good sex, by getting on top.

We get up and resume showering. He never shows up after his games unless they lost. Its always alcohol and friends.

Me: Is everything okay?

I ask as we dry ourselves.

Sabelo: No.

Me: What's up?

Sabelo: I Do ypu love me?

Me: Ofcourse I do. How could you even aak that.

Sabelo: Because Skhumbuzo saw me snorting in the restrooms.

Me: so?

Sabelo: He's threatening to expose me and babe if he does, mt life, our lives are over.

Me: What are you going to do?

Sabelo: i am asking you this out of desperation. Please seduce him. Film while you have sex, i need to have something against him to make sure I am safe.

I am lost for words. He is holding me but i do not feel him. How many times do I have to go out pf my way to fix his life in order for him to see thar that love him!

02

ZANELE

I startle when Khosi slides into the chair opposite me. I wipe my mouth.

Me: You scared me.

Khpsi: I realize. What's eating you up?

Me: Is it not Mama Zulu. That woman lives to get under my skin.

Khosi: Is she still talking about a baby?

Me: Can you believe it? I'm so angry.

Khosi: Talk to Nkazimulo. Tell him to get his mother in line. She has no right to abuse you like that. No right.

Me: Nkazimulo is too soft on his mother. He just said he'll talk to her last night when I told him and I know he just said it softly she did not get it at all. She had a nerve to say I owe him a child for that luxurious house, and cars he's bought me.

Khosi: Seriously? She is out of her mind. We are grabbing drinks after work with abo Given and Simon. You can join us.

Me: Gladly. I can't go to that house early.

Khosi: Stop poking that salad. Eat, I am meeting babe downstairs. I'll see you after lunch.

Me: Okay love. Send my love.

Khosi: I will.

She gets up and walks out. I close the salad container and drink water. Can it be next week already!

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ZIMASA

We woke up 4 hours ago but we haven't said a word to each other. I have nothing to say to him. I have ironed my clothes for later. He comes out of the bathroom, smelling good like he's not full of shit.

Sabelo: I'm gonna go to the mall, do you need anything?

Me: Yes.

Sabelo: What is it?

Me: For you to not come back here.

He stopped and looked at me.

Sabelo: Is this about what I asked?

Me: Ofcourse Sabelo! You want me to have sex with a man, and record it.

Sabelo: Yes! How hard can it be? You know very well that I took an oath that I shall never use drugs while working for The Kings boys. Do you know what this could do to me? It wouldn't only get me fired but it will also ruin my whole career. No club would ever want me. We would lose all of this,

this apartment, gone, your car, gone. Everything, gone!

He takes a deep breath.

Sabelo: Now decide what is hard, having sex with Skhumbuzo or losing the nice life. And while you decide, call this lady. She needs a pa. Its about time you stopped being a stripper, its not good for my image.

Me: Oh really? When did start to realize that?

Sabelo: We-

Me: Get out. Just get out.

He takes his phone and walks out. I sit down on the bed and cry....

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NKAZIMULO

She stumbles in with her heels in hand. Out of all days, she chose today to come home late and drunk.

Zanele: I thought I'd find you in bed.

Me: Doing what while you were not home?

Zanele: Sleeping.

Me: Where were you?

Zanele: Out with friends. I needed to clear my head.

Me: And you do not call to inform me.

Zanele: You would've come and ruined my fun. Where's your mother?

Me: Upstairs. .

Zanele: Did you talk to her?

Me: I did.

Zanele: Then why is she still here?

Me: You ask her. I'm tired. I'm gonna go to bed. Are you hungry?

Zanele: No thanks. I ate.

Me: Let's go to bed then.

I take her bag and heels and we walk up to the bedroom. We go take a shower, every night for the past 8 years we do this. Even when we're mad at each other, this is where everything gets resolved.

I pick her up when we're done and carry her to the bed. I lay her down and get on top of her and kiss her. She stops me.

Zanele: Babe I'm too drunk and tired.

Me: Ok.

I kiss her forehead and get off.

Me: Sleep.

I cuddled her and drifted to sleep...

...

ZIMASA

Around 00:00 the club clears out. I go to the changing room as soon as the group of men I was dancing for leave. I count all the money and take Razo's cut to him and keep mine. I find Martha taking her drugs when I come back.

Martha: Hey. You want: some?

Me: No. I'm leaving.

Martha: So early?

Me: I've made Razo's money and I am happy with my tips.

Martha: Okay. I'll see you at home.

I take my bag and leave. I get into my car and sit there for a while. Men are coming in and out of the club. I take my phone and call Sabelo. He doesn't pick up, I try him until he answers.

Sabelo: Sthandwa sam.

Me: Sabelo do you love me?

He yawns.

Sabelo: Is this-

Me: Just answer the damn question Sabelo.

Sabelo: Yes. I do love you.

Me: But not enough love?

Sabelo: Babe what's up?

Me: Does each time I give myself to a man to save you, makes you love me more?

Sabelo: Zimasa.

Me: No. Answer me.

Sabelo: Don't do it. I'll find another way.

Me: Will you answer me!

Sabelo: I love you. That's what I know. I really really love you.

Me: Is loving you and doing all of this for you going to be worth it at the end of the day?

Sabelo: It will. Just trust me.

I hang up and drive off to Rosebank where Skhumbuzo stays...

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In the morning I woke up first and drove to my place. I stayed in the shower for an hour crying. I no longer feel sorry for myself because I keep doing this to myself. Over and over again. Why won't I leave him? Why do I let him do these things for him?

I feel a cold hand over my cheek as I start falling asleep. I open my eyes and Skhumbuzo smiles. I jump.

Me: What the hell!

Skhumbuzo: I couldn't stop thinking about you.

Me: What about me?

Skhumbuzo: What you did. Why don't you leave this guy?

Me: Get out.

Skhumbuzo: You deserve better than Sabelo. If a man is capable of asking you of such then that man does not love you nor respect you. I will not tell on him. Not because of anything but because of you. I care about you. I never stopped.

Me: Thank you.

He tosses a drive at me.

Skhumbuzo: It has the restroom footage.

Me: How do I know there isn't another one.

Skhumbuzo: There isn't. Thank you for last night, I needed that.

I nod. He motions to the door and closes it behind him. I take the drive and take a deep sigh and calls Sabelo....

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ZANELE

I arrive at work and everyone is full of energy. And I can't even walk. I come across Simon. He grabs my bag and pull me by hand until we get to my office. I take off the sunglasses, he laughs.

Me: This is all your fault.

Simon: What time did you get home?

Me: Around 9 to 10. My husband was angry.

Simon: He shall remain strong. A human needz that every once in a while. He knows that.

Me: He doesn't drink.

Simon: At all?

Me: He used to and he quit.

Simon: Is he born again?

Me: No. It was creating problems for us so h3 quit.

Simon: True love.

I laugh.

Me: You could say.

Simon: I'll see you later, yeah?

Me: Come around with coffee.

Simon: I will.

He walks off. I feel my inside twist and I rush to the toilet. Nothing comes out. I hate hangover. I call Lilly in. She gets in, in a minute.

Me: Order me a smoothie to beat this hell of a hangover and make me strong black coffee while at it.

Lilly: Sandwich?

Me: Just coffee.

She walks out. I feel like I am dying. I call Nkazimulo.

Mulo: Mama wasekhaya.

Me: Babe I'm dying.

Mulo: Order those green juices you drink.

He chuckles.

Me: Its not funny. I just asked Lilly to order one for me. Can we have lunch together today?

Mulp: Ofcourse my love.

Me: Please fetch me around 11, I can't drive like this.

The door roughly open up. I freeze.

Zodwa: You need to help me.

Me: Mageba, I'll call you later.

Mulo: Is that someone crying?

I hang up. I never thought I'd see her again.

Me: Zodwa? What are you doing here? You know you are not supposed to be here!

Zodwa: I didn't know where to go. You were the only person I could think of. Zanele please help me.

Her baby won't shut the hell up. And I know exactly who she is running from and why and I do not have any intentions of helping her.

Me: You need to leave Zodwa. You knew very well you shouldn't reproduce. Do not get me involved in such.

Zodwa: I was young. I didn't know what I was doing.

Me: Well there is only one way out of it. Give it up.

Zodwa: I can't. She had killed my husband. I can't lose my child too. She is all I have. Siena plea-

Me: Don't call me that!

I take my phone and call security.

Zodwa: I am begging you. Just get me out of the country please.

Me: Mr Mtshali, please rush to my office.

I hang up and look her dead in the eye.

Me: If you do not leave right now. Security will throw you out like a dog that you are. Who the hell do you think you are betraying Nomalanga?

Zodwa: I did not mean what I said! I was only 18; what did I know!

Me: You knew you wanted a good life, a husband to love you and only you. What changed!

Zodwa: I wanted my own family.

Me: And preferred losing everything?

Zodwa: I did not know that it still stand!

Me: What does forever mean to you? Just give her that damn child and get your life back.

Zodwa: No.

The security came in.

Mr Mtshali: Is this her?

Me: Yes. Never let her in.

Zodwa: Siena please!

She cries as they pull her away. I close the door and walk to my desk. I hear the door open. I turn, Its Mulo. I fake a smile and welcome him in. Some things can never stay buried, no matter how hard you try....

O3

ZANELE

He keeps stealing glances. I know he wants to ask but he won't cause he's him. I clear my throat and drink my wine that doesn't taste as good today so does this food. I love this place for their exquisite steak and salad but today it tastes like rubber and its bitter.

Me: When is your mother leaving?

Mulo: I don't know.

Me: You should ask her so I can prepare myself ukuthi how long am I gonna be uncomfortable in my own home.

Mulo: But don't you think it is time we had one?

Me: Excuse me, what?

Mulo: A child. Its been 13 years Zanele.

Me: So? That's a certificate for a child?

Mulo: No but as normal people, we should have a baby by now.

Me: No. I am not ready for a child.

Mulo: I'll wait.

He takes my hand and kisses it. I smile.

Me: We should go on holiday.

Mulo: Not now. My boss's wife is in town.

Me: Can't they get another driver to stand in?

Mulo: You know he trusts me and only me.

Me: Maybe you should just quit and we'll look for something here for you.

Mulo: Don't ruin this good moment.

I nod and chew my rubber steak.

Mulo: Who was that woman?

Me: What woman?

Mulo: The one that was dragged out of the building when I came in.

Me: I didn't see her.

Mulo: Babe they said she was at your office.

Me: Probably one of the beggars. At what time are you going back to work?

Mulo: 4pm. I thought we could go for a ride after lunch if you have time.

Me: I do.

He smiles.

Me: I know I have a sex debt.

He laughs.

Mulo: Of course madam. Thought you forgot.

Me: How could I? I could really use some energy transfer.

Mulo: Say no more cause I booked us a room. .

I laugh. He's so wild. I call the bill and I pay before he tries to take over. And I take my bag, we walk out holding hands...

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ZIMASA

I was getting ready for work when he arrived and he's been following me around since then. Its been 2 hours. I walk out of the shower and dry myself and walk out. He's on my tail. I was mad when he arrived but now I feel like laughing. I laugh.

Me: Quit that face.

Sabelo: You are mad at me.

Me: I am but this is crazy. Are you gonna follow me to work?

Sabelo: Yes. If it'll get you to forgive me then yes.

Me: Come here.

I hugged him.

Me: There isn't a thing I wouldn't do for you.
Anything to save you from anything or anyone.

Sabelo: I know my love and I appreciate you. Do you want a new car?

Me: No. I want a steady relationship. Something solid. A relationship that will give me peace. I wanna sleep at night and know that wherever you are, you love me.

Sabelo: You got it.

We pinky swear and kiss. He takes off the towel and lay me down on the bed and pulls me to the edge of the bed, my legs on his shoulders and his head buried deep inside my thighs. I moan softly as his tongue trail in circles around my clitoral area and he sucks my it I squeeze my breast pull him in with my legs. He feasts on me until I almost cum. He's up on my lips kissing me and fingering me quick, I have the urge to pee but it won't come out. He's in. I didn't see him wearing a condom. He's humping.

Me: Sabelo.

He kisses me.

I push him off my mouth. He's humping hard.

Me: Sabelo you forgot the condom.

His hand go under me and he grabs me tight and moan. I lay there like a corpse. This man just nut in me. Deliberately.

He's sweating and panting like he's been running for 30 minutes while it was just 5 minutes nyana in a vagina.

Me: Get off me.

I push him, he rolls over and chuckles. I get up.

Sabelo: Why are you mad? Didn't you get youe orgasm?

Me: Fuck orgasm. Where is the condom?

Sabelo: Shit I forgot. I'm sorry. Aren't you preventing? I saw a card.

Me: That's not the point! You could infect me with STDs.

Sabelo: What?

Me: You're a fucking whore. All these hoes you were with last night, who knows what you did with them.

Sabelo: Its me. Nothing happened.

Me: You're a fucking liar.

Sabelo: Babe.

Me: Aisuka. Go away.

I go to the bathroom and lock myself in. He knocks.

Sabelo: I'm sorry babe. I swear I never cheat on you.

Me: What about those women you're seen with every time?

Sabelo: Nothing is going on. Its just harmless fun and I promise I'm gonna stop hanging out with them.

Me: I'll see you tomorrow.

Sabelo: No. We're going out.

Me: I'm going to work .

Sabelo: Ok I'm driving you there. I'm gonna be a customer for the night.

I open the door.

Me: Really?

Sabelo: Is that a smile?

Me: You went to school for softening me up.

Sabelo: I love you.

He hugs me in and kisses me.

Me: We should freshen up.

Sabelo: Yes ma'am.

I close the door and we get under the shower.....

....

ZANELE

One thing about my husband, he will be out for hours after sex. You could clear the whole house out and he wouldn't hear a thing. I just finished off some paperwork and sent it to Lilly. And now I don't know what to do to myself.

A knock on the door came. I get up to open. I find a box on the floor. This is unlike my husband. I pick it up and close the door.

I can't help but smile thinking of what he could have possibly bought.

I gasp and throw the lid away when I see our picture with a knife stuck on Zodwa's face. I pick it up to see the writing underneath.

"She who shall betray the sisters, or help a deceiving sister will pay the greater price"

My tears warm their way down. Mulo moves, I close it and take it out to the trash outside. I sob while holding on to the trash bin...

****1 month later****

ZIMASA

I wait for everyone to cash and go in. He's already smiling alone.

Me: A good night?

Razo: Extraordinary.

Me: Cool.

I put the bag over his table.

Razo: Fuck no.

Me: Fuck yeah. Now give me my cut and I will be out of your way.

Razo: You think its that easy?

Me: You said it was a once off thing!

Razo: Well not anymore.

Me: Razo please. I can not sell this and also come to work every single day.

Razo: Do you know who are we selling this for? He wouldn't hesitate to kill us if we do nor sell this for him.

Me: Give me the rest.

He pulls a bag out of his safe and give it to me.

Razo: That's 30K.

I take it and my money and walk out.

One fateful night here at the club a man asked me to keep his bag for him. I don't remember what happened after that but I woke on top of the counter, 4 scary men looking at me. I lost that damn bag. It had money he said. I told him I'll replace it he declined. He said I will repay him by running these damn abortion pills. I am now a seller of baby killers. Heaven and me will never meet.

I find Sabelo waiting for me outside. He's been taking me here and fetching me whenever he can. When he's busy he sends his brother.

I never told him about the side business or what happened that night.

I toss my bag in the boot and hop in. We kiss and I fasten my belt.

Sabelo: I've got a running stomach.

Me: You need to go to the toilet?

Sabelo: Yes.

I give him my key. He hops out. I put on music
And text Martha. She found a man and moved out.
I know she will be back in a month. She does it
every time. I startle when I see a light flash on my
window. It's a policeman.

I roll down the window.

Policeman: Please step out of a vehicle.

Me: Why?

Policeman: I've got to search this car.

Me: Do you have a warrant?

Policeman: Ofcourse I do. Step out.

Me: I would like to see it.

He whips a paper out and gives it to me. I runr my
eyes through and I sigh and steps out.

There is probably drugs in this car.

Police: Please open the boot.

Me: This isn't my car. I don't know how to-

Sabelo: What the hell is going on here?

Me: They want to search the car.

Sabelo: Step away from my car. Get in the car
Zimasa.

Me: No.

Policeman: Is this your car?

Sabelo: Yes.

Policeman: Open the boot please.

The pills! The abortion pills!

Sabelo presses his key and the boot open. I hold on
to his arm.

Me: There are-

Policeman: Clear!

He says to his buddies that I didn't even notice
were there.

Policeman: Thank you.

He walks away. I need to pee....

04

ZIMASA

We drove to his house last night and when I am here. I am madam. I woke up to lavish breakfast, i ate and was ran a bath for and now I am watching TV while my feet are getting massaged. Not to forget the mimosas. Not that I can't have all this at my place. I just prefer saving. Because I may be just a stripper, and a soccer player's girlfriend but I am very smart with cash. Oh and a drug dealer now. Nonetheless, I do not blow cash for nothing like Sabelo. He'd spend his last cent on a pair of sneakers.

My phone rings. Its Martha. She remembered I exist.

Me: Hi stranger.

She sniffles. I sigh.

Me: Ask for the key next door.

Martha: Thank you friend.

Me: You welcome.

She hangs up.

Sabelo walks in, smelling fresh, nivea man all over the lounge. I need to leave. I have been avoiding him since he asked me why did I seem scared when the police searched the car. He kisses me and sits next to me.

Me: How was practice?

Sabelo: It was hectic. Where should we go today?

Me: My place. Martha is back.

Sabelo: So?

Me: She is not okay.

Sabelo: She must be strong. Today is our day.

The lady takes her equipment and leaves us. My feet are rejoicing.

Me: She's always there for me when you make me cry. It is only fair that I return the favor.

Sabelo: Or you're just running away from me.

I chuckle. I hope guilt isn't written on bold letters on my forehead.

Me: That's crazy.

Sabelo: I thought trust was a thing between us.

Me: It is.

Sabelo: Then tell me about this.

Me: You went through my bag?

He tosses the little pill at me.

Sabelo: To find the answer, yes.

Me: You're full of shit, you know that?

Sabelo: What is this? Don't get mad.

Me: You went through my bag. Without my permission!

I get up and go to his bedroom. I find my bag on top of the bed, opened. I take out jeans and top. I dress up and zip the bag. I am fuming. He's standing by the door when I turn. He closes it and lock.

Sabelo: The truth. Now.

Me: Open this door right now.

Sabelo: Just tell me the truth and I will open.

Me: There is nothing to tell Sabelo. Just open the goddam door!

He sits down and pat the space next to him.

I lean on the wall.

Sabelo: We can do this all day.

Me: I am not in the mood for this.

Sabelo: Ok.

He takes off his shoes and lays on the bed and
pWe drove to his house last night and when I am

here. I am madam. I woke up to lavish breakfast, i ate and was ran a bath for and now I am watching TV while my feet are getting massaged. Not to forget the mimosas. Not that I can't have all this at my place. I just prefer saving. Because I may be just a stripper, and a soccer player's girlfriend but I am very smart with cash. Oh and a drug dealer now. Nonetheless, I do not blow cash for nothing like Sabelo. He'd spend his last cent on a pair of sneakers.

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Me: There is nothing to tell Sabelo. Just open the goddam door!

He sits down and pat the space next to him. Iull out his phone and play fifa. I sit down and count my money. He raise his head like a stupid snake that he is.

Sabelo: Since when do you make that much?

Me: Since I let men touch my vagina.

I don't know why he is talking to me.

Sabelo: That is not funny.

Me: I am not trying to be funny. Open the door please.

Sabelo: No. Hell Zimasa! These are fucking drugs! What do you do? Sell them? Do you know how dangerous that is?

Me: No but I'm sure you are going to tell me since you use them.

Sabelo: That's low

Me: And you're high.

I put the money back to the bag and get up. I take the key from his pocket.

Sabelo: If you walk out that door, that will be the end of us.

Me: Seriously?

Sabelo: Yes. I can't be with someone who does not trust me. And I cannot trust.

Me: These are not drugs. They are but no those type of drugs. Its abortion pills.

He sits up right.

Sabelo: What?

Me: Yes. Now, can I go?

Sabelo: No. We're spending the day together. Where did you get them?

Me: Its a long story.

He pulls me to sit on his lap.

Sabelo: We have the day to ourselves, don't We?

I nod.

Me: Remember when I didn't call you to fetch me?

He nods.

Me: The previous night, a man asked me to keep his bag....

I tell him what happened....

....

ZANELE

I recognize the voice on the radio so I stop.

interviewer: So, any children to expect soon?

She laughs.

Nomalanga: Soon? I am 48.

Interviewer: It is never too late. Mrs Jones, Mr Jones I am very honored to have spent my morning with you and so does the listeners at home.

Nomalanga: Thank you.

He switches off the radio. I walk on to the kitchen.
He gets up and joins me.

Mulo: Successful women are sexy and attractive
but they are not the kind of women to be with
when you want a family.

Me: What's that supposed to mean?

Mulo: Nomalanga Jones. One of the richest
women in Africa, but no child. She's even reached
menopause.

Me: Life isn't about kids.

Mulo: Kids are a proof that you existed! They are
precious. Sweet and cute.

Me: And they cry.

Mulo: Which is part of their nature.

My home has turned into this baby talk
environment. All he talks about is children. He
even visit orphanages now in Wednesdays which
used to be my day. His mother has Succeeded in

making him need children that he could barely afford.

Me: Their nature sucks. And enough about the baby talk

Mulo: Why do you hate children so much?

Me: I do not hate them! We do not need them!

Mulo: I do. I want them. 3 of them.

Me: Then let's adopt.

Mulo: You must be kidding me. I want my own kids!

Me: Who's gonna look after them?

Mulo: Us.

Me: I work.

Mulo: Maybe you should quit that job because all this money you make have you feeling like the man of this house.

Me: Don't even try drag my job into this.

Mulo: Whatever Zanele.

He takes his cup of coffee and head outside to the garden. I toss the cloth away. I can't stand the smell of this coffee. I pour it on the sink and drink water. I eat my porridge

I hear people laughing. I go to check. He's with his brother. They come in.

Pele: Makoti.

Me: Pele.

We shake hands.

Pele: How are you? You look ravishing. Am I going to be an uncle?

I laugh but I am annoyed.

Me: No you'll not be.

Pele: That's sad.

Me: I'll tell Mma Zuma to make you guys food. I am headed to the doctor.

Pele: Thank you.

They walk on to the lounge. I go to take my bag and drive away...

....

ZIMASA

He won't stop kissing me. He is happy today.

Sabelo: Do you really have to go?

Me: Ofcourse baby. But I don't want but I have to.

Sabelo: We should just move in together.

Me: My gran would haunt me. There is nothing she hated more than that.

Sabelo: She'd understand we're in love.

Me: She would not. She only understands marriage. That's love to her.

He kiss my hand.

Sabelo: I had a really good time.

Me: Me too. Thank you.

I take my teddy bear and my bag.

Sabelo: Don't you want me to walk you in?

Me: No. Its late. You should go home.

Sabelo: Ok. I love you.

Me: I love you too.

I close the door and walk inside the building. I hear him drive off. I take the lift.

I unlock and go in. I lock. There are bags on the floor and someone sleeping on the couch.

I throw teddy on the chair and go to my room. I bump into Martha in the passage. I am frightened.

Me: If you are here then who is on the couch?

Martha: Your sister.

Me: My sister?

Martha: Yes. She said something about being kicked out of res.

Me: Oh. Guess what?

Martha: You've finally left Sabelo.

Me: Why do you hate him so much!

Martha: Because he's fucking hippohead.

Me: Whatever. We spent the day together, outdoors, kissing, holding hands. Our love has grown so strong just in a month. We even went house viewing.

Martha: He probably wants you to do something for him.

Me: Fuck you.

I go back to the lounge and shake Amber. She peels the blanket off her head. She's sleeping with her make up.

Me: Why are you sleeping with make up?

Amber: I was too sleepy to wipe it off.

Me: Does your mom know you're here?

Amber: No. And she must never know.

Me: Why were you kicked out?

Amber: I threw a party. I just need shelter until I am done with my exams.

Me: Cool. We will talk in the morning.

Amber: Thank you.

Martha walks in.

Amber: Does she have clothes?

Me: Yes but she does not wear them.

Martha: My rich cousin is dead.

Me: The one from Pretoria?

Martha: Yes. She committed suicide. Who am I going to run to when I need cash? Or maybe I can fuck her husband.

Me: Martha!

Martha: What?

She laughs and cries. I get up and hug her.

Martha: I really loved him.

Me: Who?

Martha: My boyfriend

Me: I thought you're crying for your cousin.

Martha: No. I'll cry for her on the funeral.

I give up...

05

ZANELE

I fix my scarf when 2 little boys pass by. I hate waiting. Especially in such a shady environment. Finally someone comes out. He comes and stand before me.

Him: A scarf in this heat? Go in.

I hold my bag tight and go in. It is reeking of weed. The smoke makes it hard to see, the light is almost not on. They aren't even paying attention to me. A lady wearing only her panty and heels come out of one of the doors carrying drinks on a tray.

Me: Hi. I am looking for Cousin.

Her: What do yoh want?

Me: To talk to him.

Her: Bitch say what you want. Weed or Coke?

Me: None of that. I need to speak to cousin.

Her: Over there.

He is surrounded by women. I walk to them. He kissing another while fingering another one. I'm gonna throw up.

Me: Cousin.

One of the girls come to me.

Her: Daddy you didn't say there was someone joining us today.

Me: Don't you dare touch me with those hands.

I say as she extend her claws to touch me.

Her: Ohh she's feisty. I like her already.

Cousin: Give us space.

They move off him. He stands up with a boner and extend his hand that was buried in a women's vagina.

Me: I'd rather not.

Cousin: You shouldn't be here, should you?

Me: I need pills.

Cousin: Which ones?

Me: Termination.

Cousin: I no longer run that business here. I have a girl selling them for me.

He takes out his phone and call out numbers for me.

Cousin: If you get caught with them. Don't mention me or my girl.

Me: Understood.

I hurry back to the door and I appreciate the fresh air. I get in my car and drove off. My phone rings. I ignore it. It's Mulo. I left home in the wee hours of the morning. I could not stay a second longer in that bed with this thing in my stomach. I call the girl. She answers in a sleepy voice.

Me: I got your contact from Cousin.

Her: I'll send you the address.

Me: Can't we meet somewhere private?

Her: I'll send you the address.

She hangs up. I slow down and a text comes through and I drive to the location...

....

ZIMASA

I wash my face and brush my teeth. I take my back pack and phone. I check on Martha. We drank until 2am. And right now I have to go meet a

client. This woman probably slept dreaming of terminating.

I drive to the location I sent her. I get there and wait. I am sleepy as hell. I adjust my seat down.

I am woken up by a knock on the window. I roll in down.

Him: Hi.

Me: Hi

Him: Are you okay?

Me: Yeah I'm good. Just waiting for someone.

Him: Okay.

Me: Thanks.

He smiles and go away. I take my phone and call her. She answers.

Me: I'm here.

Her: I just arrived.

Me: White Corolla.

I hang up. A black G wagon parks next to me. A woman hoops out. This is who I wanna be in life, either by a rich husband or on my own.

Why is she coming here? It can't be her. Oh my God. She hoops in and give me an envelope.

Me: It's only R500.

Her: Keep the rest for yourself.

I take out the pill and give her.

Me: cut it into 4. Drink one piece now and another one in 3 hours.

Her: Do you have water?

Me: No.

She's fucking married! She probably had an affair and fell pregnant.

Me: Rest when you get home.

Her: Thank you.

She hops out and put on her glasses and gets into her car and drove away. I count the money. It's R2000. Why couldn't she go do it at a

professional? I put my R1500 on my boobs and drive off to Sabelo's....

....

ZANELE

I stop by the lake and cry. I take the test out of my bag and step out of the car and crash it with the stone crying. Almost ruined my life.

Me: I'm sorry Nomalanga. I don't know what happened. I am really sorry. I will make it worth your while.

I hear a car. I get up, its Nkazimulo. I throw the pregnancy test into the water. He pulls up behind mine. It's not him but Pele. Why is he still here?

Pele: Are you okay?

Me: Yes. Just stopped to dip my feet but I've changed my mind.

Pele: Bafo is worried about you.

Me: Just needed a breather.

I open my door and hop and drive ahead. I almost lost all this. I chose this place because of the lake

and all these beautiful trees. It was just a bush but I turned it into this and I don't know what I would do if I lost all this.

I am truly not in the mood for anything today. I fill a jug with water and go to my bedroom. I put it on the pedestal and wear a pad and a robe and get in bed. I hear the door open.

He shakes me. I keep my eyes closed.

Mulo: You just walked in. You can't be asleep.

Me: I want to sleep.

Mulo: Open your eyes.

I do. There are pads in his hands.

Mulo: Did you read the news today?

Me: No.

Mulo: The woman that was being dragged out of your work place was found dead with her baby. Needles stuck in their eyes. How cruel can people be.

Me: That's sad.

Dear Lord that could've been me. But I told her to sacrifice it!

Mulo: And another news, you haven't used these in 2 months, you're moody and you only drank coffee twice in that 2 months, and your breasts. So I bought this.

He takes out a pregnancy test.

Me: You must be joking.

Mulo: I'm not. Go on and test. Prove me wrong.

Me: I am not pregnant!

Mulo: See? You're a ticking bomb. Go test.

Me: I won't.

I sit up right.

Me: I am tired of your little obsession over kids that you can never afford. You're a driver Nkazimulo, who's gonna look after that child? Me? Because R8 000 is not enough to raise a child. R8 000 Alone is for the nanny. Who is gonna pay for clothes? Food? Doctor? Toys? Me? You can't afford a child Mulo. Get that into your thick skull. Do you want your child to grow up like you did?

Not enough? Maybe if you found a better job that paid you real money we would talk of having that freaking child! But now you're a chauffeur for a man your age. He is doing good for himself and that doesn't even move you. "my boss, my boss". If you ever raise that baby issue ever again. I'm gonna leave you. You'll never see me again. Ever!

Mulo: Zanele. All I want is to be a father.

Me: What! I don't want a child. I work hard. I provide for us, that isn't enough for you? When you work your ass off to have a good life you don't have time for kids! Not that you'd understand.

I take my phone and walk out of the bedroom. A child this, a child that. Hhai suka....

ZIMASA

I regret coming here. Sabelo told me when I was the gate that he's at his mom's there's. A funeral. I bath and change into sunny day clothes and drive myself to Mall of Africa to have brunch. I have money to spend.

“This morning on the show we have Nomalanga Jones the...”

I switch the radio off. Everywhere! It’s her.
Billboards! Tv shows! Radio! News papers!
Magazines!

A day never passes by without seeing her forever young face or hear her voice. My morning is ruined now. I text Martha to meet me at the mall.

Nx bloody Nomalanga Jones. I was having a great morning. I see my guy friend with a female when I sit down at the restaurant. He doesn't see me so I don't see him too.

I get attention from the waiter. I order coffee although I can do with a stiff. I read through the menu. Indecisive people should not be given menus because right now my head is going crazy. I don't know what to order. I startle when someone bangs my table.

Me: You could've killed me.

He laughs and kiss my cheek and sits down.

Me: I thought you were with someone.

Lufhuno: Yeah. She is at the ladies.

Me: Bae?

Lufhuno: Kind of.

Me: Do you like her?

Lufhuno: I do. We haven't seen you in a while.

Me: I know. I'm in a tight space. But I will show up soon.

Lufhuno: I miss hanging out with you.

Me: Me too. How is Kutlwano?

Lufhuno: She is fine and she has started asking questions. That school is ruining things for me. I laugh.

Me: She's 6. She's bound to.

Lufhuno: Yeah I guess.

The bae comes back.

Lufhuno: I'll see you, Yeah?

Me: Send my love to baby K.

Lufhuno: She doesn't approve of that anymore.

Me: Such a drama queen.

Lufhuno: Just like her mom.

Me: She will not survive this world then.

Lufhuno: Her mother is doing it. She will too. I'll see you

Me: Bye.

He walks away. Martha arrives. She loves free bees.

Martha: Who is that?

Me: Lufhuno.

Martha: The one of a cute daughter you used to baby sit?

Me: Yeah.

Martha: Oh he's improved. Look at those muscles.

Me: He is taken.

Martha: I'd still fuck him.

I laugh.

Me: You need God.

Martha: I have him. Can you come with me to my cousin's funeral?

Me: Ofcourse babe. No need to ask.

Martha: Thank you. Who has a betve to hurt a baby though?

Me: That's what hurt me the most. Why kill a child?

Martha: I am suspecting her husband. Phela he was a househusbabd. Zodwa did all the providing. Maybe she wanted out and he killed her.

Me: Even his own blood?

Martha: Men rape and kill their own blood every day in South Africa.

Me: I guess you're right.

We order and I listen to how much of a trash her ex is until there is commotion. People take out their phones. Sabelo appears with a hun in his hip, A movie star, Sydeny Jones, Nomalanga Joneses step daughter. The people are asked to calm down.

He is led to a table and people are being moved away from him.

Martha: I bet you gonna say let's go.

Me: No. I'm waiting for my food.

Martha: Lets go up there and fuck him up.

Me: No. That's his cousin.

Martha: Ow?

He kisses her lips. Martha raise her brow.

Martha: Cousins with benefits perhaps?

Me: Just stop looking at them.

Our food arrives. I take a bite of my toast and I chew it for straight 5 minutes. What does this man want from Me? This is the funeral?

Martha: Yes. His dick is gonna be buried in her

Did I think that loud?

I pay the bill and head out.

I get to my car and take out a knobkerrie and look for his car. I find it after 30 minutes and smash the

Windows until I am satisfied and I walk back to my car, get in and drive off. If police come to my place I'm gonna smash them too...

06

ZIMASA

I am almost done with this bottle and if the police do not arrive in the next minute they will find me blacked out.

I pour the remaining cider and drink it all down. I should be calm by now. I have realized that I am not satisfied with what I did. I should've burnt it. The door handle moves. Took them long enough.

It's him. The nerve of this man. I pull the knife out of the drawer.

Sabelo: I would put that away if I was you. There is police behind me.

Me: You called cops on me?

Sabelo: What were you thinking?

Me: I was thinking of a man that I helped become who he is today cheating on me.

I laugh.

Me: I am such a dumb bitch. A fucking stupid bitch!

Sabelo: Calm down and put that knife away.

Me: Or what cheater?

Sabelo: You're drunk.

She walks in, walking the Gert walk.

Sydney: This is the crazy woman that smashed my car.

Me: That was my man's car and who are you budging in here pointing those satan nails at me?

Police officer: Ma'am. You're under arrest.

Me: For what?

Police officer: For breaking Miss Sydney's car.

Me: I broke my-

Sabelo: It was hers! You smashed hers Not mine.
Dammit Zimasa.

Me: Ah Fuck off wena.

Mr officer put cuffs on me.

Me: I'll see you around bitch!

I say to Sydney's face and we are out.

Me: Fuck them both. And you Mr officer if you
have a problem. Nobody wanna see us together-

Police officer: Ausi I am gonna ask you to stay
quiet.

Me: Is akon's song gonna be used against me in the
court of law? Got it.

He shoves me into the car and lock the door.

Me: Safa ayphel'isizwe sunbeams ohh hhaa.....

I sing as the van goes away...

....

ZANELE

The pains were not as excruciating yesterday but now I was dying. Heavy bleeding and I could feel my energy drop and I could not go to a Dr or clinic or hospital or anywhere that would be evidence to Nomalanga that I was pregnant. I have not seen Mulo since yesterday after our little quarrel and its only for the best because I don't want to explain why am I like this right now. I sent Linda to the mall to get me sanitary pads and more energy drinks and she has been gone for 3 hours.

I get up and use the last strength in me to go to the bathroom. I pass by the mirror and I do not even take a glance at myself because I hate me so much

right now. I hate my messed up my face looks. I hate everything!

I sit on the toilet seat and cry thinking about what is going to happen to me if Nomalanga finds out because she always know when someone has betrayed the sisters.

I hears knock. I quickly compose myself and say come in. Linda comes in.

Me: Seriously?

Linda: It's the end of the month. You know how it gets.

Me: You should've woken up earlier Linda. I do not pay you to be late! Bring my things.

She walks out and come back with a plastic with energy drinks, pain killers and pads.

Linda: Should I tell Masimo to make you food?

Me: Get out of my sight Linda.

She walks out. I stand up and go under the shower and wash myself for the 3rd time today. I can't seem to erase all this dirt of falling pregnant. I still do not understand how it happened. I made sure that everyday at 10am I take the pill.

I drink pills afterwards and take a nap on fresh linen as they kick in. I just want this nightmare to be over....

....

ZIMASA

When the alcohol wore off, I realized I am not the bad bitch I was when I was drunk yesterday.

I am hungry and I need a hot bath cause I feel like shit. An officer calls out my name.

Officer: Are you gonna come or you're still enjoying the cell?

I get up like lightning and rush to him.

Officer: Collect your stuff from the front desk.

Me: Thank you so much Sir.

I run on the hallway just in case he changes his mind.

I get to the front desk and take my things and they make me sign some things I do not bother reading. I just wanna be out of here.

Officer: Can I not see you here for at least the next 5 months?

Me: You will not

Officer: That's what you said the last time.

Me: I mean it this time.

He laughs and I walk out. How do I get home from here? I see Lufhuno talking on the phone. Thank God!

I walk to him. He brings me close to him until he gets off the phone.

Lufhuno: Hi.

Me: I haven't bathed today.

Lufhuno: I can tell.

I hit him. He laughs.

Me: I was arrested.

Lufhuno: I know. What is wrong with you and cars?

Me: That's one thing people treasure so it's a better way if getting back at them.

Lufhuno: You're lucky Sydney and I have a very good relationship.

Me: You did this?

Lufhuno: Yeah. I begged her to drop the charges.
Get in.

I hop in.

Me: ohhh this machine.

he does too and we drive off.

Lufhuno: I know right. You've been very distant lately. I even bought a house.

Me: It's only been 2 months.

Lufhuno: That's a lot. You should come over some time.

Me: I'll definitely will.

Lufhuno: So, why did you smash her car?

Me: I thought it was my boyfriend's.

He laughs.

Lufhuno: He cheated?

Me: Didn't she tell you the story?

Lufhuno: No. Not that I was interested in it. I just wanted her to drop the charges.

Me: Are you smashing her?

Lufhuno: Used to.

I laugh.

Me: I knew it. You're such a whore.

Lufhuno: My whoreness just paid off. I offered to fix it but she told me to not worry.

Me: That means you fucked her good. Keep up the good work.

I pat his shoulder. He laughs and takes a turn at garage that has Steers.

Me: You're such a life saver.

Lufhuno: You know I am. I'll go in and get us something to eat. Fill up.

Me: I want large everything.

Lufhuno: Where does all that food go?

Me: My butt.

He laughs and go away. I jump to the drivers seat and drive forward....

I fill up and wait for him to come out and we drive off. I stuff myself up and I feel alive again.

When we get to my place, Martha is outside hanging laundry.

Me: Thank you.

Lufhuno: You know I got you.

Me: I'll see you soon.

Lufhuno: I hope so.

I smile and get off.

Lufhuno: Stay out of trouble and leave people's cars alone.

Me: I will.

He chuckles and drive off. I head in. Martha has moved from from the balcony. I find her ironing. The house looks spotless and smells of lavender.

Me: And then?

Martha: One of those days.

Me: Where is Amber?

Martha: At the mall to do groceries with Sabelo.

Me: Oh. I'll go bath.

Martha: I'd Fuck him till he.... Ooh I don't know but I'd Fuck him till he does something.

Me: Who?

Martha: Your guy friend. God he's so snacky. When he showed up here this morning I just froze when he called my name. I just pictured him calling my name in his sleep while he rolls over to cuddle me.

I laugh.

Me: What did he want?

Martha: You. I told him you're arrested he said he'll get you out. He loves you.

Me: He is a good friend of mine of course he does.

Martha: I also want a hot friend like him.

Me: Cute boys are Fuck boys Martha. Think of Your fragile heart chile.

She laughs.

Martha: Go wash the jail off.

I go to my room. I hear Sabelo's laughter as I get into my room. I am done with him.

I take my clothes off and put them in a basket and wrap a towel around me and take my cosmetics and head to the door. It opens. He closes it behind him and leans on it.

Sabelo: Hi.

Me: Hi. I'm on my way to the bathroom.

Sabelo: She's not my girlfriend.

Me: I don't wanna hear it honestly.

Sabelo: It was-

Me: I am done Sabelo. I am done being your fool. I am tired of your lies. I honestly did some thinking in there. I asked myself if is it worth it to be with someone who keeps me at the edge? Make me act out of my character and have me sleeping in a jail cell only 3 months apart? And I came to a conclusion that it is all not worth it because one day Sabelo, one day you will leave me for someone else and it's inevitable. From here on, I will pay my rent and my car installment. I wish to never see you here.

He moves off the door and I go out and rush to the bathroom. I get in there and cry. I love him I really do but this is not healthy....

07

ZIMASA

it's been 5 days and I am still feeling like I did Monday morning. I missed him the moment I told him to go away and it doesn't help that he hasn't tried to contact me or showed up to beg me back. I haven't even been to work. I have just been pushing the pill around and that was enough to get Razo to agree that I take a week off and come back tomorrow for the jazz night. The club is booked by rich folks and their trophy wives. And I have to be a hostess for the night.

I blow my nose and check my phone for the 100th time since the last 10 minutes. There is nothing but facebook and instagram notifications. I take my things and go to take a shower hoping I do not bump into Martha.

I find her brushing her teeth. It's too late to turn back.

Martha: Get in. I'll act like I don't see you.

Me: Thank you.

I go in and turn on the shower.

Martha: Are we still going to my cousin's funeral? It will be a good place to cry it all out.

Me: We are going.

Martha: Let's leave tonight.

Me: OK.

She walks out. I bathe and Amber gets in, doesn't acknowledge me, brush her teeth and walk out.

Martha comes in with flowers and little paper bag. My heart smiles.

Martha: Special delivery.

Me: Who is it from?

Martha: Probably Sabelo.

I wiped my hands and took the card.

"#Guyswithmansions"

Sabelo wouldn't send this. It looks more like Lufhuno. I chuckle. He's so stupid.

I take the paperbag. There is a little box. There's a note inside it.

"This is a special invitation to my place. When you come please do show this at the gate. Looking forward to seeing you "

Me: It's Lufhuno.

Martha: What is he saying?

Me: He bought a house. He is inviting me over.

Martha: Then you should go. Staying here will only depress you even more.

Me: No. I am not ready to visit anyone's house. Tomorrow after the funeral I am gonna drive back and prepare for work.

Martha: Lufhuno cares about you. The least you can do is pay him a little visit. You guys used to be close.

Me: We are grown ups. We have lives to live.

Martha: Streynji.

Me: Don't do that.

Martha: I'll take the invitation.

She walks out. I follow her going to my room to throw a pity party for myself....

....

ZANELE

I have searched for him everywhere. Sent out a word to his brothers and friends but none of them knew where he was. My only option now was his mother. Time was slow. On a normal day, it be lunch but I have been sitting on this meeting for the past hour. And I can not wait for it to be over. My body is here but my mind isn't. I am thinking of anything that could've happened to him. I was a bit harsh but he knows I did not mean all that. I was just frustrated by the fact that I was pregnant.

Mr Kenan: And since we all agree that we buy new 8 trucks. We should have them delivered by next month. Thank you ladies and gentlemen.

Finally. I get up and head out before anyone tries a small talk. I am really not in the mood.

Me: Any meetings?

Lilly: Yes.

Me: Cancel them.

Lilly: Yes ma'am.

I go in to my office and pack my things....

My phone rings as I drive off. It is Nomalanga.
My palms sweat. I answer.

Me: Hello

Nomalanga: Hey. You haven't replied.

Me: On what?

Nomalanga: I sent you an invitation on your mail.

Me: What is the occasion and when?

Nomalanga: Jazz night. Tomorrow evening.

Me: I'm sorry. I have had an insane week. My husband is missing. I haven't got time to do anything.

Nomalanga: Oh my. Why didn't you call? Let's hope he is fine.

Me: Yeah. I am driving to his mom's.

Nomalanga: Do not hesitate to call if you need help.

Me: I will.

Nomalanga: OK bye.

I hang up and take a deep breath....

I am in awe when I approach and I see a double storey house amongst RDPs. Did they sell their house? I have not been here since the day I got married. I park in front of the gate and wait for any human to show up so I can ask.

Luckily two old ladies show up from a double up.
I greet them when they pass me by.

Them: Yebo.

Me: I am looking for the Zulu household.

One of them: This is it. Aren't you Nkazimulo's wife?

This is embarrassing. I shake my head no. She nods and they walk on. I hop out and head to the little gate. It is not locked. I go in. There he is, playing with kids, rolling on the grass like a fool that he is.

I push the bloody child off him. It cries in pain, I don't even care. I need this man to explain to me WTF!

He is paying attention to the kid. Rubbing it's knee.

Mulo: Askies ne? Go to the slide. I'll you guys there.

They run off. What is this? A creche?

Me: Whose kids are these?

Mulo: Hello. These are the kids my mom teaches.

Me: Seriously. You never told me you extended the house.

Mulo: I didn't have to. As my wife you would've known.

Me: Don't start with me Mulo. Where did you get money to build this house?

Mulo: I am employed, aren't I?

Me: Oh please.

Mulo: If my wife won't let me use my money on her. I will use it on a woman who raised me. And what you did to that child was harsh.

Me: Can you please come home? I was worried sick about you.

Mulo: Why? Wena go find a husband of your dreams and leave me in peace.

Me: Look, I'm sorry about what I said. I was in a bad space and I took it all out on you. I'm really sorry.

Mulo: I do not forgive you and I will never. I will come back to your house when I have calmed down. For now, decide if you really want me as your husband or not. If you do, ask yourself if you will let me be the man of the house or not. If your answer is not yes then never bother me.

Me: Are you threatened by the kind of money I make?

Mulo: I am threatened by the kind of person you're becoming. You're nothing like the woman who loved and respected me despite of my monthly salary.

He picks up the toys and walk away. I am frozen. Something is not right. He has never. I mean ever! Let me not have my way.

Me: Do you still love me?

He turns.

Mulo: I love you.

He disappears to the house and his mother comes out. She looks at me. I look at her. We are looking at each other. She shakes her head and go back in and close the door. I walk out, my eyes blurry. I get in my car and try to start it but it won't, my hands are shaking. I cry silently.....

....

ZIMASA

I wish Martha hadn't cleaned this room. Now I have nothing to do to deal with my broken heart. I can't do this anymore. I get up and put on sneakers and a hoodie. I take my car keys. And my door opens. I freeze.

Sabelo: Do not say anything. Just listen.

I nod.

Sabelo: I am not with Sydney. It was a publicity stunt. She has a movie coming out in a week and she asked me to be pretend boyfriend to get people

talking. I didn't tell you because you would've said no and I wouldn't have been able to do it. I don't want to lose you Zimasa. I would never do that to you.

I know he would. He has done it before.

Sabelo: With Mpumi, it was just plain stupid of me. I will never do you dirty like that. I am sorry.

Me: I do not trust you Sabelo.

He takes out his phone and shows me the emails. I sit down and read them all. He is telling the truth. He was approached by the production company. Why do I always jump into conclusions?

But it's Sabelo. He has done this before and I guess I believe in 'history repeats itself' too much.

I look at me beside me.

Me: I'm sorry.

Sabelo: It's fine.

Me: I am really sorry babe.

Sabelo: I'm sorry too, for not telling you.

He moves the braids off my face and kisses. I turn to him and sit on top of him and we kiss. He unbuttons my jean and stands up with me and throws me on the bed. I take off my pants, he's already naked. Fat dick ready and shit.

I open my legs wide.

Me: Condom.

He chuckles and take it out of his pocket and put in on. He lays on his back and I climb on. He rest his hands on my hips and guide me as I go in circles, up and down. This isn't really my favorite thing to do in sex world but he likes so I do it.

Sabelo: I missed you.

He says in between the soft moans in my ear. I am laying on top of him now, clapping my ass like I

am at work, clapping in for people's husbands. He is gripping me hard, I know my job is almost done here. I do not even enjoy sex with this position. It is just for him. I increase my pace. He is calling my name loud. We switch positions. He pounds me lightly.

Me: Fuck me harder baby! Harder.

The house is quiet. I hope Martha and Amber are out. Music plays. They are here. He cums. Finally.

Sabelo: I love you.

He says and get off. I am dripping sweat. He is too and I can't miss the wide smile on his face.

Sabelo: I need water.

I wear my robe after wiping myself and head out.

Nothing could've prepared me for the stares I get when I walk in.

Granny: Zimasa

Me: Hello Gogo. What brings you here?

Gogo: A taxi.

Martha is focusing on her phone. Amber is snuggled up in Gogo, staring at me.

She heard all that? I go back to the bedroom.

Sabelo: Haw baby?

Me: My grandma is here. And she heard all that.

Sabelo: Shit.

I laugh but I'm shaking.

I hear a knock.

Gogo: We miss fuck me harder come make me tea we need to talk. I don't have all day.

We giggle. Oh my goodness. I hope she forgets about it soon....

ZIMASA

My dad used to say if I grow up to be like my grandma I would be in trouble. She shouts at everyone for anything. She always want to see a cup of tea before her even if she won't drink it. She screams for the the whole neighborhood to hear if you're still in bed by 6am. Only her sons can remind her that we are in the 21st century.

The cup of tea she requested is getting cold. I have been changing positions because she has been just staring at me for the past 15 minutes. I am done. I get up.

Gogo: Sit down.

I do.

Gogo: Nolizo's husband told me he saw you at a hookers place dancing for men while naked. Is it true?

Me: Me? I would never do that. He might have mistaken me for someone else.

Gogo: Explain that man in the room.

Me: He is my boyfriend.

Gogo: Can't you visit his place and do your sins there? What example are you setting for your little sister?

Me: He-

Gogo: Ei shut up. Let the ladies in and go put on a decent dress and a doek.

Me: What is happening?

Gogo: Amber!

Amber comes rushing.

Gogo: Make tea. Wena, go dress up.

I ask no more. I get to my room and Sabelo is nowhere to be found. This man. I look for a dress in my laundry basket and a scarf. I put it on and I

hear a very vibrant voice sing on top of its lungs.
Oh God.

Its a full house. Some of them are in uniform.
Gogo pulls me to the center and force me down.
They sing even louder and there are hand on my
head. They are praying in tongues. Apparently I
have a demon. They ask God to deliver me and
find me a husband that will accept me with my
dark past and shaking my butt for married men.
They tell him I do not know what I am doing, I
am just blinded by the unnecessary need of roots
of all evil. They ask him to make me stop having
sex and keep myself for marriage.

After what feels like 3 days they say amen and I
am free. Amber and Martha serve them tea and
scones. After they are done finishing our food
Gogo asks us to drive them back to Tembisa.

Me: Let's just pack our things for the funeral.

Martha: Oh about that. There won't be a funeral.
They will cremate her. We don't have to go.

Me: Okay.

I get to spend tonight with my man!

....

ZANELE

I have taken 8 baths without him and I feel empty. We usually take long on Fridays because we usually watch a movie if not reading a book but today I only spent 15 minutes there. It's close to 11pm, way past my bedtime but I just won't feel asleep. He is on my mind. I miss him so much.

I get out of bed and go to my beauty room. I pull the calabash out of my last drawer and my red candles. I take the ash from another one and make a circle with it and get inside it and light my candles around the calabash. I stir the mixture inside it until I get the urge to beat it fast, it forms a foam.

Me: A star. Shine Siena's way. I sacrificed the blood of betrayal to the home of the sisters and I believe I shall never go to bed hungry, cold and without my husband. In exchange of my child's blood and life I demand Wealth, my husband to wake up wherever he is and come straight home to my arms where he belongs, I demand my boss to give me ownership of that company, I demand wealth and for my husband to never mention children. He must loathe them like I do . It's me, Siena, a rose amongst thorns.

I cross fingers before opening my eyes and the candles are all put out. My demands were granted. I did the right thing, I sacrificed the blood of my fetus to the wealth of the sisters. I was scared things might have changed.

I put my things back where they stay and lay there and wait for Nkazimulo's voice screaming my name.....

.....

I can hear the rain. There is cold breeze hitting my skin but I feel so warm. I am within his warm arms like I should be. I am in our bedroom. I didn't hear him come home or bringing me here.

I bring his arm to my face and kiss it.

Me: You're home.

Mulo: There is nowhere I would rather be. I missed you so much last night. I couldn't stay there a minute longer.

Me: I am glad you're home.

"Breakfast"

Ketchup says with her tiny voice outside the door.

Mulo: Come in.

She place it next to the window where we usually have our breakfast on Saturday morning. We can

see the lake from there. The birds and every living thing that lives in these fields give us a warm view.

She walks out and Mulo jumps out of bed and I already know he's going to eat something on my plate. He takes the bacon and go to the bathroom.

Me: Grow up!

He laughs. I get up too and follow him in. He hands me my toothbrush and we brush our teeth. Our love has always been beautiful and real. I hate it when I have to do what I did last night just to get him back to me. It's manipulative but I do not know what life is without him. He is my everything.

We kiss before sitting down.

Mulo: This is the best house we have ever lived in.

Me: That's because we built it from scratch.

Mulo: It's so beautiful. Like you.

I blush.

Me: Stop.

Mulo: Let's attend the jazz night.

Me: You know about it?

Mulo: Yes. It will be a kick start to our make up session.

Me: Or you're just obsessed with Jazz.

He's crazy about a saxophone. If it was up to him he'd know how to play. Every year on his birthday. I invite a jazz crew to make his day. And he doesn't get tired of it.

Mulo: Are we going?

Me: Yes we can. Let me RSVP quick. I hope I am not too late.

Mulo: Already did.

He kisses my hand and we focus on eating...

....

ZIMASA

I wake up around 10 and I feel lighter and energetic. Martha budges in.

Martha: You've got a visitor.

Me: Who?

Martha: My lol.

Me: Lufhuno?

Martha: Yes. Come. I just made him breakfast. Freshen up. Don't come to my man smelling of doggy styles and missionary positions.

Me: Get out.

I hop out of bed and put on a robe.

Sabelo: Y'all are friends again?

Me: He bailed me out. I owe him.

Sabelo: Nobody asked him to. And I was gonna get you out.

Me: I don't really understand what the matter is.

Sabelo: The matter is him getting out of jail and now coming here. The next thing I know you will be babysitting his child and I do not get to see you as often as I'd like because of it. You don't want to have a child of your own but you babysit his and even take it shopping.

Me: You're just being dramatic.

Sabelo: I am not.

Me: I stopped visiting Lufhuno. I distanced myself from him and his daughter as you wished. What is the problem now? Yes he's here and I know it must be important because he would have called.

I walk out to shower and come back to an empty bedroom. He's exhausting. I get into clean clothes and walk out to the lounge. I find them laughing.

Me: Hello.

I sit down next to him.

Lufhuno: You smell nice.

Me: Thank you.

He always smells nice and looking clean. If he wasn't my friend I would find him attractive.

Martha: Sabelo is full of shit.

Me: What did he do?

Martha: He came here and talked nonsense. You must speak to him. He can't be talking to another child like that. This isn't his house.

She gets up and disappear to her room.

Me: I'm sorry about whatever he said.

Lufhuno: I was gonna ask you to babysit Kutlwano for me tomorrow but he said you guys have plans.

Me: We don't. You can bring her.

Lufhuno: No. I can't bring my child to a place with such people. I'll find a babysitter. Keep well.

He gets up.

Me: Lufhuno.

Lufhuno: It's fine.

He head out. I take a deep sigh. What is wrong with Sabelo?

....

NARRATED

The club was packing up. Two girls were by the entrance handing drinks to people coming in.

When Nomalanga Jones and Nathan her husband came. Their bodyguards came in first and searched for anything or anyone dodgy and then brought them in. The crowd cheered. They led them to VIP section where Mulo and his plus one Pele were.

They bodyguards went to stand by the door.

Nomalanga: Mr Zulu. Where is Zanele.

Mulo: She got her periods and the cramps seemed worse. She is very sad. I had to show up. This is my brother Pele Zulu.

Nomalanga: Nice to meet you.

Pele: Likewise.

They shook hands.

Nathan: Gentlemen. Let's get ourselves a drink.
My love, your ladies just came in.

Nomalanga: I'll see you later.

She took her phone out of her bag while heading to the bathroom. It rang for quite some time before she answered.

Zanele: Hello?

Nomalanga: Are you fucking kidding me?

Zanele: I'm sorry. I can't even do anything. I am dying.

Nomalanga: It is full moon you idiot! When we go to the dam. I need to find you there.

Zanele: Fine.

She hung up and clucked and fixed her make up....

....

ZIMASA

I wait for these guys to get out and they do. I walk in and place the bag on the floor next to him.

Me: You did not say I'll be nursing around Nomalanga Jones.

Razo: Is there a problem?

Me: Yes there is. I can't.

Razo: Ei Zee please don't stress me. I am already stressed.

Sizwe comes in.

Sizwe: He is unavailable too.

Razo hit his glass on the wall.

Razo: Fuck! That bloody chancer is gonna pay. How dare he runs with my money. Where am I gonna get someone to play so late?

Me: Play what?

Razo: Get out.

Sizwe: I have a cousin who plays Saxophone. Maybe he can get us his teacher.

I turn before I reach the door knob.

Me: You need someone to play a saxophone?

Razo: Why are you still here?

Me: I can play for them.

Razo: This is not the time Zimasa.

Me: I am serious. I can. I learned from the best.

Sizwe: Do you have it here with You?

Me: No. It's at my grandmas house.

Razo: Great! Get the duck out of here. Both of you!

We follow each other out. We part ways and I go to the changing room. I do not see myself tip-toeing behind that Nomalanga Jones. I have seen how she treats waitresses and I will knock her dead if she does that to me.

I put on my mask on and I am ready to serve her 30 000 alcohol. The door opens. It's Razo. He tosses a dress at me.

Razo: Let your hair loose and don't wear any shoes. Sizwe will bring the saxo. Don't Fuck this up for me Zimasa. These people paid me good money.

Me: I won't.

I put the dress on. It does fit perfectly but not something I'd wear. I like it simple. Elegance

isn't my stuff. Sizwe comes in. He hands me the saxo and walk out.

"Always close your eyes when you get your hands on it. The audience could distract you. "

My dad would say whenever he taught me how to play. I haven't touched it since he died. I just have not found the strength to play. I have never played for an audience before.

I get on the stage and sit on the bar chair placed on the spotlight.

"Posture. Posture is very important. Look alive and sexy. Your shoulders are your biggest communicator. Keep them up"

Sizwe: As Mrs Zulu requested. Please welcome on stage Zimasa Hlongwane.

They clapped. This is it.

I close my eyes and play my dad's favorite song,
Glorious nights.

At first I am nervous and regret doing it but I get
on with it and the next station is the zone and
nothing could stop me now. I even stand up and
bless their ears.

I open my eyes and they lay on Nomalanga
leaving. I continue to play with my eyes open. And
end it. I spot Sabelo and Sydney. I am not even
gonna let that get to me.

They cheer and clap. I bow and get off the stage
leaving Sizwe welcoming a band into the stage. I
am shaking. I can't believe I just did that.

I bump into someone. It's Nomalanga Jones.

Me: Sorry.

Nomalanga: Watch where you're going!

Me: I said sorry.

Nomalanga: Aren't you the low life that ruined my child's car? My girl you're lucky my daughter has a good heart. I would have ruined you.

I walk away. I don't have time for this. I get to the changing room and wear my clothes and take my bag. I walk out.

I get in my car and drive off.

I call him on the way and he sends me the address. By 10pm I am at his gate. He let's me in and he is waiting outside.

I get off and the first thing he does is hug me and break down.

Lufhuno: It's okay. Shhh.

Me: He keeps on hurting me. Over and over again.

Lufhuno: I'm sorry.

He is my safe place. Always have been since we were 7. I can't believe I let Sabelo get between us. I am the worst friend but he never gives up on me....

09

ZIMASA

His legs is on my ribs and my foot is touching his chin. What happened? I punch his foot.

Me: Get off me.

He doesn't even move.

Me: Lufhuno!

“You gonna have to do more than that” says a little voice. She closes the door and motion to the table

and pick up crayons. Those were not there last night.

Me: When did you come in?

Kay: 07:40. He said we will go to church but since you're here. I think we are not.

Me: How are you?

Kay: I am fine thank you. Why were you crying last night?

Me: Someone hurt me.

Kay: A boy?

I chuckle.

Me: Yes.

Kay: Sorry. My daddy will deal with him. He's a hero.

Me: I know. He's just scared of rats.

Kay: That's why we moved here. He saw a eat in our old house.

I laugh. Such a tall big man but scared of such a tiny thing.

Kay: You can use that to wake him.

Me: No Kutlwano he's gonna die.

I move his big leg off me and hop off the bed. I put on his slippers and pull Kutlwano out. We get to the kitchen and his fridge is empty.

Me: Has he done any groceries?

Kay: No. We eat cornflakes in the morning and gogo or aunty Melody brings my lunchbox.

This guy.

Me: Let's go freshen up and go eat breakfast. Its on me.

Kay: Can you help me with my homework later?

Me: Yeah sure.

We go to the bath room and bath. I miss these days. How close we used to be. How she would hug me randomly but she hasn't seen me in 2 months but she did not or show any excitement to see me, not that I blame her.

I carry her to her bedroom when we're done. I put her on the bed and look for clothes.

Kay: When are you going to have a child?

Me: Never

Kay: Why?

Me: They ask too many questions.

She giggles.

Kay: Please tell daddy to bring me a little sister or brother. I am tired of playing alone.

Me: That will teach you independence.

I dress her up.

Kay: I wrote my mommy a letter.

Me: You can write?

Kay: Yes. My teacher wrote it for me I copied.

She takes out an envelope from her school bag. She gives it to me. I open it.

PLEASE VISIT ME SOMEDAY. I PROMISE YOU. I AM A GOOD CHILD.

XOXO

Me: Oh my love.

I hug her.

Me: She will visit someday. I promise.

Kay: Does she not miss me?

Me: She does. And she loves you but she is working; for you. So that her and daddy can put you in good schools and give you a best life. She still writes every week right?

She nods.

Me: That means she loves you. Never question that. She trusts daddy with you. She knows you're well taken care of.

Kay: Thank you.

Me: Give me a smile.

She smiles.

Me: That's my girl. Let's go beg daddy for some clothes.

.....

ZANELE

He woke me up with breakfast in bed and now we are on our way to Nelspruit to visit my aunt. He just said we should this morning and I wasn't going to let it slide because He has never suggested we visit my aunt. Ever.

I have not seen her in 6 months. She is going to be delighted to see me.

Me: Are you still smiling about last night?

Mulo: No. I am smiling about that day I drove here with my mother's car after you dumped me.

I laugh.

Me: My heart was so broken when I heard you were arrested.

Mulo: I was hurt I couldn't get to you. I was gonna spend a second night not talking to you. I've always loved you.

Me: We've always been inlove.

He takes my hand and kisses it.

Me: I still pinch myself whenever I think of how far we've come. 13 tears later, still in love like we just kissed for the first time yesterday.

Mulo: I told you. No man could ever break what God tied together.

Me: And I did not believe it at first but now I do.

He smiles and I connect my phone to the bluetooth and play Tony and Baby face's album. Its our favorite. We have a long way ahead....

...

ZIMASA

Just like old times except, we are not holding her hands because she is old now. Every place we've passed is packed. Have Sundays lost their family day touch?

Me: Lets get in here. We will wait if we have to.

Lufhuno: Wherever you guys wanna eat.

Kay: I really don't care where we eat as long as I will see an egg going to my mouth.

She does a dramatic fall. I panic a little before realizing its her being a drama queen. Exactly like her mother.

Me: Hi.

Lady: Hi. Please be seated. We do not have a free table for now.

Me: What about the kids section?

Lady: Its Empty.

Me: Can we use it? The little one is dying now.

Lady: Only her.

Me: She has a sickness. We have to keep a close eye.

She sighs and lead us to kids section.

Lady: A waiter will come shortly.

Me: Thank you.

Kay: God please forgive the lies aunty Zee just told the lady. She is just starving.

I look at Lufhuno. His eyes are closed too. They must be kidding me.

Me: Amen.

They open eyes. His phons rings. He walks out.

Me: Do you have friends?

Kay: No. I prefer my own company.

How old is this child?

Me: I see.

Kay: Why did you not visit anymore?

Me: Because....i have been working.

Kay: Aunty Melody works but she visits.

Me: Perhaps her job does not make her travel much.

Kay: Oh. I missed you. I wrote you a letter but you never responded

Me: I never received it. Its probably still on the mail. I will check.

Lufhuno gets it. He looks sort of guilty.

Me: What's up?

Lufhuno: That was mom. She needs me home urgently. Can you look after her?

Me: Yeah...yeah sure.

Kay: No.

Me: What?

Kay: I will go with daddy.

Lufhuno: Baby I-

Me: Its okay. Let me walk you guys to the car. You can bring it later.

We walk out to parking. He fastens her at the back.

Me: She is very upset with me. I will try to visit more often.

Lufhuno: We would love that. Be good okay?

We hug. He gets in the car and they drive off.

I request an uber. And in a split second it Is here. I hop on and it drives off.

...

When I push the door open I remember why I went to Lufhuno's at first. My heart drops. I hate it here.

Martha is sleeping on the couch with her ass exposed. I cover her with a sheet and walk on to my bedroom. I need to collect everything that is Sabelo's and burn it.

Amber walks out of the bathroom as I am about to open my door.

Me: Hi.

Amber: Hey. Where did you sleep?

Me: At Lufhuno's house.

Amber: Sabelo slept here.

Me: Ok.

I push the door open. He is sitting on top of the bed with a glass of something in his hand.

I toss the bag behind him and walk to the wardrobe to look for something to wear. I feel naked in this hoodie I turned into a dress.

Sabelo: Where did you sleep?

Me: Somewhere.

Sabelo: Answer the damn question Zimasa.

Me: You lost the right to question me a long time ago.

I pull out everything that is his. He stands up and finish what's left on the glass and walk to the other side of the bed.

Sabelo: Where did you sleep Zimasa?

Me: That's none of-

The glass lands above my eye and blood runs down. I pick it up and send it back flying. He ducks it. It hits the wall.

Me: Get the fuck out.

Sabelo: Need I remind you who pays for this place? Answer the damn question I asked!

Me: Fuck off.

He charges towards. I rush to the door. He trips me and I fall. He locks the door and put the key in his pocket.

Sabelo: I don't want to do anything I am going to regret Zee. Just tell me where you were.

It shouldn't be that difficult.

Me: Go to hell.

I drag myself up.

Sabelo: Whose hoodie is this?

Me: You've got a nerve you know that? You were with that fake ass Sydney last night and you think you have a right to question where was I last night and hit me? Really?

Sabelo: I was out there getting us money. Were you?

Me: You think I am a fool. That's your problem. Give me the key!

Sabelo: Not before you tell me where were you

Me: I was at Lufhuno's. The keys.

Sabelo: What did I say about that fat nigga?

Me: I might have forgotten when I saw your tongue stuck in Sydney's throat.

I motion to the chest of drawer to look for a spare key. He grabs me and slap me countless Times before throwing me on the bed and hit me with a belt. I try to get up but he pins me down with a knee on my lower abdomen and continue hitting my thighs.

Me: Martha! Amber!

He covers my mouth and sit on my stomach.

Sabelo: I told you to stay away from him. Why won't you listen to me!

Me: Sab...sab...elo. I ca....n't brea....

He hardens his grip. Dear God, not in the hands of a man.....

.....

ZANELE

I see cars as we approach. What is happening.

My hair shrinks. This can't be good. I hop off before the car even turn off. And I run inside. All I see is sad faces. There are police everywhere. I push people away as I make my way to the front. The police stop me.

Me: No. This is my aunt's house. I need to see what is going on!

Police: You mean the woman who stayed here?

I nod.

Police: I am so sorry ma'am but she is no more.

Me: No. No. No. No!!!!

Mulo catches me before I fall.

Mulo: What happened bra?

Poloce: She was murdered. Her eyes were taken out and needles stuck. Red candles around her. Real witchcraft.

Me: Why did you bring me here?

Mulo: I don't know. I just....

His gift can not be back. It can't. I did not attend the full moon ritual for the first time last night. It cannot be a crime.

I excuse myself. I call Nomalanga.

Nomalanga: I am in a middle of a family lunch.

Me: My aunt is dead Nomalanga, killed by amantombazane. Explain this to me.

Nomalanga: I do not control anything amantombazane do. You must've done or said something to betray the sisters.

Me: And Mulo led me here that means his gift is back.

Nomalanga: Check yourself out. You must have done something. And if you do not do it quick. You may wake up to a letter getting fired.

Me: I did not attend the fullmoon ritual.

Nomalanga: Then do what is right.

Me: I can't. She's the only closest thing I have and he is gonna be shuttered. Doesn't it count that my aunt is dead?

Nomalanga: I am afraid not.

Me: Oh Lord...

I hang up. Nkazimulo would never recover the death of his mother. I hate her but I love him more than I hate her. There must be another way.

I jump when he touches me.

Me: Lets go somewhere quiet. I need to process all this.

He nods and open the door for me...

11

ZANELE

I was pacing up and down. Pele had just left. I call him again, it takes me to voicemail.

Me: Mageba. I know how hard this must be for you but please come back home. I am going crazy here.

I hang up. His phone has been off the whole day and it was now close to 8pm. I call Pele.

Me: When you find him please call me right away.

Pele: I will.

I hang up and go upstairs to take my calabash and candles and drive to where Nomalanga said we will meet....

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ZIMASA

I was not in the mood for dancing tonight. Infact I haven't had the energy to since I agreed to be someone's wife. It just felt wrong. I just couldn't wait for 9:30.

Razo grabs me from the pole and carry me to the changing room. He puts me down.

Razo: Your grandma is here.

Me: What?

Razo: Yes.

He laughs.

Razo: Change and go play the sax. Just a sly gogo.

Me: I hate Sabelo yazi.

Razo: Go play.

Me: Thank you.

I change quickly and take my saxophone. I let my braids loose and walk barefoot. My eyes wander when I walk to my chair on the spotlight. He is not here today. I see her at the back, my gogo is the worst. I know she made a promise to her son but I am over 21 and I can make my own decisions.

I start playing and I spot him far away drowning in a glass of something. He usually sits here on the front and look straight at me. And I stare at him until I am done. And today he is not in his usual spot so I close my eyes and play.

After 30 minutes I take a break and walk to him. I will not even entertain Mamthembu.

I sit next to him and order a juice.

Me: You were not on your usual spot today.

Him: So?

Me: Are you okay?

Him: Please drink your juice and let me be.

He is not wearing his ring. He must be going through a divorce.

I do as told and go back to the stage after finishing and continue playing....

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ZANELE

We form a circle and each one of us light a candle. Nomalanga starts with the praises. We hum until she is done.

Nomalanga: I don't have anything to ask for Mantombazane. I am still satisfied.

Khosi: I wish for my mother inlaw to die.

Me: I wish for nothing at the moment.

Zondeni; Zandile, and Angel asks for nothing too. We get up and pour our ashes on the holes we dug and go away without looking back...

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ZIMASA

We were quiet all the way home last night and even now, I did not see a reason to talk to him.

I make myself breakfast and eat and go bath and he wakes up after I dress up. He comes and kneel before me.

Sabelo: I did not tell her to go there.

Me: Get out of my way.

Sabelo: My mother is coming here today. She has to find you here.

Me: I am going to fetch her.

Sabelo: So early in the morning?

Me: Its 11:55.

Sabelo: Shit!

He gets up and rush to the shower.

Sabelo: wait for me!

I take my bag and his car keys and walk out. I see Martha's car. I stop. I haven't seen her in 2 weeks. She stays in Waterfall now with her dead cousin's husband. They bumped into each other once at a mall and from there on they started spending time they decided to be a couple and he made her quit being a stripper, he bought a new house and they live there now. Its sad how the man who truly loves her have to be her cousin's husband but ke, fate!

I hop out. She does too. We hug. I don't know since when because we love each other but hugging is not a thing for us.

Martha: I am so happy to see you.

Me: I am too. Is everything okay?

Martha: Yes...no no. I don't know but I saw Sabelo and Amber coming from a gynae.

Me: Yeah she's pregnant. She asked him to drive her there.

She takes a deep breath.

Martha: That's a relief. I thought they were too cosy. And I really wouldn't put it past him. He can not be trusted.

Me: I know but he is a changed man and my sister? He wouldn't.

Martha: I am glad. Where are you headed? I wanna tag along.

Me: To fetch Sabz mom. Get your car inside then.

I wait for her in the car and she comes back. We drive off.

Martha: I hope that didn't come out as me trying to cause troubles between you guys.

Me: You were just looking out for me. I know.

Martha: I just do not trust him. I fear him on your behalf.

I chuckle.

Me: My guard is down and that means I have nothing to worry about. Things are beyond good

between us Martha. His phone does not even have a password. He's not that Sabelo anymore.

Martha: If you say so mama. Anything from Lufhuno?

Ugh that cry baby. He cut me off after I told him about the engagement. He moved out of his house and I do not know where he is and I couldn't care less about him. I am just worried about Kay.

Me: Nothing.

Martha: Are you even trying to find him though?

Me: He's an adult. When he is done being selfish. He will contact me.

Martha: That's another thing about you when things are going well with Sabelo. You forget about everyone else. Its not right.

Me: That is not true and you know that.

Martha: It is. When is he paying lobola?

Me: Soon. He was still gathering money.

Martha: hmmm...

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ZANELE

I wake up and go to relieve myself in the bathroom and go downstairs to check if he's back. He is not. I go back up and search every room and there is no sign of him.

I go to the bedroom and take my phone. There are missed calls from Pele from last night. I call him back. He takes his time to answer.

Me: Please tell me you found him.

Pele: I did and the elders are wondering why you are not here sitting on the mattress as you should.

Me: You know I do not believe in that.

Pele: What you believe in became invalid the day you wedded into this family. We will be expecting you.

I hang up and pack my suitcase and call Lily while at it.

Lilly: Ma'am?

Me: Book me a flight to Cape Town.

Lilly: For when?

Me: Asap.

Lilly: I am not sure that's gonna happen.

Me: Try a jet then. Before 12pm

Lilly: I will try my best.

I hang up and go into the shower....

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We did groceries when we got to the mall and his mom came and we drove home. And now I making lunch for mu sweet mother inlaw. He comes in. He was not here when we arrived. He greets his mom and Martha. My phone rings. I answer.

Me: Mtase.

Amber: Mtase. Hey. I am not sure I can come.

Me: Seriously Amber. When last did I see you?

Amber: I know I know and I am not proud of it. I will make it up to you I promise.

Me: You better. Keep well okay

Amber: I will.

I hang up. Sabelo hugs me.

Me: That was Amber. I invited her for lunch and she cannot come, again.

He kisses me

Sabelo: I'm sorry. She is probably busy and you know how pregnant people be like.

Me: I don't know.

Sabelo: Maybe its about time you fell pregnant so you'd know.

Me: never.

I attend to my pots.

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Me: Even 35 isn't too bad.

Sabelo: You want our child to have a gogo mother?

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Sabelo: I thought you loved me.

Me: Oh I love you so much. That is why I just want us to be by ourselves and enjoy each other before we add a member.

Sabelo: I love that.

We kiss. His mom calls him.

Her: Do we have to vacate? We are non existent here.

Sabelo: Oh no. We are just used to being alone. Let me take you on a tour.

Her: thank you.

They walk away. Martha comes and sit on the bar stool.

Martha: I never thought I'd see the day.

Me: Me too.

They started speaking to each other about 8 months ago. When Sabelo quit his degree on his last year to pursue his football career that was so unclear. His mother disowned him. I became the mother. I worked extra hours to pay my rent and his. To buy him cocks, to buy him clothes and give him pocket money. An outsider might say I am sucking him dry by allowing him to pay my rent and car installment but he is here today because I believed in him. I went to the ends of the earth for him to get signed up at Kings Football Club.

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It was still the same old view with little changes of dustbins. There were families as usual. Laughing, running around, kissing and hugging. I am going

to have this. Before this year ends. My mother has died without holding her grandchildren. That was her only wish; to have grandchildren before she dies. And we failed to give her that.

My phone rings. Its her. I watch it ring. I have nothing to say to her now or ever....

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I followed her from our house until she got to the airport. At a time that I need her the most in my life. She was going away on business. I lost my mother and she is not gonna be here for me. I was there for her until her aunt was buried. I had to be at work but I asked a week off so that I can be there for her.

I did not have the strength to stop her. She knew exactly what she was doing. I drove here. I used to come here a lot when I was in high school. I loved seeing the white families. It inspired me to get married and have my own family but here I am. 30 years old with no chils or a dog even. I thought I'd have 3 or 4 kids bt now but kids only became my wish not hers.

It was still the same old view with little changes of dustbins. There were families as usual. Laughing, running around, kissing and hugging. I am going to have this. Before this year ends. My mother has died without holding her grandchildren. That was her only wish; to have grandchildren before she dies. And we failed to give her that.

My phone rings. Its her. I watch it ring. I have nothing to say to her now or ever....

12

ZIMASA

On Sunday we went to church and had family lunch. It was amazing. I got a glimpse of what my marriage life will be and that's exactly how I would like to spend my Sundays.

He carried me to bed and we bathed together. He told me how much he loves and appreciates me. He said he's happy about the hospitality I gave his mother. As if I had a choice of treating her bad.

I was in a good until I got here and saw her cakey face. Her attitude is truly repulsive. I watch the clock as it moves and jump up when it gets to 12. I take my bag and head out.

Tabitha: Hello? Where is that road leading?

Me: To lunch.

Tabitha: Where is mine?

Me: On its way.

Tabitha: Who is going to bring it to me cause those guys always leave it on the reception

Me: Because that's what you pay for.

Tabitha: Bring me my lunch before you go eat.
You get paid for that.

She slams the door. I go away.

I find Amber talking to Lebo.

Lebo: Oh here she is.

She puts the phone down.

Me: Hi baby mama. Look at you glowing

Amber: Hey.

We hug.

Lebo: I did not know you had a sister.

Me: I do. I have 3 more. From different mothers.
My father was quite a busy man.

We laugh.

Amber: I am here to take you out on lunch.

Me: Oh really? That's awesome.

Tabitha's food arrives.

Me: Please call her to come and fetch her food.

Lebo: You gonna get fired wena.

Me: Bye boo.

We had out. We use my car. She seemed drained by something though.

Me: Are you okay?

Amber: I am. I'm just forever exhausted.

Me: It will be over soon sis. How far are you now?

Amber: 5 months.

Me: See? Only 4 left.

Amber: That sounds like a decade. Pregnancy is very exhausting. You will feel it one day.

I laugh.

Me: Looking forward to it. Sabelo is on my neck about a child.

Amber: Do not let him pressure you. A child is a big commitment. You cannot have one just because he wants it. You both have to want it.

Me: True but in marriage we compromise

Amber: You are not married yet.

Me: But soon to be.

Amber: I am still struggling to understand why you agreed to marry him after he beat you till you ended up in hospital.

Me: oh Amber just let it go.

Amber: Its absurd Zimasa.

Me: He apologized and made up for it.

Amber: What if he does it again?

Me: He will not. I just wish everyone can just stop judging him. You do not know him like that.

Amber: We have been watching and we've seen he is not a good for you. How many times has he been on female scandals since you dated?

Me: Did you wanna have lunch or you came to talk shit about my fiancé?

Amber: I came to have lunch while I tell you that Sabelo is not a good man.

Me: Well he is not yours. Let him be my bad man.

I do a u-turn at the cross roads and drive back to work. I stop next to her car.

Me: I've lost my appetite.

Amber: I'm sorry.

Me: Get the hell out of my car Amber Hlongwane. Out!

She hops out. I go and park and head inside. I see Lufhuno stand up as I get in. I pass him and get into the lift.

Tabitha: Come here Zimasa.

I stop.

Me: Yes?

Tabitha: Where is my lunch?

Me: Did you not fetch it?

Tabitha: I have a P.A.

Me: Well 12pm to 12:45 I am not working.

Tabitha: Do you still want this job?

Me: You are full of shit do you know that? You think working for you is nice? I work here because I need the money. If I did not, I would've quit after 3 hours being here. You may have grown up in a home full of slaves, but this is not how you treat people. Have you realized how unhappy every one is here? You think its cute to keep every one on their toes? Its not that they are scared of you. They are scared of losing their jobs and not being able to look after themselves and their families. I'll collect my things.

Tabitha: You better.

I walk to my station and start packing....

.....

ZANELE

Thamsanqa joins me for lunch. I do not know of a better view than eating and watching the sea. The birds flying around. It is all heaven.

He kisses my cheek and sit down.

Me: I didn't think you'll wake up after last night.

Thami: I am a steel. No hangover formed against me shall prosper.

I laugh.

Me: I should be leaving in 2 hours.

Thami: You want me to drive you?

Me: If you do not have anywhere to be.

Thami: No. I'll be fetching my bambino later after school.

Me: How old is she now?

Thami: She's 6.

Me: Thank you for coming here. I really needed that fun.

Thami: I could never let you be on your own in Cape Town while I am here I just wish you came with Mulo.

Me: Maybe we'll both come next time.

I check my phone. There was no text nor missed calls from him. I know he is distracted but it is not like him to not try to get to me. What am I doing wrong? The death of his mother had to make him

love me more. But instead he is slipping away from me.

I face it down and continue eating.

Thami: Are you guys okay?

Me: Who?

Thami: You and Mulo. This never happens. You're never apart.

Me: We're fine.

My phone rings. Its him. My heart skips a beat.

Me: Mtwana.

Mulo: Come back home.

Me: I am.

He hangs up. I put my phone in my bag.

Me: Please drive me to the airport.

He laughs.

Thami: What did that man feed you?

Me: Stop asking me things please.

He helps me carry the suitcase. And we drive to the airport....

....

ZIMASA

I drive to his place because mine would depress me. The house is clean and awfully quiet. I throw myself on the couch and turn on the tv. There is nothing interesting playing so I take a nap.

I wake up to him squeezing me. He's sleeping behind me. I didn't hear him come in. I move a little.

Sabelo: Don't go.

Me: Its 5pm.

Sabelo: Yes. Lets sleep a little more.

Me: I need to see what we'll eat.

Sabelo: We will eat fastfood.

The door bell rings. He grunts. I laugh.

Me: Go attend the door. I need to pee.

I get up and rush to the bathroom. I do my business and go back. I find him reading a brown envelope.

Me: What is it?

I take it from him. He snatches it back.

Me: O-kay.

Sabelo: Its confidential.

Me: Oh.

He disappears to the bedroom. I go to the fridge and take out a bottle of water. And drink....

.....

ZANELE

I got home and started cooking. It us close to 6pm and he can get it anytime. I lay the table.

The door swings open. His coat is hanging over his shoulder as always. I meet him halfway and hug him.

He doesn't hug me back. I let go.

Me: How did the funeral go?

He goes on to the table and dish up and sit down to eat. I join him.

Me: I'm sorry I could not come. I had to go away on business.

He says nothing.

Me: Nkazimulo Zulu.

He takes the tab controller and play Hhashi Elimhlophe very loudly.

Me: I'm gonna go to bed.

He takes out his phone and call someone.

Mulo: Hhei Bafo. There is food here. Come with the crew.

Me: Not in my house.

Mulo: Bring beer.

Me: Pele I dare you!

Mulo: Oh that's a helping lady. My wife is in Cape Town. Ok I'll see you soon.

Me: Nkazimulo do not start with me.

He whistles and sing along to Mqumeni now. I really hate it when those ill-mannered hard core Zulu friends of his come here. They always leave this house a mess, not to mention the maskandi and ukusina. They broke my tiles the last time they were here.

I go upstairs to my beauty room. Something is not right with this man. I need to fix him...

I woke up alone. There was still maskandi blasting loud as I headed down. I found them sleeping on my white couches with their dirty shoes up on them, not to mention the broken glasses on the floor and spilled beer. I called Tamia to come in and clean. I drove to work and right now I am regretting coming here. I should've worked at home. Lilly brings me another cup of coffee. It was standing in for wine or anything alcohol because my marriage is falling apart and I cannot drink at work.

Lilly: After how long should I bring another one?

Me: 15 minutes or 13

Lilly: Right.

She walks out. I need to call this man. I take my phone and it rings. It's Nomalanga Jones. I answer.

Me: Nomalanga.

Nomalanga: Siena.

We have a problem.

Me: What is going on?

Nomalanga: Your husband was here. Wasted is an understatement. I just told my husband to drive him home.

Me: I am trying to not be there for him but it's hard to see him like this.

Nomalanga: You're doing that for your marriage.

Me: He is not talking to me Nomalanga. He called his friends over. I went to the beauty room and he didn't even come to bed.

Nomalanga: Give him space or else this will be all for nothing. We waited for an entire 6 months for this. Do not ruin it.

Me: I won't. It just does not feel okay to take a bath by myself and sleeping alone.

Nomalanga: The full moon will come back soon and you make all your demands and they shall be done.

Me: I know. Let me call him.

Nomalanga: Don't. Let him be.

I sigh.

Me: OK. Talk to you soon

Nomalanga: Our talks have become constant .

Me: I noticed. Bye.

I hang up and block her number. We shouldn't be communicating this much. It is against our rules. I drink my coffee and look at our picture frame that has pictures of us from the very first day we started dating. We captured everything. Mr Carlson comes in.

I stand up to shake his hand.

Mr Carlson: Can we go to lunch?

Me: Ofcourse.

Mr Carlson: You will find me at reception.

Me: Okay Sir.

He smiles and walk out. We never talk one on one and I couldn't have said no. He is my boss and that would have been rude. I pack my things....

....

ZIMASA

The sun stings my poor fragile eyes. I grunt and turn around.

Sabelo: It almost 12. Wake up.

Me: Let me be please.

Sabelo: Why aren't you at work? Did you take a day off?

Me: Yes. A permanent day off.

Sabelo: You quit?

Me: Yes I did.

I lean on the continentals.

Me: I have enough money now. When are you going home to pay lobola?

Sabelo: About that.

He sits down and caress my cheek.

Sabelo: I've been thinking. What is the rush?

What is he saying to me?

Me: What does that mean?

Sabelo: It means we have a whole lifetime to spend. Why rush into marriage. We've never even spent a week together. Let alone nights.

Me: That's because I work for us Sabelo.

Sabelo: You used to. I got the money and now you quit a day job to go back to stripping?

Me: I was gonna stay at home until I figure something out.

Sabelo: We should put this whole marriage thing on hold.

Marriage thing? My heart is shattered. I can feel the tears forming. My phone rings. I take it quickly. Its grandma.

Me: Hi gogo.

Gogo: My girl. I just found your message. I am so proud of you. We will be waiting for an official letter that has a date and we will start preparing.

He stands up and walk to the window.

Me: Thank you gogo. Can I call you back shortly?

Gogo: Ofcourse my darling.

I hang up.

Sabelo: So, you told your grandmother?

Me: I did.

Sabelo: And you did not discuss it with me first?

Me: Its what we agreed on at first before that envelope arrived.

He chuckles.

Sabelo: You think it has anything to do with this?

Me: Does it not? Everything was perfect before it arrived. You were looking forward to our wedding and then it arrives, you hide it and leave in the middle of the night and come back now to tell me we should put everything on hold? Are you shitting me?

Sabelo: Do you see why we should put this wedding on hold? There is no trust between us or atleast on your side. What kind of marriage would it be if you do not trust me!

He walks to the door.

Me: That's all you do. You run away every time.
Coward!

I take off the fucking room and throw it across the room. I tolerated that spoilt brat Tabitha trying to collect enough money to have a beautiful wedding only for him to put it on hold!

Me: I hate you Sabelo. I hate you!!

I curl myself and hold on to the pillow and cry....

5 days later....

I have not seen him or heard from him and it was only for the best. I did not want to see nor talk to him. I have been ignoring Gogo's calls and everyone's. I had nothing to say to them all. I was throwing myself a pity party all these days.

Only eating, crying and sleeping for an entire 5 days. And now I am done mopping around. I need to clean up. I have taken out the first load of laundry and now I am cleaning our bedroom that was a pigsty for the past few days. Martha just won't stop calling me!

I hear the door bell. I ignore it and continue cleaning. They finally give up and I sigh. What if he is not safe wherever he is? I would never forgive myself if anything happened to him.

I take my phone and sit down. I send him a text first to see if it goes through. It does so I call him. He answers and says nothing.

Me: Sthandwa sami. Are you okay?

He says nothing.

Me: Sabelo I'm sorry okay. Please come back home. It's been 5 days.

Sabelo: I need a breather and I believe you do too.

Me: I don't. I just need you here with me baby please.

Sabelo: I need atleast 2 weeks away from you Zimasa. Please give me a bit if space.

Me: Fine. I love you.

Sabelo: I have to go.

Me: I said I lo-

He hangs up. He has a very short temper. I hate that about him.

The door wide opens. Its Martha.

Me: How did you get in and what is chasing you?

Martha: We need to go. Right now.

Me: What?

Martha: You need to see this for yourself.

Me: What? I am really busy Martha.

Martha: Where is Sabelo?

Me: He's out.

Martha: I don't know what kind of game he is playing but the woman that was here as his mother

is just an old hooker that would do anything for cash.

Me: Are you jealous of my life Martha?

Martha: Excuse me?

Me: Yes. Are you? Why do you always have something horrible to say about my man?

Martha: Because you're stupidly inlove to notice that Sabelo is using you.

Mr: For what?

Martha: I don't know! But he is. I just saw the woman at Cousin's cabin. I asked who she is and they told me she is one of the hookers and has been since she was a little girl, she has no kids nor a qualification. What I know is that Sabelo's mother is a qualified teacher. Is she not?

Me: I see what you are doing and its not gonna work. Get the fuck of my house.

Martha: My door will be open when you finally see him for who he really is. I hope it won't be too late.

She walks out. I close the door. What is she so against our relationship?

14

ZIMASA

Me: I know you said its only for 2 weeks but I miss you so much babe....i haven't slept a wink. I don't know if I am strong enough to go 2 weeks without you. Please send me a text at least so that I'll know you're okay.

I drop and sob silently. Why is he doing this to me? He knows I am not that strong. I rest my head on the pillow....

....

ZANELE

I shake him gently. He opens his eyes and stare at me. I clear my throat.

Me: Morning.

He just stares. What is wrong with him?

Me: I am sorry I couldn't come to the funeral. I was scared of seeing you like that. You know how I am. Its enough now with this mute in this house. What can I do to make it up to you?

He peels off the duvet and head to the bathroom. I sigh and follow him. I find him pooping.

Me: Since when do we use our bathroom for pooping?

He whistles.

I go out. He is on a mission to test my patience. We have a bathroom for doing number 2 because we eat in our bathroom!

My phone rings as I dress up for work.

Me: Mrs Zulu

Caller: Its Khosi.

Me: Friend. Hi.

Khosi: What are you doing later today?

Me: Nothing I hope.

Khosi: Victor is coming home. I am making a little welcome home party with just friends and family. I would like for you and Mulo to be there.

Me: We will be there babe.

Khosi: Thank you love. I'll text you all the details.

Me: Ok. I'll see you later.

I hang up. He comes out.

Me: That was Khosi. She is inviting us for a party. Victor is coming home.

He dresses up.

Me: Fuck this! How long are you gonna sulk like a little child? I get the message! Cut it out Mulo.

He motioned to the door.

Me: If you walk out that door, this marriage is over.

He turns and look at me.

Me: Yeah I thought so. Are you ready to be an adult?

He opens the door and walk out. Nkazimulo Proffesor Zulu just walked out after I threatened to end this marriage if he dare does that. I feel heat. Tears rush down. I fail to stand. I collapse on the chair and cry. My marriage is over. I punch Nomalanga's numbers with my hands trembling. She answers on the second ring.

Me: Did I do the right thing? Was it what I was supposed to do cause if it was. Things would not be like this!

Nomalanga: What has that man done now?

Me: He hates me Nomalanga. I can see it in his eyes. I repulse him. He walked right out of the door after I said our marriage will be over if he do so. And he did!

Nomalanga: Your life is so dependent on that man you do not even know what to do with yourself if he's being a little bitch. I told you to let him be!

Me: Well I can't!

Nomalanga: It be over soon Siena. Go stay at a hotel and amantombazane will fix everything. In no time you will have your husband back.

Me: Oh God.

Nomalanga: And stop crying.

She hangs up. She doesn't understand. I get up and fix my ruined make up. I can't live without him. I would give up anything right now to get him to talk to me....

....

ZIMASA

My phone rings. I was planning on not waking up today. I search for it under the blanket. I find it and it has stopped ringing. It was Lufhuno. What does he want!

I toss it on the other side and continue sleeping. It rings again. I grunt and take it.

Me: What!

Kay: I'm sorry i-

I sit up right.

Me: Baby? Hi I am sorry. I thought-

Kay: It was my dad? So its true?

Me: What?

Kay: That you want nothing to do with us anymore.

Me: That is not true.

Kay: Why don't you visit us anymore?

Me: I have been busy but I will come this week.

Kay: You are just saying.

Me: I'm not. I promise you.

“Kutlwano! What did your dad say about using his phone!”

Kay: I'm sorry mommy i-

Melody: You're sorry nothing, go take your bag we're leaving....

I hang up and take a deep sigh. I hop out of bed and make it and go to take a shower....

I hear a knock as I enter the kitchen after bathing. I go to open. Its 3 men I have never seen before. My heart beats faster.

Me: Can I help you?

Man: Yes. I am detective Nhlapho. Are you miss Hlongwane?

Me: Yes I am.

Nhlapho: Can we come in?

Me: Uhm...yeah sure.

They in. I offer them seats and make them juice.

Nhlapho: I hope your fiance put you on the picture.

Me: Picture of what?

Nhlapho: Of working with us. We have been trying him on the cell for the past days with no luck so we figured it was time to get you to work.

Me: I understand nothing right now.

Nhlapo: Sabelo was caught with drugs months ago so we gave him 2 options, does he go to jail or help us get the drug lords.

Me: Okay and where do I enter?

Nhlapo: In auditioning as a stripper in his house. You will be protected at all times. Are you in?

Me: Of course.

He takes out a little paper.

Nhlapo: This is his address. Remember miss Hlongwane, be careful he is a very dangerous man. If he finds out that you work with the police he will kill you. So, do not contact us. We will.

I nod. They get up and I walk them to the door. I close it and take a deep breath. I need water. I rushed to the sink and pour it in the glass and drink.

I drop the glass when I feel a hand touch me.

Sabelo: Hey hey hey it's me.

He hugs me.

Sabelo: Its me. What's up?

Me: I thought it was...the police.

Sabelo: Police?

Me: Yeah. Do you care to explain.

Sabelo: I didn't want to stress you but I am handling it.

Me: Are you? How?

Sabelo: I don't know but I will find a way soon.

Me: That's funny cause he said I was the plam to catch him.

Sabelo: What?

Me: Yes. I have to throw myself into the wolves to keep you out of jail.

Sabelo: That's absurd. That was his suggestion. I would never make you do anything to save my ass again. You did enough of that. I am gonna do this myself or go to jail and serve. Just not putting you in danger.

Me: I will do it. .

Sabelo: You won't. I will not allow it.

Me: The detective said its been months. If yoh really had a shot at catching hjm, wouldn't be done by now?

Sabelo: I am trying my best.

Me: Let me do it.

Sabelo: I really don't want you to but fine.

Me: What brings you here? I was experimenting you after 2 weeks.

Sabelo: I missed you. I couldn't even sleep last night.

He picks me up and place me on the counter.

Sabelo: You cried till you fell asleep, didn't you?

I feel tears come again. I nod. He kisses me.

Sabelo: I'm sorry.

Me: Its okay. I can be a bit of a mess sometimes.

Sabelo: I love you regardless.

He pushes me back and pull my thong down and pushes my legs apart and eat me out gently.

God knows we're so inlove....

15

ZIMASA

There were 5 girls ahead of me now. I have been here since 5am and the line was already very long. The unemployment rate is really high in SA. These were not just hookers or women who had no life bur people with degrees but won't find jobs.

When I bring my eyes up from my phone. There's now only two of us. This house is to die for. Thugs get all the good things in life.

Man: Hey! Are you here to look around or you are looking for a job?

I stand up. It is already my turn. I get up and follow him. We enter the stripping room. It is heaven. The man I am here for is sitting down there puffing expensive cigars. I get on stage and take off my dress and spray myself and walk around the pole and start dancing. I had to swallow my pride and call Martha to come and teach me a few tricks because she is really good at it. I did not tell her why I wanted to learn a few more tricks because she does not approve of anything I do for my man.

I bow when I am done.

Man: Please follow me.

I pick up my dress and follow him. He takes me where the rest to the ladies were.

Man: The judge will come shortly. Good luck.

Us: Thank you.

We sit and wait. I text husband that we are now waiting for results. He wishes me luck.

The judge walks in. He points at me and other 4 girls and tells us to follow him. We follow him out.

Him: I really loved your performances but you perform for boys in high school. Here I need energy. I need eye contact. I need nudity. Who on earth wears a boy leg to pole dancing? I need to see some ass and almost a vagina or a pussy lip. I need a nasty performance. A performance that will leave Madonna with a boner.

Me: I can try again.

Him: I am afraid you can't

Me: Please. I really need this job.

Him: You came try again in a month or two sis I'm sorry. Thanks for stopping by.

He walks back inside. The other girls are gone

I walk away with tears threatening my eyes. Sabelo is gonna be so upset. The drive home is shorter. I am at the gate before I can even process this. There are cars in front of our house. I am assuming it's the police. I stay in the car for good 10 minutes and hop out when I am ready to see the disappointed look on his face.

It's really them. I greet.

Sabelo: Before you even sit down. Are you in?

I shake my head.

Sabelo: Shit.

Me: But I will keep going back until they take me.

Nhlapho: It's gonna be suspicious.

He turns to Sabelo.

Nhlapho: This is bad news for you Ndoda. If we haven't got him in 2 weeks. I will have to back out from our deal.

Me: Mr detective. I promise you, I will work my way in.

Nhlapho: As long as you do not get caught because if you do. We can't protect you.

Me: I won't get caught.

They stand up.

Nhlapho: I will be awaiting your call.

We nod and they leave. He goes to the kitchen and drink water.

Me: I am going to fix it.

Sabelo: Just let me go to jail.

Me: No. Jesus Sabelo.

My phone rings. Its Embers mom.

Me: Hey mah.

Mom: Zimasa. A mere call my child? Or a please call. Nothing?

Me: I've been busy mah I'm sorry.

Mom: Aisuka wena. Your sister's boyfriend is coming to pay damages and pay lobola next week. Come home.

Me: That's great I will come. I'll call you later ma.

Mom: I know you won't.

Me: I will.

I hang up before she tells me I won't. Its really hard to go home after my dad left. That house is full of his memories and I can not stand that.

Me: That was Amber's mom. Her boyfriend is coming to pay damages and lobola.

Sabelo: Wow that's great.

Me: It is.

Sabelo: Soon that will be your people.

Me: I know.

He kissed me.

Sabelo: Go get some rest. I will go buy us food

Me: You are my hero.

I go to our bedroom to change....

....

ZANELE

I left home a day ago. I was praying it will be like Nomalanga said. I kept fighting the urge to call him, hoping he shows up here but nothing.

I decided to work from here today. I am not in the mood to be out there. I order food and put my laptop away.

I get up and stretch. I hear a knock. That was fast. I go and open. My heart skips a beat. He is carrying a bag.

Me: Hi.

Mulo: Can I come in?

Me: Uhm yeah sure.

I make a way for him to get in. He does and tosses his bag over the couch. Okay. I close the door and walk slowly to him. He takes off his jacket and trousers.

Mulo: You forgot to tell me we're staying in a hotel.

Me: I figured you needed your space.

Mulo: Did I say that?

Me: Not in so many words.

Mulo: Come here.

Me: No.

Mulo: You started this remember?

Me: I said I am sorry.

Mulo: Is that what our lives have become? You deliberately disrespecting me and apologizing all the time?

Me: No.

Mulo: If you keep treating me like this I will go out there and seek for I don't get at home. Be a wife, do not try to be a man too. 2 bulls can never stay in one kraal so decide what are you in this marriage.

I nod.

Mulo: Don't cry.

I nod and tears rush down. He comes and hugs me.

Mulo: I love you but you make it so hard to be with you now. We used to be so happy Zane. What is happening to us?

Me: I'm gonna change I promise.

He wipes my tears and leans down to kiss me. We kiss slowly. He picks me up and walk with me to the bed. I missed him. I missed his minty breath. I missed the smell axe all over me. I missed his weight on top of me. I missed all of him.

We are now both naked. He is rubbing on my clit gently. We haven't had sex in a very long time. I grab his penis and shove it inside me. He is taking too long with the romance and I am starving. He let's out a trembling breath. I hold him tight as he goes in and out, increasing his pace and slowing down. He turns me around after some time and pump me up till he cums inside me. I am not back on the pill. I clean myself up and put on my clothes.

Mulo: And then?

Me: I-

Mulo: I thought you were gonna change.

Me: What does that mean?

Mulo: It means you will stop taking that poison and we try for a child.

Me: I have to be emotionally ready to have a child mageba. I can't just fall pregnant because you want a child.

Mulo: Don't take that thing then.

Me: Fine.

I undressed again and climbed on top of him. He doesn't like this much but he let's me do it cause I like it. We kiss and he slides it in. I moan as he holds me still and fucking my brains out. I love him.....

....

ZIMASA

After eating I took a nap. I am woken up by a burning sensation of pee. I rush to the bathroom and pee. I wash my hands afterwards and go out. I find my phone ringing. Its Martha.

I sigh and take it.

Me: Hi.

She sniffles.

Me: Martha?

She sobs loudly.

Me: Where are you?

“Martha! Open the door please”

Martha: Go away.

Ms: Keep the door locked. I am coming.

I walk out as barefoot as I am and rush down. I find Sabelo on the phone. I take the first car keys I see and run out.

The drive is long and I am panicking. The security at their gate gives me trouble for a bit annoying me even more.

Me: Where is she? What did you do to her?

I say as soon as I get in. He points at the hallway. I head there. I knock.

Me: Friend its me.

I keep knocking.

The door opens. She is a mess. I go in and hug her. She sobs uncontrollably. I shush her until she calms down.

Me: What's up?

Martha: I'm pregnant.

Oh.

Me: Don't you want it?

Martha: I do.

Me: Now what is the problem? Why are you crying?

She starts crying again.

Martha: He is just so ugly friend. I don't want an ugly baby.

Me: It could come out looking like you.

Martha: No. Ugly man have strong genes. You know I've always wanted colored kids.

Me: I know babe. I'm sorry.

I hug her. I almost crashed speeding here thinking
he hurt her....

16

ZIMASA

Its been 4 days and I have been coming here every single morning and afternoon but today it is a do or die. I left home with a word that if they do not hire me, he is going down. I made him a promise the first time I did the unexplainable for him, I told him there is nothing I would not do for him even if it meanr putting myself in the face of danger. He lives with that, i gave him a home in me, I gave him a mother, I gave him a wife, I gave him a friend, he trusts me with everything and I cannot let him down. Not now when we are about to be husband and wife. He is going to go pay lobola 2 weeks after Amber's. He asked for permission a day ago. He explained that he said we should wait because of this....

The door swings open and I stop tapping my foot on the floor. I stand up.

Him: You can stay out.

He says to the 2 guys with him. His hands are behind clasped together. He walks to the other side of the room. There is a table there. He takes out a

gun and put it on the table. I have seen a gun before, I've had it pointed straight at my head and I didn't flinch so this is nothing.

Mike: Candy right?

Me: Yes Sir.

Mike: Under cover police?

I laugh.

Me: I wish but no.

Mike: Why are you si determined to work here?

Me: Because I heard you pay right and I am tired of the peanuts I earn at work.

Mike: Where did you work?

Me: At Razo's?

Mike: The rasta dude?

Me: Yes.

Mike: That's unlike him. How long have you been there?

Me: Almost 2 years now.

Mike: That's a lot of time hey.

Me: It is.

Mike: Welcome aboard miss Candy. Sushi will show you around, give you your contact and I will see you tomorrow evening with a signed contract.

Me: Thank you so much. You don't know how much this means to me.

He nods and I watch him motion to the door slowly. He leaves the door open. I take a deep breath and sit down. A petite lady walks in. She greets and tells me to follow her.

Sushi: Rule number one of this place, never ever disclose your identity, starting with this. .

She gives me a butterfly mask. I put it on.

Sushi: Amazing. This way.

She shows me around. Everyone has got their change room. What a beautiful place. She takes me to the boardroom.

Sushi: This is Lucas, lawyer. Our workers lawyer. You either read the contract with him for better

understanding or you can take it home, your choice.

Me: I will take it home thanks.

Sushi: Excellent. Did you understand everything else I told you?

Me: Yes I did.

Sushi: Great. My job here is done. He's gonna explain a few things for you.

I smile and nod. I just wanna be out of here. She walks out. Lucas clears his throat. I sit down.

Lucas: Whatever it is that you won't understand do not hesitate to give me a call, okay?

Me: Okay.

He gives me the contract and his card. I head out....

.....

NKAZIMULO ZULU

Ma: Nkazi hel....

Me: Mah!

Zanele pulls me back.

Zanele: The current is too strong Mulo. Stop please.

Me: She is my mother. I need to save her.

She makes me face her, I feel powerful love fill my heart. I love her deeply and she is in control of me.

Zanele: You need to let her go. She is gone. Let her rest.

Tears escape my eyes. She hugs me. She calls my name loudly I jump and fall off the bed. She seems ready for work.

Zanele: what's going on? You were crying in your sleep.

Me: I was dreaming of mother.

Zanele: What was she saying?

Me: Nothing. She was drowning and I could not help her. You stopped me.

Zanele: I don't know what to say. You probably thinking about her too much. Let her go.

Me: You said exactly that. How much did we drink last night?

I get up.

Zanele: You opened almost every bottle in the bar.

Me: Shit.

I open the door to the bathroom.

Zanele: Can you drive me to work today?

Me: No. I am already late.

I go back to her and kiss her.

Me: Please request a ride. I'm gonna fetch you.

Zanele: I love you.

Me: I love you.

She heads out. I take my phone and go to the bathroom. I call Smanga.

Smanga: You better have an explanation why you are not here

Me: I had too much to drink. Please take the girls to school.

Smanga: I am driving the Mrs to a hang out.

Me: When?

Smanga: 8:30.

Me: Let me drive her. I won't be able to stand the noise of those kids today.

Smanga: Nkazi bra. You know we don't get along.

Me: Just try to get along. Just for today.

Smanga: You owe me.

Me: As always.

I hang up and get under the shower. I am really not looking forward to this day...

....

ZANELE

I am at my happiest. My husband is back at his senses. We are back at being the Zane and Mulo I know. Listening to music after work, dance, drink alcohol and take our late night baths together and have lunch and lots of sex.

I jump when someone hits my desk. Its Nomalanga.

Me: Jesus.

Nomalanga: Why are you smiling like an idiot?

Me: Because I am happy. Why are you not?

Nomalanga: Because there is someone threatening me!

Me: How?

Nomalanga: That they know about amantombazane. That they are going to let my husband know and the whole world know. Do you know what that means for us?

Me: Us? It sounds like a you problem to me.

Nomalanga: Have you lost your mind Siena? If this person knows of amantombazane then that means they know you are in it too.

Me: Well you came here, what if you're bugged or followed? Did you think of that? My life is just getting back on track Nomalanga. I do not want any problems.

Nomalanga: Wow.

Me: Yes wow. Get out.

She scoffs and click her heels away. I shall not have my mood ruined....

....

ZIMASA

When I got home he was not here. I cleaned the mess that I made when I left in the wee hours of the morning.

I sped home in excitement just to find no one. I push the little suitcase to the closet. He gets in. He throws his gym bag on top of the bed. He passes me without a word and disappear to the bathroom. I let him be. I fold the remaining clothes until he comes out bathed.

Sabelo: Please pack me some clothes.

Me: You going somewhere?

Sabelo: Yes.

Me: For how long?

Sabelo: For the weekend.

Me: You just decided today?

Sabelo: Yes.

Me: What's wrong with you?

Sabelo: Are you gonna pack the bag or not?

Me: I won't. And I got that job.

Sabelo: You did?

Then I see a smile. Such a dork.

Sabelo: Come here.

He kisses me.

Sabelo: Let's go out to celebrate.

Me: Aren't you leaving now?

Sabelo: I will leave tomorrow when you leave for Amber's thing.

Me: I don't think I am going. I have to be at Mike's.

Sabelo: That is not good.

Me: I will make it up to her.

Sabelo: If you say so.

He picks me up and spin me around.

Me: Put me down!

He throws me on the bed and tickle me.

Sabelo: I don't know what I'd do without you.
You're my light in the darkness.

Me: I know.

Sabelo: You were created for me.

Me: Oh yes I was.

We kiss....

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17

ZIMASA

Today came faster than expected. Just yesterday I was glad to be in my man's arms, drinking champagne and listening to him telling me he will

always appreciate me no matter what. It was a good night. I was so sad when he left today after we had lunch. I really wished I could go with him but hey a good future for my kids relies on this.

I put on my mask at the gate and the security let me in. I look for Sushi inside but she is nowhere to be found so I head straight to where we found Lucas yesterday.

I find him busy with some paperwork. I greet and sit down.

Lucas: Candy right?

Me: Yes.

I hand over the papers.

Lucas: You read and understood.

Me: Yes.

Lucas: And signed?

Me: Yes.

Lucas: This contract can be cancelled any time for the next 30 days. After that, we will fine you.

Me: I understood that.

Lucas: Shall your identity be leaked, we will be to blame and we will pay you for it. Please go stand over there and stare straight at the lenses.

I do as told. The flash almost blinds me.

Lucas: You may go to the changing room.

Me: Thank you.

I walk out and head straight down the hallway. The doors are labelled. I find mine at the end. So far away. I go in and close the door behind me. Clean and smells fresh. A mirror and cabinet. I sit down on the ottoman. I take out my cell and text Nhlapho that I am in. I delete the message and apply lipstick. I change into lingerie and look at my reflection. I feel my hair shrink. Mike comes in. He closes the door and lock. He definitely know. I try to remain aa calm as possible. He comes straight to me and pull out a knife. He rips my R800 lingerie apart!

My boobs are left in the open. This is sexy....focus Zimasa. Focus!

I get back to being scared. He takes my mask off. He's staring deep into my eyes. I wish my vagina did not react to this but what on earth with scary man? I am literally going for an orgasm.

Mike: Who sent you?

Me: Detective Nhlapho.

He let's go of me.

Shit! Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit!

Me: I mean no one.

Mike: What did you do little girl?

Little girl? Is that how he sees me? I could literally fuck him till midnight right now and right here!

Me: I don't know what you mean.

Mike: I mean Nhlapho would never ask anyone to come here undercover unless he really hates them that he wants them dead.

Me: What do you mean?

Mike: I mean I could kill you, get rid your body and you'd never be found. Why would he put you under so much danger?

Me: Its for my boyfriend. He cut a deal with the police.

Mike: Me in exchange for his freedom?

I nod.

Mike: Do you know that he does not love you?

Qaluyiva!

Me: You don't know me.

Mike: But I know you're stupid.

Me: Are you killing me or?

Mike: Not yet. I might need you. I'll tell sushi to bring something to wear.

Me: I quit.

Mike: Then I'm gonna have to kill you. Tell them you are still trying to get close to me.

He says calmly and head to the door. I finally breathe. My boobs have been staring at him the whole time. I sit down, my knees are weak.

How did he know? I just wanna be out of here....

....

ZANELE

I hate waiting. 5 minutes is my maximum waiting time. More than that its abuse.

The little girl comes out finally.

Her: She is out of the meeting.

Finally. I get up and head into her office. She finds me pouring water.

Me: I found the address you've been getting the texts from. The number is registered unde no name. So I'm guessing it was bought from the somalian shops.

Nomalanga: Thank you.

Me: Please try to stay away Nomalanga. I mean it.

Nomalanga: I was desperate and afraid. You know I trust you Siena and I knew you could come up with a solution. Thank you.

Me: Okay I'm gone.

She smiles and nods. I walk off.

I get in my car and speed off. I am late for our dinner date. I know he is a bomb now.

I arrive at the restaurant. Luckily he is not here yet. I head straight to our table. I order a glass of red wine as I wait. 5 minutes later he walks in.

Mulo: I'm so sorry.

He kisses me.

Me: I was also late. It's been 5 minutes.

Mulo: Whew! I almost shit my pants.

We laugh.

Me: I am starving.

Mulo: Me too. I haven't had anything since breakfast. Smanga forgot to fetch the kids from school. I just fetched them.

Me: No!

Mulo: He's so stupid. And Kyla has a new friend.

Me: There's 3 of them now?

Mulo: Imagine. The drop offs are tiring But I wouldn't trade them for the world. Such an amazing smart little girl. She is 6, stays with her

father. She does not know her mother but they write each other letters, she loves her father that's what I picked up.

Me: What is her name?

He laughs.

Mulo: We got caught up in the conversation I forgot to ask. Let's order.

His face is always full of joy when he talks about the little girls he drives but today, he's over the moon. Sometimes I wish I could give him children but I know he would never get it from anywhere so there is no pressure nor fear that he might come home with a pregnant woman....

....

ZIMASA

Around 9pm. I knock off. I drive straight home. Devastated. I need a glass of wine, or 2 or 3 or even the whole bottle. He was smiling at me the whole time I danced which made more scared cause I felt like anytime he's gonna shoot me off the fucking pole.

I get home and turn on the lights. I head straight to the fridge and take out my cider and drink it up. I feel the nerves calm. I try calling Nhlapho, he does not answer. I take another bottle and go collapse on the couch. What is my life becoming?....

.....

SABELO

I get off the phone and it rings again. Its Nhlapho. I hope he has good news for me.

Me: Make my night Nhlapho.

Nhlapho: I'm so sorry chief. He did not kill her.

Me: What do you mean he did not kill her? Your assured me he will!

Nhlapho: Well he didn't. I just got a report that she was seen driving in to your home.

Me: Do you know what does that mean for me? I don't want to live my life with my wife and child dodging that psycho's threats and curses. Stage a break in and fucking kill her. By tomorrow morning I want her dead.

Nhlapho: I am on it.

I hang up. So much for a smart cop. I drink the remaining brandy in my glass....

18

ZANELE

“Noma kanjani wedali wami ngeke ngikushiye. Ngikuthanda unjalo. Noma bekuthuka bethi awugezi, unuka umlomo ngikuthanda unjalo”

We sing out loud, holding on to each other and throw ourselves on the bed.

Me: Is it me or our bed feels a bit stiff.

Mulo: I think we're in the wrong room.

Me: We counted doors

Mulo: We miss counted. Our bedroom is not a 3rd door on the right its on the left.

We giggle.

Me: Shit.

Mulo: Let's camp here.

Me: Oh God I need to pee.

Mulo: Want me to help you take your clothes off?

Me: Please.

He rolls off and falls. He laughs.

Me: Mulo!

Mulo: We shouldn't have smoked that shit. My head feels heavy.

Me: Its gonna take a miracle for me to get up.

I feel myself floating. He's carrying me.

Me: Oh I love you my zulu warrior.

Mulo: I love you too my spear.

Me: Are body shaming me?

Mulo: Okay sorry. I love you shlangu sami.

Me: Thank you geba.

He puts me down and help me take my dress off and I finally pee. Whew.....

.....

ZIMASA

I am woken up by a sound of something breaking. Is Sabelo back? I get out of bed and go to check. I stop at a first step when I see two men tiptoeing to the room downstairs. One of them has a gun in his hand. Others are breaking everything before them. I walk backwards until I am at his study door. I open it carefully and lock. I look for a place to stay and there is nothing except for the desk. I go and hide behind it. How did they get in? My mind comes back and I take the phone and call Sabelo. He picks up immediately.

Me: Babe.

Sabelo: Zimasa.

Me: There are people here.

Sabelo: What do they want?

I see that envelope he received days ago. A paper is peeping through “Marriage Certificate...” written in bold letters.

Sabelo: Zimasa? What do they want?

I pull it out. I run my eyes on it. I see his name. I see Amber's. I sit butt flat. I read from the beginning. This is a mistake. This is...this is a mistake. I pull the drawers and look for Lord knows what but I find it, a memory stick. I turn the computer on, my hands are sweating and shaking. He would never do that to me. Ever!

His lockscreen is a scan printout. He changed his password. I take the phone and call him again.

Sabelo: What are you doing in my office Zimasa? Did I grant you permission to go there?

Me: I am in danger Sabelo.

Sabelo: Zimasa its after Midnight. I am sleeping. I really don't have time for you games.

I hang up. I hear footsteps outside. I sit still. My heart is beating out of my chest. The door is kicked open.

"There is no one here"

He says in almost a whisper.

"Have you searched the whole room? He said she is here. She called him with his office phone. Look behind the desk"

I pinch myself. I need to wake up from this nightmare. What does he mean ge said i am here? What is going on?

I feel a hard object hit my head i become dizzy and fall on my face. I am pulled by my feet.

I feel cold finger tips touch my butt as my underwear is pulled down and my legs are spread apart, I want to fight but I cannot. I want to beg him but I can't. He inserts himself and humps, and humps, and humps, and humps, and humps, roughly. He is holding in to me. Tightly, his arm wraps around my neck and he pulls it tight. This is it. This is how my book ends, i am dying.

He stops and get off.

"What are you doing?"

"He said we could do anything we like to her. I couldn't resist this"

"Without a condom? Your dna is all over her now. Just fucking shoot her already."

I am not scared anymore. I was, few minutes ago but now I have accepted my fate. A gun goes off, I feel a sharp sting on my back, another one, and another one. I can't move. I feel like I'm going to di.....

.....

MARTHA

I yawn and turn and I see him.

Me: Do you really have to be the first thing I see in the morning?

Mulalo: Because we share the bed babe. Good morning. Breakfast is served.

Me: I can make my own food thanks.

Mulalo: How long are you gonna do this?

Me: For as long as I live.

Mulalo: Isn't that your friend's house?

I turn to the tv. It is Sabelo's house. I turn up the volume.

“Reporting live from the soccer star's house. It is believed to have been a break in where the accused raped and tried to kill the live in maid of Mr Sabelo. She was found earlier today By the neighbor who was walking her dog and rushed to the hospital. The accused are still on the run...”

I jump on my feet and take my phone and call Zimasa. I didn't know they had a maid. Where they were? It goes through voicemail.

Me: You need to drive me there.

He takes his keys and we follow each other out. I pray she is safe wherever she is. I try calling Sabelo on the way but he doesn't pick up. I am even more frustrated now....

....

MULO

I turn the tv off. What has this world become? At night when you should be sleeping, you are going to people's houses to vandalise their belongings and abuse women. This is twisted.

She gets in walking slowly. The hangover got her bad. She sits on my lap.

Zane: You woke up early.

Me: I couldn't sleep in that bed a second more.

Zane: Is there anyone in this house?

Me: Not yet. I made myself coffee.

Zane: Aibo where are people paid to do that?

Pearl: Here ma'am. I'm so sorry. I am Sabelo's neighbor so I was trapped.

Zane: Who is Sabelo?

Me: Super stricker of kings fc.

Zane: why was pearl trapped?

Me: Because there was a break in at his house. They raped and tried to kill his maid. She was found this morning.

Zane: That's awful. But how does one break in into a fucking estate? Is that what you paid a million for Pearl?

Pearl: I am still wondering cause our houses have alarms.

Me: Perhaps she forgot to set hers.

Zane: Still. This soccer star must tell the truth. He knows what happened there.

Me: Okay enough about this. Pearl please prepare us something with chilli.

Pearl: Coming right up.

Zane takes my coffee and drinks it. I lean back on the chair and listen to my slowly pounding head. Yesterday was fun. We have been having so much fun lately and I am enjoying every bit of it. It feels good to have my bestfriend back...

....

MARTHA

I sit beside her and hold her hand and cry. She doesn't deserve what happened to her. She is bruised and looks lifeless. She looks like the heart monitor is going to stop any time.

I have been here for over 5 hours. Still in my pyjamas. When I arrived at the scene they told me the “maid” is Zimasa Hlongwane so I rushed here. I arrived an hour after she went into the theatre. Those bastards are gonna pay.

Me: I love you Zee.

A Dr comes in.

Dr: Miss i am afraid 10 minutes is over.

Me: Is she gonna be fine?

Dr: I can't say for now. But what we can do for now is pray she recovers. She lost a lot of blood but she is a fighter. So many hours without help? She could've been dead.

I squeeze her hand and get up.

I walk out. I find Mulalo outside. He hugs me.

Mulalo: She is going to be fine.

Me: I am upset. I see Sabelo and whomever walk in. The nerve of this man. I move from Mulalo and stop him.

Me: What are you doing here? Why were you not home?

Sabelo: Move out of my way Martha.

Me: I'm gonna fucking kill you. A maid? Really? Is that what she is to you? Get the fuck out of here Sabelo.

Sabelo: Dude, hold your bi-

I slap him. He tries to slap back but Mulalo stops him.

Mulalo: You don't want to mess with my woman.

The security is already here.

Mulalo: Please get this man out of here.

Sabelo: I want to see Zimasa!

Me: Well fuck off!

They drag him out. Mulalo holds my hand and we walk out....

....

SABELO

I get into the car.

Me: Did the news people get that?

Nhlapho: They did.

Me: Get your boys to finish the job.

Nhlapho: I will. I have a Dr friend in there.

Me: Let me go.

Nhlapho: All the best man.

Me: Thank you.

He hops off. I drive off. My phone rings. I put on an earpiece.

Me: Babe.

Amber: We just saw the news. What happened?

Me: I don't know.

Amber: Can you guys postpone?

Me: No no no. We are coming.

Amber: Everyone is going crazy here Sabelo. This won't go as good.

Me: Zimasa is gonna be fine love I promise.

Amber: I'll see you later. We love you.

Me: I love you more.

I hang up and drive straight home to fetch my mother.....

ZANELE

He comes down smelling fresh and looking good. I thought we were spending the evening indoors.

Me: And then?

Mulo: Duty calls sthandwa sam. My boss needs me.

Me: Isn't Smanga on duty?

Mulo: He is but when he goes to Soshanguve he only needs me.

Me: can't he drive himself? Its 7pm for Christ's sake.

Mulo: I will be back before 10.

Me: Since when is Sosha around the corner?

Mulo: I will be back before 10.

He kisses me and take his phone.

Me: You really don't need this job you know that?

Mulo: I could be a stay home dad but there is no child.

Right!

He smokes and walk to the door. I sit and fight the urge to go to the beauty room. I really want him to quit that job I don't don't want to use that method.

I change the channel and watch whatever it is that is playing. I will stay here until he gets back.....

....

The next morning I wake up and he is behind me snoring. I did not hear him come back. I am starving. I move his arm over me and get up. I find Pearl filming her cooking tutorials. I slide into the chair. She takes out a plate and dish up for me. I thank her and eat. He hugs me from behind. He smells of cigarette, mixed with mint and berries.

Me: You smoked again last night?

Mulo: Just for the guys.

Me: What do you guys usually do in Sosha?

Mulo: I can't tell you that. Hey Pearlie.

I laugh. She hates that.

Me: But I am your wife. You can tell me.

Mulo: I'd rather tell pearl. You are such a phenomenal woman. You'd use that against him to fire me.

I laugh.

Me: Why are you making me a bad guy?

Mulo: Because I know you very well Mrs Zulu. Did you sprinkle a love potion today on these eggs P? They taste heavenly.

Pearl: It's an increase my salary potion actually.

We laugh.

Mulo: Are not satisfied with your salary anymore?

Pearl: Kinda.

Mulo: Your next salary will increased.

I look at him. He's serious. Is he still stoned? We pay her enough. He does not look my direction at all. Its days like these where I just wanna strangle him.....

....

AT MIKE'S

He summons Sushi to his office. She comes in a moments later.

Mike lifts his eyes from the papers.

Mike: Is who am I seeing?

Sushi: Nhlapho.

Mike: Is he still here?

Sushi: Yes.

Mike: Please let him in.

She walks out and Nhlapho comes in. He attempts to sit.

Mike: Stand.

Nhlapho: I'm on duty.

Mike: Good. Whose the girl's real name?

Nhlapho: Which girl?

Mike: The one you sent here. What is her name?

Nhlapho: I-

Mike: Don't even try lying to me.

Sushi comes in panting. She gives Mike her ipad.

Mike: Wait outside Nhlapho.

He walks out again.

Mike: What happened to her?

Sushi: There was a break in. She was raped and shot, left to die.

He gets up and head out. He grabs Nhlapho by his collar and push him back in and slap him.

Mike: Did you have anything to do with it?

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

He slaps him again. He runs to the corner. Mike take his gun out.

Nhlapho: I-

Mike pulls the trigger and shot at his thigh. He cries and fall down.

Mike: Tell your folks officer down.

He crouches before him.

Mike: God forbid anything happens to her. I now have a task for you. You have to keep her safe. Shall anything happen to her, you will die.

He stands up straight and they walk out with Sushi.

Mike: Go clean up the mess in my office.

He says to his bodyguards....

.....

MARTHA

I finish eating. He smiles. I wish he could just stay out of my face. I take the car keys.

Mulalo: I am driving you.

Me: No. You're going to work.

Mulalo: And I am going to drop you off at the hospital on my way to work.

Me: Fine let's go.

....

I hate how busy the road is during lunch times. We arrive at the hospital. He drops me off and leaves.

I get in and head straight to where she is. The ward is empty. I won't let myself panic I look for a nurse

or a Dr I can find. There is none in sight. I head down the hallway. A dr comes out of one of the doors.

Me: Excuse me....excuse me. Do you perhaps know where is the lady that was on that recovery ward?

Dr: No ma'am I don't. Dr Phewa might know. His office is up there.

I rush back. I pass a family crying. I hope God doesn't do that to me. She's all I have. She wouldn't leave me here by myself. I am already crying when I reach the Drs office. I knock. He lets me in.

Me: I am looking for my sister that was-

Dr Phewa: Are you Martha?

Me: Yes.

He gives me a little paper.

Dr Phewa: A good friend of your sister moved her. She woke up and responding very well to medication. In 4 weeks time, she will be herself

again. The good friend said she is in danger so I let her take her. That's the address.

What friend? I am her only friend. I nod and walk out. I request a ride there. It is already there when I get out of the hospital. I get in.

“Sabelo Mtshali. I never took him as a husband material. He's trending for the tragedy that happened to his maid and his lobola ceremony talk about a real influencer”

They laugh.

Me: Can you turn it up please.

He does.

“This weekend is definitely his. And Amber is so cute. Their baby is gonna be fire.”

“but a 10 million engagement ring? How much money does this man have? I hope my future husband is taking notes”

They laugh again.

“Man! Well congratulations to the Kings boys super striker Sabelo Mtshali and Amber Hlongwane. We should invite them some day”

“Yeah we should. The next song is by Dumi Mkokstad Ziphozenkosi. Enjoy....”

I really wish Zimasa listened to anyone other than her stupid heart. I suspected it but I hoped it was nothing. Zimasa will never recover from this.

Amber? Not after how she put her through varsity and did everything for her. She's so ungrateful....

.....

ZIMASA

I open my eyes and scan the room. I have drips connected in me, a heart monitor and I am laying in bed but this isn't the hospital. It's a luxurious room. I can't move. My body is numb. I try to say a word but nothing comes out. What happened to me?

The doors open. 2 women walk in. The other one rushes to me but stops before she could reach the bed.

Her: I almost hurt you

Another one: She does not know who you are. We had to inject her to move her cause she would have felt massive pain in humps.

They seem to know me. I can't keep my eyes open. They keep on talking and I drift away....

....

ZANELE

Mulo decided to visit Nomalanga's husband so I had to tag along. Now we were the spare wheels listening to them talk about soccer we know nothing of. Nomalanga calls me to come help her in the kitchen.

Me: Since when are they close?

Nomalanga: I thought you'd know.

She doesn't seem fine.

Me: Are you okay?

Nomalanga: I am.

Me: You don't look okay.

She looks up and sniffles.

Nomalanga: It's the year of soul sacrifice for me.

I gasp.

Me: Is it him?

Nomalanga: No. Its Sydeny.

Me: Oh no Nomalanga. Can't you like use a cow in her place?

She shakes her head.

Nomalanga: I have been doing it for the past 4 decades. This sacrifice is the final one and it has to be human blood.

Me: I'm so sorry. Where is she?

Nomalanga: Out with friends. I have been dreading but now I have a deadline.

Me: When?

Nomalanga: Tonight.

Me: Oh Nomalanga this makes me sad.

Nomalanga: And to think I accepted that legitimate son of his thinking they would pick him drives me nuts.

She excuse herself. Amantombazane know how much she loves Sydeny. They wouldn't have chosen Bongani.....

MARTHA

Days have passed. It's been 4 weeks now and she is not showing any signs of gaining her memory. I go to Sushi's every morning and return in the evening. I stay with her, just watching her, I pray for her. I cry, although I try so hard not to but it is just too much sometimes. She is the only friend I ever made and never judged me for the kind of lifestyle I led. She has always been there for me. We have our fights, which friends do not?

I get out of the tub. I longed for this. My phone rings. I dry my hands and take it. It's Sushi. My heart beats faster every time she calls.

Me: Hi

Sushi: Hey. She is awake and she keeps saying she wants Sabelo. Who is that?

Me: I'm coming.

I hang up. I'm fuming. I dress up quickly and look for Mulalo. He is nowhere in sight. I go to the lounge and take the keys and walk out. I get in the car and drive out....

I arrive at Mike's. I head straight to the room Zimasa is in. There is Mike and Sushi trying to calm her down.

Mike: Please try talking to her.

They walk out.

Me: What do you want Zimasa?

Zimasa: I want Sabelo.

Me: What for?

Zimasa: That is none of your business. Take me to him!

Me: Then go!

I head to the door. I don't even know why I came here. I close the door and cry.

Sushi: Who is Sabelo?

Me: Her boyfriend .

Sushi: Should we let her go?

I nod.

I want her to get there and see for herself that I was right.....

.....

ZANELE

I throw the shovel down and follow it.

Khosi: We could've got someone to do this for us.

Me: And kill them too afterwards?

Khosi: Where is Nomalanga held up? Try calling her.

I call her.

Nomalanga: I'm not sure I can do this

Me: You must be kidding.

Nomalanga: She -

Me: Sisi you are not doing this just for yourself.
Our lives are on the line here if you do not do it.

Khosi: And she is gonna die anyways

Nomalanga: You don't know how this feels like.

Khosi: Yes we don't but in 3 years time we will
know so get Sydeny here. We have husbands to
go to.

She snatches the phone out of my hand and hang
up.

Khosi: She is full of shit.

Me: Let's light the candles as we wait.

We ignite the 100 candles and wait an hour more.
We get up when we see the lights. She parks
under the tree. She hops out and Sydeny does too.
They come towards us.

Sydney: O-kay. What is going on here ladies?

Me: Did your mom not tell you?

She shakes her head. I look at Nomalanga. She
looks cold.

Me: If this does not happen now, we will be still
here by sunrise.

Nomalanga: This is where it ends Sydney.

Sydney: What?

Nomalanga: Your life.

Sydeny: What does-

She gasps when Nomalanga pulls out a sword.

Sydeny: Mom. Mom what is going on?

Nomalanga: I'm so sorry baby.

She close her eyes and stab her. She runs away.
Great! We run after her. She is crying and
holding the wound. Khosi catches her and pin her
down.

Sydney: Aunt Khosi what did... What did I Do?
I'm so-

Nomalanga reaches us.

Me: Finish her off

She is crying too. Khosi takes the sword and stick
it right into her heart and take it out and stick it
into her throat and out again and everywhere. We
wait for her to die which takes forever. We carry
her to the whole we dug. We put her in and put our
capas on. We hold our calabashes.

Nomalanga: Mantombazane I give you your
sacrifice. Her soul for our strength, wealth and
husbands that love Us, and only us. Feed
yourselves with fresh innocent blood.

We pour ashes into the grave and stand up. We take shovels and start filling up the grave. It is close to 4am. We could've done this a month ago but we had to wait for the full moon....

.....

MARTHA

I miss my baboon. It's mad at me for driving alone at night. I woke up to make him breakfast but still he's not talking to me. I thought a way into a man's heart is through his stomach. I bring him a bottle of water, he loves water. In a world full of juice, alcohol and coke, he loves water.

He takes it and drink. I rest my head on his shoulder and look at his busy laptop screen. There's a knock at the door. I go and open. It's Zimasa's gran. How did she know where I live?

Me: Gogo

Gran: My child. Please take me to Zimasa. I can't live this long without my grandchild.

Me: Uhm...ok please get in. I will go dress up.

Gran: Thank you.

She gets in. I have been in touch with her keeping her updated all this long....

.....

ZIMASA

I wheel myself to the door after Sushi helps me out of the car. I knock. There is laughter and the door opens. Her smile fades away. I smile.

Me: Hi. Is it safe to come in?

She is just staring at me.

Me: Amber?

Amber: Yeah sure.

Her stomach looks like its gonna blow. I wheel myself in. He stand up and meets me halfway.

Me: Hi.

Sabelo: Hi.

Me: We need to talk.

Sabelo: I don't think this is the right time.

Me: Tell them to leave.

Sabelo: No. There is Amber's mom upstairs.

Me: Interesting. I just have 1 questions.

Amber comes and stand next to me.

Amber: I'm glad to see you're okay

Me: God's grace sis. Brave of you to live in my tragedy scene.

Sabelo: Why are you here Zimasa?

Me: I want to know why couldn't you just fuck my little sister and marry her without trying to kill me.

Sabelo: That's absurd

Me: Why did they know the code to your office because it locks after 60 seconds and how did they know I was there?

Sabelo: Can we not do this now? I have company.

He starts walking away

Me: I made you what you are Sabelo.

He stops and turns.

Sabelo: I know and I'm sorry you had to be my ladder. How much do you want for everything you did for me?

I chuckle.

Me: You know I have always known that one day this was going happen. I knew you would turn on me and treat me like trash, look at me with that disgusted look on your face, but I never, not even on my wildest dreams thought the woman who'd be by your side would be my own sister.

Sabelo: I really tried to love you Zimasa but I could not. I meant what I said that night, I will never ever forget what you did for me. And I don't want you blaming Amber for any of this. She

wanted to tell you sooner but I wouldn't let her.
Now stop embarrassing yourself, name your price
and Fuck off.

Amber: Sabelo!

Sabelo: What? She must tell me how much money
she wants to leave me alone.

Me: I want nothing Sabelo. I'm gonna leave now,
if you don't put a bullet in my head as I turn
around, you will live to regret it Sabelo Mtshali.

I turn around and wheel myself out. Amber calls
after me. I stop.

Amber: I know you hate me. I am truly sorry
mtase. I never planned for any of this to happen. I
tried putting a stop to it the first time it happened
but he would not let me go. I will pay all the
money you used on me in varsity.

Me: When dad was sick, he put me in charge of
y'all. I did that out of goodness of my heart. I did
what every big sister is expected to do.

Amber: I'm so sorry.

She sobs.

I wheel off. Mike opens the door for me. He carries me inside and buckle me up. He closes the door. I can't hold the tears. She is going to live the life I helped build. She is going to have the kids that should've been mine, the ring, the house, the cars, my life.

After everything I did for him, living for him. He saw me worth of death....

.....1 YEAR LATER.....

21

SABELO

I hold on to him tight and open my eyes. She smiles.

Amber: Let me take him to bed.

Me: Ok.

She takes him and put him in bed. I put away the controller and stand.

Amber: I've made lunch.

Me: Thank you.

I take her hand, we walk out. Who knew that one day I will have the exactly life I have always hated. Its true that it takes someone really special

to change your outlook on life. We love each other. I have never loved anyone like this before.

Amber: I was thinking we visit home this Saturday. We haven't seen her in weeks.

Me: Why doesn't she come here?

Amber: You know she doesn't like that.

Me: An entire weekend alone?

Amber: Aren't you going to Zim?

Me: Shit.

She laughs.

Amber: You should get a pa. What kind of a captain are you?

Me: And we have practice later today. Let me remind the gents.

Amber: Don't be long. Your food will get cold.

I nod and head to the lounge. Life has been very generous to me. I am now the captain. I am at the light end of the tunnel. In a few months I will be marrying the mother of my 8 months old Sibusiso Mtshali....

....

ZIMASA

She removes her leg on top of the other and close her book.

Vanessa: Our sessions will now be once every Friday. You're doing very well, be kind to yourself.

Me: I will be.

Vanessa: I'll see you next week Friday.

I get up and shake hands and I'm out. I find Mike waiting in the waiting area. He stands up.

Me: Finally.

Mike: How did it go?

Me: Every Friday now.

Mike: See? You're making progress.

Me: I am fine and I have been.

Mike: I don't want you committing suicide because you didn't deal with your trauma.

I laugh.

Me: I am not that type.

We get in the car. He dragged me here kicking and screaming about 8 months ago when I suffered anxiety attack when I heard that Amber gave birth. It really hit me I won't lie and talking to Vanessa really helped. I think I would still be a mess but I could never admit that to Mike who became my pillar of strength. I could never thank him enough for everything he has done for me over the year.

Mike: I feel like a burger.

Me: Oh yes Lord!

He laughs and take a turn to Steers. I hate their short fat fries. They remind me of Sabelo's stupid dick but he's obsessed with Steers. He says his drivee influenced him.

He looks for a spot to park. He doesn't like drive thrus. We get off and head in. We order and wait. His phone rings, he excuses himself. I need a phone too. I decided to not have a phone because I knew I would stalk him and break my heart so I saved myself the trouble.

He rushes back in.

Mike: Smarties, can you remain behind and uber home? There is an emergency at home.

I get up.

Me: Is everything okay?

Mike: No. There is a woman who at my houde claiming to be my baby mama.

Me: shit.

Mike: Yeah I know.

Me: Go.

He runs out. He's fucking dead. That woman does not play. She whooped him and his hoe 5 months ago in a restaurant. I don't wanna know what she'll do to a baby mama.

I sit and wait for the order that takes 30 minutes to get ready.

I stop when I get outside. Am I gonna use Jesus to request an uber? I am not really in the mood to be talking to people. I see a lady get out of her fancy car, I head straight to her.

Me: Hi.

She locks her doors and greet back.

Me: Can I use your phone?

Her: Uh...

Me: I need to call my friend to fetch me.

Her: Call out her numbers.

Shit.

Me: Can you re quest an uber for me?

Her: I don't have the app.

“Mahosha!”

Her: I think he is talking to you.

I turn. Its one of Mike's drivers. I head to him.

Me: Excuse me.

Him: I am here to fetch you.

Me: My name is not Mahosha. You are full of shit.

Him: Are you gonna get in the car or?

Me: Apologize.

Him: I have somewhere to be sisi.

Me: Didn't your mother....wiat I know you.

Him: Ofcourse you do. Get in the car.

If I had plan B I wouldn't. Who is he to call me Mahosha.

Me: That was really rude. You can't just call someone umahosha especially if they are not.

Him: What are you?

Me: I am a stripper.

Him: We call it ukuhosha.

Me: Well it is not!

He rolls up the patition and plays maskandi.

Me: Son of a bitch

....

We arrive at Mike's. He doesn't open the door for me. I hop out and head to the entrance.

Him: He said you should give me the other burger.

Me: Tell him I said no.

Him: How are you do izinto zakho zobufebe with a full stomach?

I ignore him and walk off. He wants my soul I can see.

I meet Sushi about to go out.

Me: Who the hell is that rude bastard?

She laughs.

Sushi: Nkazimulo Zulu. He's Mike's personal driver.

Me: His mother raised an asshole.

Sushi: He called you Mahosha didn't he?

Me: He did.

Sushi: But I asked him nicely to say that. I'll go talk to him. He doesn't like driving anyone except to Mike, his wife and their daughter.

Me: He has no respect for women.

She walks out. I head up the stairs to my luxurious bedroom. I pick the phone up and call Martha and open my burger. I brace myself for hearing about her ugly baby. We laugh at it everytime but we

like it. He's 6 months now, strong as his dad, she says.

Martha: Hey babe.

Me: Hey. Guess what?

Martha: You and Mike fucked.

Me: Which part of he's my friend don't you understand?

Martha: The part that you got a boner when he teared your lingerie apart.

Me: That was a year ago.

Martha: You've seen his dick.

Me: It was an accident you dumb fuck. This phone could be bugged stop talking about someone's husband. My sessions are only going to be on Fridays.

Martha: I'm proud of you. Maybe its about time you got yourself a phone.

Me: Yeah. I was thinking of it. And going home.

She takes a deep breath.

Martha: Are you sure?

Me: Yeah. Its about time. I can't shut them out forever.

Martha: Just be sure it is what you want and what you are ready for.

Me: It is.

Martha: When do you wanna go? I can take you.

Me: This weekend.

Martha: Ok I will take you.

Me: Thank you.

Martha: Anytime babe.

Me: Where is Zamani?

Martha: Out with his father and grandma.

Me: She's there?

Martha: Yes and nice. But I don't buy all this crap.

Me: Just play along.

What could be worse than a monster inlaw and a mamas boy?

Me: Let me take my meds and nap. I'm working later.

Martha: Ok bye.

Me: Bye.

I hang up.

This time last year I was laying on this bed almost lifeless. I was laying here because a man that I loved and still love with everything in me wanted me dead. I was laying here with gun wounds because he wanted me gone so he can stay behind and marry my little sister. I was laying here raped. It still hurts. I still get nightmares, I still want to show up at his door and ask him to just hold me, to shoot him, to ask him to let me smell me, to stab him....

I am grateful for Mike, Sushi and Martha. They were with me through everything. They were patient with me. They forced me to do anything that was guranteed to help me heal. I wouldn't have done it without them....

I pull the box from under the bed. I open it. I don't know if I'll ever be ready to use them. Although he

hurt me, I don't think I can do him like that. I close it and shove it back. I pull the fleece and cover myself....

22

ZIMASA

As soon as my head hits the pillow. There is a knock at the door. I ignore it. I fell off the pole earlier. I am not in the mood.

I don't dance for Mike but his rich customers and the tips are juicy.

"Zimasa" its him. Shouldn't he be at home?

I turn on the bedside lamp and hop out of bed to open for him. He's leaning on the frame. He could barely stand.

Me: Did you drink the whole tarven?

Mike: My wife hates me.

Me: So the baby is yours?

Mike: Yes. That sly bitch.

Me: Come in.

He stumbles in. I hold him and walk him to the couch.

Mike: No. I want the bed.

Me: This isn't your room.

Mike: But its my house.

I laugh and take him to the bed.

Me: Where am I gonna sleep?

Mike: Here with me.

Me: No.

Mike: I don't see you like that Zimasa.

Me: Ouch.

Mike: You're my friend. You're like my little sister, that's why you were moved to the VIP section. so come here and sleep beside me. I want to vent.

Me: Ok take off your shoes.

Mike: Please take them off for me.

I sigh and take them off. I go to the bathroom to pee and come back.

Me: Okay I'm ready. Who is the baby mama and where is she from?

No response.

Me: Mike?

He's gone. Alcohol. I slide in beside him...

“Fuck. What time is it?”

I turn around. There is a figure standing at thre door.

Mike: Was I wearing a jacket last night?

Me: No.

Mike: Nkazi please tell Sushi to make me coffee.

Oh its him. He goes out.

Me: He called me mahosha.

Mike: I talked to him. He's just not friendly to women.

Me: Then he must practice keeping his mouth shut. He used to come where I worked.

Mike: Don't mind him. Thanks for letting me sleep here.

Me: I had no choice.

Mike: Screw you.

I laugh. He walks out. I continue trying to sleep but there is no luck. I get up and go to the gym.....

.....

ZANELE

My head is pounding. I hate Khosi for this. She stayed over last night and we drank like we were not going to work today. Mulo had to drive me here. I take another dose. Lilly comes in with my strong coffee. It's not in drinking temp. I pour water into it and drink without a stop.

Lilly: You should quit alcohol honestly. This is the 3rd time this week.

Me: Leave me alone. Please get me something hot and spicy.

Lilly: Ok.

She walks out. I rest my head on the desk.

The door opens as I am about to pass out. The smell of meat hit my nostrils. That was quick.

A kiss on the cheek. It's my dear husband.

Me: What would I be without you?

Mulo: A rich single woman. I have food, hangover cure and painkillers.

Me: Thank you ndabezitha.

He takes it all out.

Me: thank you.

Mulo: I'm not gonna be long. Mike is 2 streets away.

Me: I appreciate this little time I get to see you.

Mulo: We should go to ma's house this weekend.

Me: Okay.

He chokes. I hand him water.

Me: Are you okay?

Mulo: No. What did you do to my wife?.

I laugh.

Me: What are you saying about me husband.

Mulo: That you never agree to anything that easily.

Me: Perhaps I've changed and we haven't been there in 9 months so its only fair.

His phone rings.

Mulo: Thank you. Let me go.

We kiss.

Mulo: Drink that mixture.

Me: I will.

He walks out. I drink the mixture. We haven't been to his mom's house since the cleansing and I hated every moment of it. I could feel them judging me for not coming to the funeral. He could see I hated being there that's why he was surprised I agreed to go spend the weekend there. He's been a good husband lately, he deserves everything he wants, plus we haven't had the baby talk in so long so that

is progress. I take out the meat and eat. He's such a life saver....

.....

ZIMASA

I insert the sim card and turn it on.

Martha: Yay!

Me: Yeah yay! Zam Zam. Did you have to name him Zamani though?

Martha: Yes. It was my dad's name friend.

Me: Ai mara.

Martha: Wouldn't you name your son Benson?

I laugh.

Me: Hell no. I love him but I would never do my child like that.

Martha: So. Are you ready for this evening?

Me: I am. Gogo is gonna be home too so it Will be better.

Martha: Ok.

We eat in silence. I am nervous about going home but its now or never. I log on Instagram and the first post is Amber and her son. I swipe right, it's a family picture. They still live at his old place. He has grown beard and he's fit. I scroll down, I see Lufhuno and Melody. She is wearing a ring and holding her tummy. There is a bump, why is everyone having kids? I go to his profile and there is not a single picture of Kay.

I go back to Amber's. There's a 1000 pictures of her, Sabelo and their son. He looks like her which makes him look like me too.

My phonr is snatched out of my hand.

Martha: Seriously?

Me: I was just-

Martha: You were just nothing. Throw this shit away right now if you gonna do this to yourself.

Me: I wanted to see her child.

Martha: For what? Zimasa, you have come this far. Don't drag yourself back to the dark place. Sabelo

and Amber are living their life, happily. Why don't you want that for yourself?

Me: I do. I just got carried away.

Martha: Take it easy okay?

Me: Its not gonna be easy.

Martha: Lets go buy clothes.

Me: I need heels.

Martha: Now we talking.

We settle the bill and I push the stroller. He's forever sleeping....

....

SABELO

I walk them in. Its almost 6pm. My flight is in 3 hours.

Me: Sanibonani.

Them: Yebo.

It's a full house. Even the gran is here. I give Sibusiso to her and bid them goodbye. Amber takes me out.

Me: Is there a ceremony?

Amber: I don't know. I'm actually surprised that everyone is here.

Me: Just have fun okay?

Amber: We will. Goodluck for tomorrow. We will be here supporting you.

Me: I have faith we will win.

We kiss. A black G63 drives in. It heads straight to us. We move off the way.

Me: and who is that?

Amber: Probably malome Britz. A woman hops out. Its Martha. The passenger door opens too. Its her, I can tell by the legs.

Me: Let me go.

Amber: Its Zimasa.

Me: Stay out of her way.

Amber: We share a room.

Me: Then go back home.

Amber: That's crazy.

I kiss her and head to my car. She has gained weight. She cut her hair. I wonder if she finally used the money I gave her and bought this car. I drive out...

...

ZIMASA

Very generous of the universe to make Sabelo and Martha the first people I see when I get home. If I knew she would be here. I wouldn't have come. She is behind us. We get in.

Molly: Sis Zimasa!

Mom turns and hold her mouth. They hug me, pass me around like a joint of weed. I didn't expect this.

Finally the adreneline rush is over and I am seated.

Mom: I am so happy you're home.

Me: I'm happy I am home too.

Gran: Did you she see her boss coming in or he was gone?

Amber: Who?

Gran: Sabelo.

Amber: She did. He was was happy to see her too.

Me: Sabelo was not my boss gogo. He was my boyfriend.

They gasp.

Mom: Tell me you are joking.

She looks at Amber. She looks down.

Gran: Amber!

Amber: I thought we agreed Zimasa.

Mom: After everything your sister did for you?

Amber: She refused when I asked to pay her back.

Mom: Were you gonna pay her for her time and love?

She keeps quiet.

Mom: I can't believe this.

She gets up and any of us know better than to follow her.

I promised I wouldn't tell them but I am not gonna protect her after she betrayed me.

I go out too. She grabs me before I can open the car door.

Amber: Its been a year Zimasa. Why don't you get over it?

Me: I am over it.

Amber: You're not. Why did you tell them the truth?

Me: That is me getting over it.

Amber: If I could. I would've made him love you but he did not. You can't hate me; this was all him.

Me: You're my family. You had a choice!

Amber: What choice?

Me: To leave him the fuck alone! But you didn't; you hurt me Amber. He tried to kill me, he had me raped, up to this day I am battling. I can't get a peaceful sleep without drugs. You had to walk away. I loved him. You knew that.

Amber: Well it is done. We cannot change anything now. Accept it and move on.

She walks back inside. I get in the car and drive off, tears pouring down my face....

NKAZIMULO ZULU

Me: I am going to Soweto later.

Mike: I hate it when you are not here. I have to do everything carefully.

Me: The best advice would be; don't talk or do business in front of them.

Mike: I try but my business is anywhere Ndabezitha.

Me: Stay at home.

Mike: I won't. Candy and I are going to a weed function.

Me: What is it with you and her?

Mike: Nothing.

Me: I found you in her bed.

Mike: Fully clothed.

Me: Don't do that to your wife. She's a good woman.

Mike: And I am a good man.

Me: Yeah right.

Mike: Its in a man's nature to be occasionally unfaithful. Not this thing of yours. Zanele is feeding you bhekamina ngedwa every night.

Me: And I am happy about it. Get off.

He laughs.

Mike: You are rushing home to the same vagina you've been fucking for 14 years now. Udlisa iteam.

Me: Tsek. That vagina is very hot thank you.

We laugh. He gets off and I take off. I put on incandweni. I am late. She calls.

Me: Baby.

Zanele: Mageba.

Me: I already hate what you are going to say next.

Zanele: Nomalanga is going through some things and I would be a bad friend if I let her be alone.

Me: Are you going to sleepover?

Zanele: Yes. We can leave tomorrow morning. I'm so sorry. You can come too.

Me: No I'll pass. I will call you later okay?

Zanele: Okay. Thank you for understanding. I love you.

Me: I love you too.

I hang up and drive to Razo's. Its jazz night. I miss the lady that used to play the saxophone. Now I have to abuse my ears with the trash that guy plays....

.....

ZANELE

I take a deep breath.

Khosi: Did he buy it?

Me: He did.

They laugh. I forgot we had a ritual to perform tonight. It is gonna be the last bloodshedding ritual for this year. Its gonna be goats and we get to live our lives freely for the next 5 years.

Nomalanga: Mulo is truly under your spell. He's the most stubborn person but too soft on you. He understands beyond understanding.

Me: He loves me so much naturally.

Nomalanga: Such a good man.

Khosi: So sad he will have no descendants.

Me: Really Khosi?

Khosi: What? Its true.

Me: You know how to ruin a good moment.

I get up and pour some wine. When we perform this ritual we do confessions. I don't know if I can confess about the pregnancy.....

....

ZIMASA

“miss...miss you have arrived" I open my eyes.

We are at Mike's gate. So fast. I pay and hop off. I

hope Martha's car doesn't get stolen but I can replace it with all my savings. I am holding my shoes on my hands. I punch the code and go in. Its quiet. Its 12am. Why are there no cars here? Plus its Friday.

I meet a human at the entrance.

Me: Hey...hi.

Her: Hi.

Me: Are we not working today?

Her: We are. Its BEEs day.

Ohhh. Ok. I eave her goodbye. I would kill to be sober right now. I head straight to my bedroom. I turn on the lights. There is no electricity. Great! Did they have to switch off the whole house? Nx bloody idiots.

I throw the shoes away and take the dress off. I take my phone out and light my way to the bed. I climb up and get under the blankets. There's an unusual smell. Its Hugo Boss. I know someone who smells like this. They snore. I extend my hand

and lands on a beard. It must be one of the BEEs. I turn around close my heavy eyes. I can't help the urge to touch him again. His beard felt really healthy. I turn around and touch it again. He grabs my hand. I freeze. He pulls me closer. I can smell alcohol mixed with mint and cranberry.

Why am I horny? He puts my hand back to his beard. I don't know what to do. I am picturing him in my head and he's so beautiful and I am willing to have sex with him right now. I pull him closer and kiss him. He doesn't kiss me back but I am not stopping. He tastes so good. He left a sweet on his mouth. I get on top of him. He is not moving an inch. Maybe he is dead. Shit. I stop kissing him. He is not breathing. Oh my God. I attempt to move off but he holds me still.

“I have just one question” he whispers.

Me: Yes?

I whisper back.

Him: What are you doing?

I try to get off but he holds me still.

Me: can I get off?

Him: No. Continue with what you were doing.

His hands are on my ass, pressing me against him.
He's hard and....

[REMOVED]

....

I open my eyes and scan the room. I have a light headache. I roll to the other side of the bed, I smell the perfume. The memories come flooding. I smile alone. I smell the sheets. They reek of him. We had sex until 5am in the morning. We just couldn't stop. His dick is made of gold. Ok enough. That's a man I would sit next to today and not recognize him. Plus he is someone's husband.

I don't wanna wash him off but I have a car to fetch. I get out of bed, I step on a watch. It must be his. It screams expensive. I toss it on my Jewellery box.

And head to the bathroom....

.....

ZANELE

I am welcomed by a smell of fresh toast and coffee. I would kill for for a cup of coffee. We stayed in the bushes until this morning. Right now I need a bath and coffee and my bed. I thought I'd find him here eating.

Me: Morning.

Pearl: Hey. Wasn't expecting you this early.

Me: Well here I am. I couldn't stay there a minute longer.

I take the cup of coffee and head upstairs. He is not in bed. It looks clean. So I am the one that always mess it up. He comes out of the bathroom.

Me: So early in the morning?

Mulo: Its 7am. Did you not say we will leave first thing in the morning.

Me: I did. I was hoping I will sleep a bit.

Mulo: You can. How is Nomalanga?

Me: She's good; she's good. Let me bath quickly. I'll nap for 2 hours.

Mulo: Okay.

He kisses my forehead and walk into his closet....

....

ZIMASA

I drive in. She must be fuming and I don't blame her if she is. I spot her under the tree with kids. She is reading something to them. When did she become the caring citizen?

I hop off and go to them. I greet and sit down. They seem really interested in the story.

Martha: And that's how they remained friends. The end.

Kids: Hha!

Me: Go inside and ask for goodies.

They get up and run inside.

Me: I-

Martha: Did you get enough fresh air?

Me: Uhm yeah. Aren't you mad at me?

Martha: I am. Why didn't you take my calls?

Me: I don't know. I'm sorry.

Martha: I'm just glad you're okay.

Me: I am. We should leave. I will not be able to be in the same space as her.

Martha: She left after you yesterday.

Me: Oh. Great. Where's Zam-Zam?

Martha: Inside with grams. They like each other. Where did you sleep?

Me: At Mike's.

Martha: You and Mike.

Me: Stop.

We walk to the house.

Me: I had sex with a stranger.

She stops.

Martha: What!

Me: Shhh. Yes. It was dark, I didn't even see his face but I felt what he did to me.

Martha: Damn that's wild.

Me: I know right. I get goosebumps just thinking about it. I can still smell him on me.

Martha: You should look for him.

Me: No.

I laugh and walk on.

Martha: You go ma sex with a stranger.

She laughs. Everything is a joke to this moron but I love her....

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ZIMASA

We finish making lunch for every one and finally sit down to eat. When last did I have so much food.

Me: I'm already full just by looking at this plate.

Martha: I'm gonna wipe mine clean.

Me: Have you called Mulalo?

Martha: I'll call him later.

Me: Martha.

Martha: He's not gonna take it know.

So last night we went fun hunting. We found a Sunday chillaz in Yoeville. We went in and drank. Mulalo kept calling and then we bumped to his brother. 2 hours later, close to midnight Martha saw him in the crowd, he spotted us and Martha said we should run. You know everything is fun when you're drunk so we ran out to the car. Wandile was sleeping. We woke him up and drove off.

It was funny I won't lie but now I realize it was stupid.

Me: Just call him anyway.

Martha: Ok Dr love.

I chuckle and we eat. I feel so much lighter being here. I am at peace. I am happy. I had the best weekend. I just have one thing to do today and I will live my life to the fullest.

My phone rings. I pick it up. Its Mike. I answer.

Me: Hey.

Mike: What about a 'hey Mike, I'm still breathing' text.

Me: I'm sorry. I went out for drinks last night. I was meaning to call you.

Mike: How are you? Are you enjoying being home?

Me: I'm good and coming here was the best decision. I am so happy Mike. I missed my family so much and I didn't realise it.

Mike: I'm happy to hear that.

Me: How's the madam?

Mike: Still not talking to me. I guess we'll talk when dna results come back.

Me: Try to soften her.

Mike: I am giving her space.

Me: Hhaibo Mike, space for who? She's 30 times angry now that you are giving her space.

Mike: Ei I'm going to my mom right now with the kids.

Me: Turn back! Or better yet, drop the kids off and buy flowers on your way back

Mike: Ok Dr love.

Me: You're welcome.

Mike: Bye.

Me: Bye.

I hang up and take the plates to the sink. Mom gets in. It feels like I have been avoiding her. We hardly talked.

Mom: So you're leaving today.

Me: Yeah. Work

Mom: Do you still dance?

I nod.

Mom: Sbahle opened a firm months ago.

Me: I love what I do ma. The money I make is satisfying. I know it looks improper but its good money.

Mom: You've always wanted to be a teacher.

I chuckle.

Me: I did but someone had to help you raise these kids.

She nods rapidly. She is about to cry. Her world fell apart when dad died. She sunk deep into depression, she got fired. We were not going to live off Gogo's pension money that she had to split. I had to do what was expected of me, I quit tertiary and looked for a job and I found one. My dad's friend had to pull in some favours for me to get that job. They made it a leadership so I could have an idea of what property is about. Things became better for us. I was making good money, enough to cover us for the whole month. Mom ended up finding another job so I moved out. I put Amber in varsity. I was happy to do it. I was happy to see mom having a lighter load in her shoulders. When I started stripping I put my little brothers into model c schools because that's what my dad would have done. He valued good education.

Mom: It just hurts me so much to know Amber did that to you.

Me: Maybe it was fate.

Mom: nonsense. She betrayed her own sister, what kind of a monster is that?

Me: Its done mom. I've moved on.

Mom: Well I have not.

Me: Aren't you tired of living in this house?

Mom: I'm not leaving my husband's house.

Me: Fine.

I need a powerful pastor to convince her to leave this house! I know it has all the memories but no.

Mom: I will wash the dishes.

Me: I love you.

Mom: Say that next weekend when you come to visit.

I laugh.

Me: I will.

I walk to my room. I find Martha and Zam-Zam ready. I dress up too and we take our bags to the car. We go back inside to say our goodbyes and we leave....

....

Martha drops me off at Mike's and drive on to face her man when he comes back from work. I smell him as soon as I open the door. He didn't come back here, did he?

I open the Windows and spray my perfume. I put my bag in the wardrobe and walk out to the receiving room. I find no one so I check my mail. My order arrived. I take it and go out. I hear Mike's laughter. He must be kidding. I take the parcel to my changing room and walk downstairs. He's talking to Sushi. He sees me.

Mike: Look who's back!

He pulls me in for a hug. I feel dizzy just by smelling hugo boss and mint and cranberry in his breath. He can't be my stranger.

My stranger did feel like this. Oh ngelosi yobufebe why have you forsaken me.

I move off him.

Me: Can I use your car?

Mike: Sure.

He hands me the keys and take Sushi's hand and they go upstairs. I rush out. I find his car. I get in and fasten the seatbelt. My palms are sweating. How am I gonna look at him now?

NKAZIMULO ZULU

I find myself awake. I check the time. Its 5 minutes after 3am. This house has spirits. I barely slept this weekend. Something about Zanele's presence made me uneasy, excruciating headaches every time she is too close. I get up and go to the bathroom. I pee and look at myself in the mirror. I look sick. She's heavy on my shoulders.

What aura is she carrying? I think this is why I can't sleep. She's overpowering me or is it my guilt or its this house. I really don't know but something is definitely going on.

Zanele: You barely slept.

Me: I can't.

Zanele: We can drive home.

We should've left yesterday but Pele said he'll come but didn't.

Me: The sun is going to be up soon. We can leave then.

Zanele: We should go to the Dr first thing. You're anxious.

Me: Some thing is not right with you or this house.

Zanele: What does that mean?

Me: You're heavy on my shoulders. I can feel your existence as soon as you enter the room and its not nice.

Zanele: I think your mom's spirit is all over this house.

Me: I'm going to go watch tv.

Zanele: I'm coming with you.

Me: I need to be alone. I want to pray.

Zanele: We can pray together.

I nod. She turns to walk away. I feel lighter. What is happening to me? I wash my face and head out too....

....

ZANELE

After praying we cuddled on the couch and fell asleep. He was acting very strange the past 2 days. He didn't spend 2 minutes in my presence and the waking up at night worried me. And this morning he was not behind me when I opened my eyes. I found him bathing. I joined him and now we are eating. He is not his usual self and I am crossing fingers that this has nothing to do with the ritual.

Mulo: Where were you on Friday?

Me: At Noma's.

Mulo: Jones says you left after 9 and he didn't know Noma wasn't well.

Me: You called him?

I can't find a lie to tell.

Mulo: Answer the question.

He says calmly.

Me: We went to drink.

Mulo: Was that all?

Me: Yes.

Mulo: Then why am feeling like this? As soon as you walked through the door Saturday morning I got this feeling. Whenever you are present my head pounds and it feels like its going to explode.

The veins are popping out. He's in massive pain I can tell. I get off the chair and rush to the medicine cabinet. I look for grandpa. I find it. I pour water into the glass. I give him.

Mulo: It doesn't help.

He gets up and walk out. I walk upstairs to call Noma. I find missed calls from Lilly. I send her a text that I am not coming to work today again today and call Nomalanga. She takes a while to answer.

Noma: This isn't the right time.

Me: Mulo is sick.

Noma: And he has created problems for me.

Me: Something didn't go right that day.

Noma: Can we talk about that later?

Me: We can't! My husband is si...

She hangs up. She must be kidding. I text Khosi to meet me at my house asap. I grab my purse and walk out. I look for him but he is nowhere in sight. I call him, his phone rings on the counter. I take it and rush out to the front. I find him leaning on the car.

Me: Mulo.

Mulo: Take me to Pele.

Tears are just pouring down his face but he is not crying. His eyes are bloodshot red.

Me: No I'm taking you to the hospital.

I open the door and help him in. I close and rush to my door. He is taking deep breaths every now and then. My hands are sweating. I am trying not to cry. Focusing on the road but he makes it impossible. He's in pain. He adjusts the seat back.

He's dying...

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ZIMASA

I walk in on them kissing. That means they are fine now.

Mulalo: Morning

He hands me a cup of coffee.

Me: You are my hero.

Mulalo: You look like death.

Me: I feel like a corpse.

Martha: What is up with you and drinking?

Me: I haven't drank in a year. I am covering the score.

Mulalo: Let me love and leave you ladies. Zee, take meds and be unkind to my money.

We laugh. They kiss. He takes his flask and walk out.

Me: I thought he'll be moody towards me.

Martha: He's not like that. We worked it out. We good.

Me: I'm glad babe.

Martha: Ready to talk?

Me: Its Mike.

Martha: What did he do?

Me: The stranger. Its him.

Martha: No!

Me: I know. I feel dirty.

Martha: Why?

Me: He's my friend!

Martha: Well it was a mistake.

Me: I need an apartment.

Martha: You can stay here.

Me: No. Lets go hunting.

Martha: The internet is there for a reason.

Me: oh I forgot about that.

I pick my phone. There are missed calls from mom. I'll call her later. I take our cups and follow her to the lounge. We sit and eat.

Me: Where is the child?

Martha: At Mulalo's mom.

Me: Oh that's why he said we should be unkind to his money.

Martha: Yes.

Me: You still putting some away right?

Martha: Yes. I am an inch away from being a millionaire.

Me: Good girl. I was thinking its about time I used that money Sabelo gave me.

Martha: I thought you'd never want to use it.

Me: I want to talk to him first.

Martha: And say what?

Me: I need closure Martha.

Martha: I don't think it's a good idea. He is rude, you might come back sad.

Me: I feel like I need to.

Martha: I'm gonna hold your hand. As always.

She squeeze it. I smile. How did I get so lucky.....

.....

ZANELE

I am starting to feel dizzy with the ups and downs I've been doing for the past hour. No Dr or nurse is coming out of that room and I am going crazy. My eyes are swollen and hurting from crying. I bump into Khosi when I turn around. She holds me. I cry.

Khosi: He's gonna be fine. Nomalanga is coming.

Me: What did I do wrong?

Khosi: Whatever it is we gonna fix it okay?

Me: You should see him Khosi. He was not breathing when we got here.

Khosi: He will be fine.

I see Nomalanga getting off the lift.

Nomalanga: How is he?

Me: I don't know. They have not get back to me.

Nomalanga: Did you confess everything?

Me: I did.

Nomalanga: You better be not lying Siena.

Because if I perform this and you did not confess everything, he is going to die.

Khosi: Zanele! Snap out of it! Mulo's life is on the line here.

Me: Ok I didn't. What...what do I have to do?

Nomalanga: We have to go.

Me: I can't leave him here.

Khosi: You gonna lose him if we don't leave right now.

I pick my bag up and follow them....

We arrive in the dam. Nomalanga claps and calls upon amantombazane. We hum a song as she says their praises.

After a good 30 minutes a bird lands in her shoulder. I hold on to my cape.

Nomalanga: The last time we were here, Siena forgot to mention everything. Please give her a chance to say what she left out. Siena.

Me: Siyabonga mantombazane. I fell pregnant but I gave the fetus to amantombazane. Forgive me for not mentioning it. Please save my husband.

Nomalanga cries out. I open my eyes. She's bleeding on the forehead. The bird is gone.

Khosi: They are angry. How could you not mention it!

Me: I thought it didn't matter since I gave it to them.

Nomalanga: You were supposed to do that with us! You have to get him off the spell.

Me: What? No.

Khosi: Do you want him to die? Because he's gonna fucking die if he is under their spell. They are in control of him. Get him off the fucking spell before we all suffer for your selfishness.

Nomalanga: Is there anything of his in the car?

Me: Yes. A hoodie.

Khosi goes to fetch it and come back. She tosses it to me. Nomalanga stir the calabash. I can't talk. This could ruin my marriage but I don't want him to die.

The foam forms in the calabash as Nomalanga beats the mixture inside.

Me: Nkazimulo Zulu. I am setting you free from the spell of amantombazane.

Khosi: Keep reparing until the foam is gone....

....

ZIMASA

The bedroom is spacious, built in wardrobe, a bathroom that is also huge. The guest bedroom is

also satisfying. The kitchen has an island, there's even a laundry room.

Me: I'll take it.

Martha frowns at me.

Agent: Awesome. Lets get the paperwork ready then.

Me: What do you need?

Agent: ID certified copy, proof of income, and a payslip.

I take them out.

Agent: You came prepared I see. I will get back to you tomorrow or Thursday.

Me: Thank you. We can leave now.

Agent: Yes you can.

I pull her out.

Martha: We could've gotten another that you would have liked more.

Me: I like this one.

Martha: You annoy me.

Me: My ride is here. I'm gonna call you okay?
Thanks for coming with me.

Martha: I regret it but I love you so yeah.

We hug and part ways.

Martha: Don't let him get to you!

Me: I won't.

I get in the car and it takes off. I can't let her come.
It will just get ugly if he disrespects me.

I get nervous the closer we get. I hope he is here
but he cannot not be here. He's the captain.

In a blink of an eye. We are here. I hop out. I see
him. He's shouting at some guys. Maybe this isn't
a good time. The whistle blows. They stop
running. I walk straight into the field. The other
guys are picking their bags up and some are
splashing water into their faces while some are
laying on their backs on the grass. He is packing
his. I freeze when I get close to him. I hold the box
tight to my stomach and clear my throat.

He turns and his face changes.

Sabelo: You are never gonna leave me alone, are you?

Me: I came to get closure Sabelo.

Sabelo: Closure for what? You see the sun is hot and you decided to come and make it worse.

Me: Why are you so rude! I just came to talk.

Sabelo: About what? I am engaged!

Me: Know what. Its cool. Be the asshole that you are. I thought you've grown.

He picks his bag.

Sabelo: Never ever come here. What is my team going to say seeing me talk to a stripper, I am a faithful man and the mother of my child will not appreciate it when she hears you were here.

I watch him walk away. I scoff. What a jerk.

I came in peace. And he is attacking me.

I am holding in the tears as walk out of the field. She is leaning on the car as I approach. She fixes her shades as I get closer.

Amber: Move on Zimasa. You're starting to get on my nerves.

I pass her. No marn I can't let this child disrespect me. I swing back. Someone grabs my hand before I can slap her. Its Martha.

Martha: You're in enough trouble with the law. She's not worth it.

I don't know but seeing her makes me cry.

Me: I'm tired Martha. I am tired of her acting like this is all okay, like I have to just move on like my own sister didn't take the man I loved!

Martha: The man you loved agreed to be taken. Let them both go. Right now! I am tired of seeing that pain in your eyes whenever his name pops up on the screen. Right now tell her you forgive her and move on.

Amber: Thank you! Please tell her.

Martha: baby karma knows everyone's address. They both going to get a visit. Just give it some time.

Amber: You don't even love him. You are just after this flashy lifestyle.

Me: I created it okay. I made him what he is today!

Sabelo: You're still here?

He says out of nowhere.

Me: I made you Sabelo and I'm gonna destroy you. You have one more chance to say you're sorry or to shoot me as I turn back because if you don't-

Sabelo: What? What are you gonna do? You said that the last time.

Me: Except for this time, I am not hurt I am angry, I can walk and I have dealt with the trauma of being raped and shot, left to die.

Sabelo: Fuck off.

He opens the door for Amber and closes it.

Martha pulls me away.

Me: What are you doing here?

Martha: I knew he will disrespect you. I came just to make sure you lose yourself.

We get in the car.

Martha: That 'I'm gonna destroy you' threat sounded serious.

Me: It is.

Martha: You must be really angry.

Me: I am.

I fasten the seatbelt and we drive off. He doesn't know me.....

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ZIMASA

I hope this finds you well...

File attached

And sent!

I toss my phone on the bed and unwrap the towel. I just took a setting myself free bath. I needed it after crying myself to sleep last night and that was the last time I cried for anything related to Sabelo. He loves Amber, never loved me. He tries to have me killed. What more could I want to prove that he hates me?

Yes I made him what he is and starting from that email I just sent. I am gonna take him back to where he should be if I was not there working triple shifts trying to afford his trips and soccer boots, pay his rent and buy him food and cosmetics. I might have been a fool then but not anymore.

My thoughts are disturbed by a knock on the door. I hope it's not Mike.

Me: Who is it?

Mike: Its me.

Shit.

Me: I'm half naked.

Mike: What's new? Open up we have to talk.

You know. I was really hoping my stranger is not him but that sounds like we are about to address the issue.

I put on my underwear and bra and a robe. I open. I serve him a smile. He has food.

Mike: That looks fake but Hi.

Me: Hey. Come in.

He does. I close the door. He put the paper bags on the rug and takes a pillow and sits on top of it.

Me: You came to talk?

He nods.

Me: Maybe we shouldn't. It was a mistake.

Mike: I cheated on my wife Candy. I need to fix it because she is still not talking to me.

Me: She knows?

Mike: Ofcourse!

I feel hot. I walk to turn the fan on.

Mile: I kinda want the results to come back negative but I am not the kind of man to walk away from my responsibilities. I don't understand why she had to go to my house. She could've came here and told me she has my child. I would've found a better approach to tell her there is a child but she had to ruin my marriage.

Me: We're talking about your baby mama?

Mike: Yes. Who could I be talking about?

Me: I don't know, anybody. Friday was BEEs night so you married men get wild and end up fucking people in the dark.

He laughs.

Mike: I am not even watching porn these days the guilt of having a child outside my marriage creeps

on me whenever I look at a woman inappropriately.

Me: You may have been drunk.

Mike: I wasn't even here. I was at home being a perfect cheating husband babe.

Okay. This is good news. I take a deep breath. He frowns.

Mike: Are you okay?

Me: I am perfect. I am just glad you were at home on Friday because that definitely scored you a point to your wife.

I sit next to him. He smells of something else today. I take out food. He's such a junk foodie.

Me: I'm gonna chow fries. Why only one pocket?

Mike: Cause I couldn't wait for another one. We gonna have to share.

Me: Never.

I get up and run to the bathroom. His phone rings as he's about to get up. I get in and lock and eat the fries. He knocks a few moments later.

Mike: Can you please drive me to the hospital?

Me: You have a driver Michael.

Mike: He's in the hospital.

He sounds sad. I open the door. He looks sad.

Me: I'll see you downstairs in a few.

Mike: Thank you.

He walks away. I look for clean joggers and socks and slippers. I take a jacket and my phone. I don't need my purse when I go anywhere with Mike. I see a text from the house agent. I don't have a reason to move out but I'm gonna take it. Wandile has a girlfriend now. They can spend time there. He's daddy's only son and then 3 girls.

I send her the address to send the lease. I haven't seen Sushi. He's using a sports car today, awesome. I hop in.

Me: Damn. How many cars do you have?

Mike: 6.

Me: This one is my favorite.

I start it. I fasten the seatbelt and drive away....

....

ZANELE

I have been waiting on the line for the past 30 minutes. I hope I get him this time. I did not sleep a wink last night. From the dam Noma drove with me home. I am not supposed to get close to him until a week later. For the first time since I joined I felt regret. Mulo is my life. I live for him, he lives for me, he is my best friend before anything else. If anything was to happen to him, worse because of me I would commit suicide.

I have been trying to talk to the drs in charge of him but none of them was available. Right now I am crossing fingers I get any of them.

Operator: Dr Dan's office is ready to take your call.

Me: thank you thank you so much.

Dr Dan: Dr Dan.

Me: Dr Dan its Mrs Zulu. My husband-

Dr Dan: Mr Zulu? I had asked the reception to call you. You need to come to the hospital ma'am.

Me: Is he awake?

Dr Dan: No

Me: Is he gonna be okay?

Dr Dan: Let's talk in person.

Me: Dr Dan js my husband going to be okay?

He hangs up. Tears flood down. What have I done?

Noma comes in followed by an indian man. I just stare at them. He sits down.

Him: Morning madam. My name is Lucinda Mclord. Your husband's health lawyer.

What on earth is that?

Lucinda: Here on the paper is your husband's announcements. One of them being taken off the machines asao shall he ever gets in coma. I called the hospital this morning to ask about his progress and they told me he is out of theater but still not breathing on his own.

I can't control the sobbing. Noma holds me.

Lucinda: I need your signature to get him out of his misery.

Me: No! He's gonna be okay!

Lucinda: The Drs doubt it Mrs Zulu. Let us not deprive the man of his wish. He stated here that 'I shall be no bargain to my wife and waste money for our kids future"

Me: There are no kids and I don't care how much money I have to use. I don't care if he's there for an entire year.

Noma: I think you should leave.

Lucinda: As his trusted lawyer. I have a right to go ahead with the process.

Me: I dare you!

Lucinda: You remain well ladies.

He leaves the papers and head out. He's right. He has a right to do what his client asked of him. I can't let it happen.

I take a bat and run after him. I find him opening his door. I hit him on the head, he falls down, Noma screams for me to stop as I hit him rapidly, crying and screaming.....

.....

ZIMASA

We get to the hospital. Its my first time stepping my stick legs in here.

Me: You must be paying very good if he affords such health care.

Mike: His wife us a CEO of one of the well thriving companies in SA.

Me: He's married?

Mike: Yes.

Me: Nice.

He goes to the front desk. I wait behind. There are snacks in the waiting area.

Me: Are they free?

Nurse: Yes.

I take two lunch bars and a handful of cardberries.

Mike comes back and leads the way. We get on the lift and get off at the 3rd floor. We're in ICU.

We bump into a Dr when he pushes the door.

Mike: I'm Mike, looking for Zulu Nkazimulo.

Dr: Are you family?

Mike: No

Me: I am his sister

Dr: This isn't a good time.

Mike: We will take just 2 minutes.

Dr: Mr Zulu is awaiting his health lawyer to give us a go ahead to take him off the life support. Only his family can go in to say their goodbyes.

Me: Dr please. I know this will sound crazy but my brother and this gentleman here had a thing. Please let him see his lover for the last time...

I am crying now.

He nods.

Dr: I'm sorry. Only 2 minutes, his wife will be here soon.

Me: Thank you so much.

He opens the door and we follow him.

My scalp gets itchy just by hearing these beeping sounds. He looks peaceful.

I call my fake tears. The Dr is staring me.

Me: Oh bhuti wam.

Mike: You shaved him?

Dr: yes. He was going to theatre. I'll be outside.

I sob and take his hand.

Me: Don't leave us here bhuti who is going to take care of us now.

Mike: Cut it out he's gone.

Oh. I toss the heavy hand down.

Me: Is this the rude bastard?

Mike: Nkazi? Yes.

Me: ugh seriously! Did I just waste my tears for him?

Mike: He's dying Zimasa.

Me: well good riddance to-

He's crying.

Me: I'm sorry.

Mike: Its breaking my heart that he's dying and he does not have one thing that he wanted so dearly.

Me: what is it?

Mike: a child. He is my daughter's best friend. My child is gonna be broken. He loves children. You will never hear him say no to fetching kids or taking them anywhere.

Me: What happened to him? Why is he here?

Mike: I don't know.

He's rude but now I'm sad for Mike and his daughter.

Mike: Rest in eternal peace Mageba.

He heads out. His hand hands aside. Now I am scared to touch it. Why did he say rest easy? He is not dead yet. I take a deep breath of courage and slowly take his hand and position it right. The machines beep louder, he is having a seizure, the Dr comes in running, followed by more Drs. They chase me out, Mike is looking through the small window. I stand behind him. I see the heart monitor, the line flattens.

Mike breaks down. I am now crying real tears. Why is my heart so broken? I feel light, I feel hot, I can't see anything. I hear someone shouts for help from afar. Where am I? Why is everything blindingly white? Am I dead? I can't be dead....

ZIMASA

I am getting tired. I have been walking. Now I am tired, hungry and thirsty. I need to find a place to rest. I see a tree ahead. Now I can see where I am. I am where we used to stay when I was little. We used to come here with my dad and he would tell me stories under that very same tree. You would hear mom call out my name and they would fight about taking me to the bushes cause I could've been bitten by a snake or whatever my mother was paranoid about.

I reach the tree. He's laying on his back on the grass and he's out. The excitement gets better of me. I jump him with a hug. He startles. I laugh. He is not.

Me: Dad? Are you okay?

He shakes his head.

Dad: I thought I would never see you.

He hugs me so dearly. I hug him back and cry.

Dad: Its okay. You're with me now.

Me: Amber hurt me.

Dad: That doesn't matter any more. You're here now.

Me: I love her baba. She is my sister but I am just so mad.

Dad: Shhh.

Me: When you died I-

Wait. What does he mean I am here with him now? I break the hug and stand up.

Me: I can't be here with you. I...I...I need to be with mom.

Dad: I miss you. Don't leave me.

Me: No. I can't. I need to leave.

I head back to where I came from.

“Zimasa! Zimasa!”

Me: That's mom. I need to go.

I run.

“Zimasa!”

Me: Mah!

.....

MARTHA

We stop when she responds to her mom calling her and she gasps for air.

Dr: Please wait outside.

Her mom is praying. I am crying and silently thanking God. We get out. We hold hands and she prays.....

Its after 7 when the Dr finally comes out.

Dr: You can go and see her.

Mom: What is wrong with her Dr?

Dr: She witnessed a patient dying and her blood pressure rose but she seems fine now.

Mom: The same thing with her father. Thank you
Dr.

Dr: Be brief okay? She needs to rest.

Us: We will be.

We walk in. She's crying. Her mom hugs her.

Zimasa: It was dad.

Her mom exclaims.

Mom: How selfish is he? Why does he want to
take you away from me!

We are crying now.

Zimasa: My whole body hurts.

Me: Just rest okay. If I could. I would stay here
with you for the rest of the night.

Zimasa: Its okay babe. I'm gonna sleep anytime
soon.

I hold her hand.

Me: You scared us.

She was dying and there was nothing we could've
done except crying that we did.

Mike gets in. He rushes to her and hug her.

Mike: I prayed. For the first time in forever I prayed. I was asking God why do I have to lose two friends in one day.

She laughs. That is Zimasa.

Zimasa: Then its not surprising that I an here right now. This is all your fault. You took me to the dying man. I witnessed my dad die the very same way. I cannot handle such.

Mike: I'm sorry.

The door opens.

Nurse: Mr Zuku is ready sir.

Zimasa: Doesn't he have insurance?

Mike: He does.

Zimasa: Why are they saying he's ready? Are you taking his body home?

Mike: He's not dead. In fact, he is perfect and getting discharged.

Zimasa: That's good.

Mom: That's our cue.

Mike: I can give you a ride home.

Me: I drove.

Mike: Okay. You drive safe okay?

He hugs me. We bid Zim goodbye and we leave.

Me: We are going to my place. It will be easier to me here in the morning.

Mom: Thank you. I appreciate your love for each other. How you drop every thing just for each other.

Me: We love each other that much.

....

ZANELE

I locked myself in here and broke everything. I am sleeping amongst the mess. I feel exactly how this room looks. I hear a soft knock.

Me: Go away Nomalanga.

Nomalanga: Khosi is here.

Me: I just need to be alone. My husband is dying, and I have an unconscious man in my lounge that is definitely getting me arrested when he wakes up.

Nomalanga: I finished him off.

I get up and storm to the door. I open.

Me: You must be shitting me.

Nomalanga: Wear boots cause we have a body to bury.

Me: Do you think Nomalanga? He could've told someone he's coming here! Fuck!

Nomalanga: You were gonna go to jail!

Me: And now I won't? Why are you so stupid

Nomalanga! Oh my God. I never...I never should've listened to you. I never should've let you convince me to join this craziness. I wouldn't be-

Nomalanga: Take those words back right now Siena.

Me: You ruin everything Nomalanga. You're ruining my life!

Khosi: geez. What's up? I've packed the shovels.
What are you two fighting about now.

Me: he killed him. I would've talked to him when he woke up.

Nomalanga: He's an indian not your fellow Swati person.

Me: Yes and you fucking killed an indian man. Do you how those people use voodoo?

Nomalanga: Are you coming with us or-

I shut the damn door and grab my hair and scream.
She's ruining my life....She' ruining me....i am ruined....

**

1 MONTH LATER

ZIMASA

It is true that seeing the possibility of death changes how see and do things. One of the days after being discharged I went to my bank to see

what could I get for my mother's birthday and surprisingly it was a house renovation because this girl wants to die there but I went home Yesterday to convince her for the last time to move out. I moved to my place 3 weeks ago but I don't sleep there. I can't get myself to be alone. I tried but I found myself at Mike's around 1am so I decided one step at a time.

I give her a cup tea and sit down.

Mom: That be not alcohol

Me: It is love. Its Saturday.

Mom: So?

Me: I need a plug.

Mom: Drink coffee.

Me: Mom you have to get used to the fact that I am 27 now not 15.

Mom: You're still child!

Me: Ok I'm not drinking anymore.

I put the glass of wine down. I need her to be happy to have this conversation. I give her my phone.

Me: Swipe left.

Mom: Whose house is this?

Me: Could be yours.

Mom: Zimasa.

Me: It's a safe neighbourhood. 15 minutes away from a mall. And 10 minutes away from Melo's school. Its perfect mom.

Mom: Its expensive and you're already doing everything here. Its really beautiful but we are happy here.

Me: Amber and I can't even come home at the same time because we have to share a room, its getting smaller for us.

Mom: But you grew up here.

Me: Mom please be open to change. I dance every night and that is to give you and my siblings a good life. Let dad go. He's not just in this house but he's everywhere you would go.

She's weeping. I go and sit next to her.

Me: You deserve a new house that has no spirits.
Why do you want the least of the fruits of your
labour girl?

Mom: I will talk to your gran. If she gives me a go
ahead. We can move.

Me: That means we are moving cause gogo
agreed!

Mom: I'm gonna go call her. You lie a lot.

I laugh. I love her. She gets up and heads to the
hallway. My phone rings. I hesitantly take it. I
don't like being called by unknown numbers.

Me: Hello.

Caller: You're speaking to Ivy Mogorosi from
Daily sun. I just received your email. Is this legit?
Is this really thee Sabelo Mtshali?

Me: In flesh.

Ivy: And these are minors.

Me: You got it. What took you so long to respond!
Damn I almost leaked that myself. Put it into good
use.

Ivy: This is gonna be epic.

Me: Pleasure all mine.

I hang up. Well well well. Is this a perfect day or
what?

I drink mom's coffee. I can't stop smiling. The
ladder doesn't only takes you up. It also takes you
down....

.....

ZANELE

Frustrated. Suicidal. Tired. Annoyed. Angry.
Scared.

My house has turned into a flippin day care!

The noise!

I close my laptop. I need a quiet place to work.
He's still in bed but his friends are up turning
everything upside down.

I startle when he kisses my cheek.

Mulo: Morning.

Me: Morning.

Mulo: Why do they wake up so early.

Me: They are kids.

Mulo: I had another dream.

The baby talk is back and I just want to scream.
He's been dreaming of his non dying spirit mom
giving him a child and he is convinced I am
pregnant or yet to be but I went and tied my tubes
2 weeks ago. I don't need another mistake.

Me: What was she saying today?

Mulo: The baby had drowned. Remember that
dream I had months ago when she was drowning?

Me: Yes I do.

Mulo: Today she was drowning because she was looking for the baby you tossed in a very strong current river.

Me: Me? Why am I always the villain in your night movies?

Mulo: I don't know. Maybe you would abort it since you hate kids.

Me: Nkazimulo!

Mulo: Seriously. You loathe kids. You can't even hide it. I hope you do no such thing because I'd murder you.

I chuckle. He does not seem like he is kidding.

Me: Come on. I wouldn't do that.

Pearl come in and gives him a plastic.

Mulo: Pele suggested I seek traditional help with this dream. But first, you have to test. If you're not pregnant then I'll go to isangoma to get explanation cause it could not mean a serious baby. It could be a tikoloshe.

Me: So those are tests?

Mulo: Yes.

I sigh and take them and my phone go to the bathroom. I pee and dip two and wait.

What if he goes to the Sangoma and they tell him about Amantombazane and the baby and everything I've been up to? No I can't let him go there. I text Khosi to call me. She calls immediately.

Me: Can't I get him back under the spell? He wants to go see a Sangoma.

Khosi: No. He still get the migraines. He need to be completely fine before you take him back.

Me: Did you hear me? He wants to go to a Sangoma.

Khosi: Follow him. You'll weigh the vision down. He will only see other things not amantombazane.

Me: Yoh thank you. I am in deep shit without the spell. There are kids all over my house, breaking my things.

Khosi: Be patient. Atleast he still loves you.

Me: yeah. I guess that's what matters at this point.

Mulo: Are they ready?

I hang up and turn to him.

Me: They must be.

He takes them and his face drops. He scratches his head.

Mulo: I could never get used to this. It breaks my heart the same every time. Because every time I have this hope that they might come back positive but every time its this freaking single line!

He throws them across the room.

Mulo: Even if its just one. Just one child, to stay up all night shushing it, changing diapers, feeding it a bottle. Just one chance of being call baba Zanele. With the amount of sex we have there's no fucking way you do not catch. You're probably doing something to not fall pregnant.

Me: What? Why-

Mulo: Because you hate kids! That's why. I almost died Zanele. Had God not bring me back I would have died like a dog. No one to carry on my

legacy. I need a child Zanele and if you will not give me one then I'm gonna have to take a second wife.

Me: You wouldn't dare.

He walks out.

Me: Mulo!

I follow him.

Me: Nkazimulo Zulu I am talking to you.

He is out of the bedroom. A second wife? I lose the ability to stand, my head spins. I fall down and cry....

‘Uma ujhova evula iminyango. Akeeeeeekho ongavala...’

I sing along loudly. When God says yes, not a single soul can say no because he is God and he makes the unable able. A year ago I did not see it possible to be this happy. I didn't see myself out of that misery. But as always, imvana came through for me and I am getting ready to go sign and get the keys to my mother's new house. I have been up and down the past 6 days trying to get it done asap before she changes her mind. And today is the morning that South Africa gets to know that their captain is a pedophile. What a worst time to be known for that.

I take my bag. Satisfied!

I don't want anything ruining my mood today.....

....

MIKE

I hear Kyla screaming in excitement and that could be one reason, Nkazi. I take my coat and go down. I find them laughing.

Me: Go wait in the car.

Kyla: But daddy we are still greeting each other.

Nkazi: We will continue in the car.

She nods and walks off.

Me: Ndoda. Where have you been?

Nkazi: I needed a breather.

Me: excuse me.

Nkazi: what?

Me: You? You needed a breather without your wife? Are we dying?

He laughs.

Nkazi: Uyaphapha wena. Did she contact you?

Me: Yes. She did not believe that I didn't know where you were.

Nkazi: I'm sorry. Let me take the girl to school. We've got a lot of catching up to do.

My phone rings. It Zimasa.

Me: Candy bar.

Zimasa: You fetched the car?

Me: No I didn't....oh the driver is back. He must have fetched it.

Zimasa: I am gonna be late for my meeting now. Let me request.

Me: No he'll take you wherever you are going.

He clears his throat and wave goodbye.

Me: He's coming now. Go wait in the gate.

I hang up and follow him.

Me: Please take Candy on your way and take her wherever she is going after you drop Kyla off.

Nkazi: That's not on my payroll.

Me: It is now.

Nkazi: Is she your girlfriend?

Me: female friend.

Nkazi: Doesn't she have money to uber?

Me: She is the lady friend I came with to the hospital. You owe her one.

Nkazi: Well she was paying for when I fetched her from steers.

Me: Just go Zulu and please do not call her mahosha.

Nkazi: I am not in the mood today.

Me: Good.

He gets in the car. I blow Kyla a kiss and walk back inside as they drive off.

Enhle: Who is candy bar?

Me: Zimasa.

Enhle: Why does she have a pet name?

Me: Its her disguise bame. You should meet her. You'd love her.

Enhle: You could be fucking her for all I know. I don't wanna make a fool out of myself.

Me: I am not. She wants to meet you. She loves Sax as you do.

Enhle: Breakfast is ready.

The results came back positive and now we are just housemates. I sleep in a different room. I am not even pressuring her to forgive me. Cheating is one thing but a child? Its unforgivable and I am ready and I deserve whatever decision she will make.....

.....

ZANELE

I try his phone. It rings. I was not expecting that. He left after our fight and kept his phone off. I hardly slept the past few nights. I couldn't help but think if he is already seeing that second wife. I fear what could happen while I wait for him to completely heal. God knows if he meant what he said, I would take him back under the spell. He would rather die than take a second wife that would be able to give him children at that.

I would mean nothing to him. That child would become the center of his world. Why am I even

think of this. He would not do that to me. He said that because of anger....hopefully.

He doesn't answer but its good to know he is okay.

“Come home.”

I send and call Lily in.

Me: Please buy me coffee.

Lily: I can't stand the smell of that place. Can I send someone else?

She's pregnant.

Me: Yes you can. I forgot.

She chuckles and nod...

What if I faked pregnancy? Just to keep him grounded until he is fine to be put under the spell. Yes, in that case he wont look for a second wife.

Me: Lily!

She gets in rushing.

Me: Please pee on this.

Lily: Uh....

Me: Please. I will double your salary.

Lily: Amen.

She takes the pregnancy tests and go out.

"I have news"

I send it to him again. This should help....

.....

ZIMASA

The car pulls up in front of me. I was starting to get worried. I open the door and hop in. The partition is down. There is Kyla, I know her but we have never really spoke.

Me: Hi.

Kyla: Hi.

The car takes off.

Me: So you always sit like this by yourself?

Kyla: No. My uncle doesn't seem to like other people.

Me: Oh.

Kyla: Are you going to work?

Me: No. I am going to buy my mom a house.

Kyla: That's beautiful. Where do you work?

Me: At a strip club.

Kyla: What is a strip club?

Me: A place where adults-

The partition slides up. It's the rude bastard. I was planning on having a good day today.

Him: Kyla put on the headphones.

She does as told. He adjusts the rearview mirror.

Him: So you do drugs too?

Me: What I do is none of your business.

Him: Well it if you gonna tell a child that you're a mahosha.

Me: Stop the car.

Him: Its freeway.

Me: Stop the fucking car you ill mannered asshole. Have you ever seen me sleeping with different men? Because as far as I know a mahosha is a hooker which I am not!

He whistles. I try to open the door but it is locked.

Him: I knew you were on crack. Do you think you gonna live if you hop out of a speeding car? Be humble please.

I wipe my tears. Honestly he should have died. I hate him.

We drop Kyla at school. She wishes me a goodday and I do too. She reminds me of Kay. I miss her so much, Lufhuno blocked my calls and on social media. He is not driving off.

Me: I am late.

Him: Well go and get on a taxi. I am waiting for her to get to her friends.

I sigh. And then he takes off.

Me: Why are you so rude?

Partition!

Me: You don't even know where I am going you asshole!

The car stops. A few moments later the door opens.

Him: Get out.

Me: This isn't my destination.

Him: It is now. You can't call me an asshole. Get off and non-assholes will drive you wherever you are going.

He must be kidding me. Its starts raining

Me: This is not your car.

I use the door on the right to get out and is this a driver's door?. He's still closing the other door. I hop in and take off.

Him: Yey wena mahosha

Me: Mahosha ke mmao

He must put some respect on women.....

SABELO

I always look forward to days where there is no practice. I get to spend time with my family. I wake up and check the time. My phone is off. I put it on the charger and get out of bed. I pee and dress up. I go out to see my favorite people. She gets in running. There is noise from outside.

Me: What's up?

Amber: Its journalists.

Me: What do they want?

She takes a deep breath.

Amber: You haven't seen it, have you?

Me: What?

She gives me her phone. It's a footage of me at Cubana with those bloody kids I literally sweat. This-this isn't good. We got rid of this. Zimasa deleted every copy.

Me: Shit. Shit. Shit!

Amber: People are fuming on twitter Sabelo. They are calling you all sorts of names. This is bad.

Me: I don't care about that. My career Amber. My career is over.

Amber: What were you thinking!

Me: I was high and drunk but Zimasa fixed it.

Amber: What do you mean?

Me: She...She went and got the footage. She told me she deleted every copy.

Amber: And you're sure she didn't keep any?

Me: She wouldn't....would she?

Amber: Sabelo. You're so naïve.

I'm gonna kill her!

I run upstairs and switch my phone on. Missed call notifications come in flooding. I dial Zimasa. It goes through.

Zimasa: Sabelo Pedophile Mtshali.

Me: You fucking whore. What did you do?

Zimasa: Kept my promise. I made you right, therefore I shall destroy you. Happy new year bitch.

She giggles and hang up. I groan and hit the bloody phone against the wall. Conniving bitch!

SPONSORED

29

NKAZIMULO ZULU

He keeps looking at me and shaking his head. I would entertain him if it was any other day but it is today and I am fuming. That skimpy clothes wearing satan will get to know me today. If it was not for the heater I would be dead by the cold now. I walked from the highway until I got to Pele's work. 5 hours of my day wasted, just like that!

Luckily he had spare clothes so I changed after having to explain myself and get laughed at.

Me: How far is this place exactly?

Pele: We are here.

Me: Great.

He dragged me here cause I don't wanna know what that dream means... I don't know maybe I am scared of finding out the meaning.

Me: He must be rich.

Pele: R2000 consultation

Me: He's crazy.

Pele: He is very precise. He tells the things as they are.

Me: He better.

Pele: Today we are finding out why don't you get peace at night.

Me: How long are the queues?

Pele: We have an appointment.

My heart is racing as we get out of the car. Zanele is going to flip when she finds out I really came here. She does not believe in tradition.

Pele: Hhaibo ndoda.

Me: Is this really necessary?

Pele: It is. Come.

He pulls me. We take off our shoes and a lady gives us slippers. He has a snake. No black person would pay R2000 just for ukuhlola unless he has a snake that attracts people to come here.

"Zulu brothers! Been waiting for y'all"

What on earth is this. Y'all? Is he gay?

Him: Sit over there.

We sit on the mats. Yoga mats. This is a circus. He's rich because he's gay not because of what he does.

Him: Thwasana food and my drum!

He sits opposite us butt flat on the cold ass tiles.

The Thwasana brings food and the tiny drum. He takes a wing from the platter and shove it to us. My father would go crazy over this platter.

Him: Your father made a special request. He said I should remind you both his favorite food so that he can come to your houses more often.

Okay maybe he is really good at what he does. He drums, softly and close his eyes. I take a foot and eat.

He laughs.

Him: So your wife Denys you children Jacob.

I look at Pele.

Pele: Yes.

Him: He needs to answer for himself.

I clear my throat

Me: Yes.

Him: Your mother. She is the bad bitch. You have a baby on the way. The mother is 5 weeks pregnant. That is why you've been dreaming of a child....ai ai ai what the hell Bantu abadala! And that child is in danger. When your wife finds out...hhhei hhhei your wife Nkazimulo. Your wife!

He throws the drum down.

Me: What do you mean when my wife finds out?

Him: The girl you slept with in the dark. I can't see her face cause its dark but she is carrying your child and you need to keep her safe because the people watching over your wife are very strong and dangerous. That is why she frowns the baby in the dream. She doesn't have to find out Zulu. Get up right now and go find the girl and take her somewhere safe.

My head is spinning. My heart is literally in my throat. I am shivering. I have a child on the way?

Me: We need to go.

I get up and head to the door.

Him: Watch out for your wife!

I will deal with her. For now I need to find that woman. I get behind the steering. Pele gets in and hugs me.

Pele: Who is she? I need to buy her whatever she needs. She turned you on, you slept with her and came inside her? You cheated on Zanele? Hhai Bafo I am proud of you. I was certain she fed you something.

Me: First of all she could be a mahosha and secondly, I don't know who the hell she is. And right now I am sick because I love her even though I do not know her. I cannot even touch Zanele excited. I cannot wash her off, she is all I think about and I don't even know her. Worse she could be a mahosha but I am praying she is not.

Pele: I really don't care who she is. She gave you a boner and that's what matters right now.

Me: Did you hear isangoma se gay said the baby's life is in danger. I need to go to Mike's right now.

Pele: Drive.

He takes and deep breath and laugh. It's going to be a long night.....

....

ZANELE

I was hoping I will find him home but the house is quiet. I take off my heels and throw the bag over the couch and go to the kitchen. I pour a glass of juice and drink. Is he slowly slipping away from me? What is going to become of me if I lose him? That pregnancy test needs to work on my favour. I need my husband Home, loving me and worshipping the ground I walk on.

I gave everything up for this man to be mine forever. Unspeakable things. I will never just sit and watch him slip away.

I take my keys and head out....

.....

ZIMASA

after my meeting I came to Martha to choose furniture for the house. Mom will get the keys on her birthday. After hours of staring at the screen I fell asleep and I just woke up to pee.

Martha: Did you drink alcohol?

Me: No. Just water. I have been peeing all day.

Martha: Pregnancy did that to me. I see you have a new watch.

Me: I want to sell it but I just said let me feel what it's like to wear a R100 000 watch. My stranger left it behind.

Martha: Oh Cinderella vibes.

Me: We would've come for it by now if he cared about it so he doesn't and I'm gonna sell it.

Martha: For how much?

Me: 50k.

Martha: It looks new Zim. At least 75K.

Me: Yoh hhai be easy on my customers.

I look at it. It is quite a masterpiece. I like it.

Me: I'm gonna keep it.

Martha: Are you falling in love with your stranger?

Me: I think about it sometimes but no I don't love it. I just wonder.

Her phone notifies. She laughs.

Martha: #arrestmtshali. People are fuming.

To be honest.... The adrenaline rush is over. I am starting to question if this is worth it? Turning into someone I'm not Just because of Sabelo? he hurt me but it feels like there is nothing I could do to make him feels the pain I felt. This could get him off the team but another one may hire him.

Me: Did I do the right thing?

Martha: Ofcourse. Sabelo isn't even remorseful he deserves this.

I nod. It's late.

Me: I am working later. I should get going.

Martha: I thought we were gonna have dinner together.

Me: Keep some for me in the fridge and I will come tomorrow morning. I need to take the car back.

Martha: I'm sad.

I hug her. She walks me out. Mulalo gets off his car.

Mulalo: Hi.

Me: Hi and bye.

We fist bump.

Martha: Drive safe.

Me: Thanks baby.

I get in and drive off....

....

MIKE

I find him drinking my scotch and sitting on my chair.

Me: Mr Zulu.

Nkazi: Remember that day you said I only Fuck one vagina? Well you say that at every chance you get but I am talking about the last time you said it.

Me: Uh-huh.

Nkazi: Well I found myself in a different vagina.

Me: What do you mean?

Nkazi: I slept with someone that day. Here.

I laugh. He is not laughing. He is fucking serious. Nkazimulo fucking someone else other than that huge head Zanele? No ways.

Me: I don't believe that.

Nkazi: Well she is pregnant with my child.

Me: Who is it?

Nkazi: I don't know that's where you come in. Tell them to test

Me: There is 20 of them.

Nkazi: Mike please.

Me: Fine. I'll go tell Sushi.

Nkazi: Thank you. I'll go chill in the balcony

....

An hour later Sushi gets in with a huge container.

Me: Nkazimulo!

He comes in. He rubs his palms together.

Sushi: All these tests are negative or they could be less than 4 weeks.

Nkazi: it's been a month.

Me: Did everyone test? These are 19.

Sushi: Oh. That should be Candy. She's not-

Candy: Mike I-

She stops.

Candy: I will come back later.

Sushi: No come. We are doing urine tests.

Candy: What's up?

Me: Just take the stick and go pee on it.

Candy: I'm not on drugs.

Me: I know but just to be sure.

Candy: I'll bring it later.

She takes it and walk out.

Nkazi: It can't be her.

Me: Why? She was here that night.

I leave him and go to the club....

....

ZIMASA

I pee and dip it in and leave it on the counter and go out. I startle when I bump into him.

Mike: Are you done?

Me: I am waiting for it.

I take off the watch and throw it on top of the bed and kick off the heels and go back to the bathroom. I need glasses.

Mike: Are you okay?

Me: No. This-

I take it and sit on the toilet seat. I look at it. Two bold lines. Tears drops land on it. Mike is not here anymore. I sob quietly. What have I done?

There's a knock.

Me: Not now.

The door opens.

Me: I said not now!

It's the rude bastard.

Me: Not now okay. Get out.

He has my stranger's watch in his hands.

Him: This is the worst thing that has ever happened to me.

Me: Put it down and get the hell out!

He puts it on top of the counter and walks out.

How? We used a condom. I am not gonna have a child whose father I do not know. And I know very well that I don't want a child but what if.... I get up and go out. I find Mike sitting on the bed.

Me: Do I lose my job?

Mike: Yes.

Me: I will go pack my stuff.

Mike: Come here.

He holds me.

Mike: Are you okay?

Me: No.

Tears just pour down.

mike: He's gonna take care of you.

Me: Who?

Mike: Nkazi.

Me: The rude bastard?

He nods

Me: You think I'm gonna keep it and give it to him for adoption?

Mike: What do you mean I think you can keep it?

Me: I'm still deciding Mike. This is new to me okay? I don't even know who the father of this child is!

He frowns and looks beyond me. I turn. He's leaning on the door frame.

Nkazi: She was crying. I don't know what to say to crying people. And I never thought in my wildest dreams that I would have a child with umahosha. I'm still shook.

Me: Mike please get this man out of here. I might kill him.

Nkazi: I am staying over.

He gets in and close the door. I pick my bag up and walk out.

I am not keeping a married man's child. The last thing I need is being kept away from my child because married people do that all the time. Men do it all the time!

SPONSORED

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ZIMASA

I am woken up by someone shaking me. I rub my eyes and yawn and turn to see who this special person is to disturb my sleep.

I close my eyes and shake my head when I see his bearded face.

Nkazi: It is 11am.

Me: Can you leave me alone please?

Nkazi: Yeah. After we've confirmed if I am going to be a daddy or what.

I remember my tragedy. Oh no it wasn't a nightmare. My stranger is the rude bastard. I liked the man I imagined him to be not this rude motherfucker.

Nkazi: Are these sleeping pills?

Me: How can I help you Bhuti?

Nkazi: Are you trying to abort my child na Candy Jar?

Me: Its Candy Bar!

Nkazi: I don't care really. I bought 3 more tests. And booked you an appointment. If they come back positive we will go. 2pm.

Hhai ngiyalingwa!! I am being tested.

Me: Which perfume do you use?

There is noway he can afford that rolex. He is a driver for heaven's sake. He could not be my stranger.

Nkazi: Hugo boss. I wore it that day. I had a sweet in my mouth and you started this whole mess.

Its really him. I have no energy to talk honestly.

Me: Where did you get the watch?

Nkazi: My wife bought it for me. She's filthy rich.

I open my hand and he gives me the little plastic. I go to the bathroom and pee on the sticks.

Me: What is this?

Nkazi: Its biltong. I searched on the internet they say It kills time while you wait for the results.

I sigh and pull one out and take a bite.

Nkazi: Look I know this whole thing is shocking but please do not abort it. I will even pay you to keep it and give it to me when its born and you can continue with your life. Life is full of surprises I know. One day you're the most loyal man on earth and later that day a mahosha kisses you in your sleep and boom she is pregnant and now you're at

her bathroom door begging her to not kill your sperm but she might cause she hates you but you are ready to do anything for her to keep the baby.

I actually thought he's gonna be nice and apologize for calling me mahosha but he still continues. They are still positive. A part of me wished they would come back negative. I am not for this.

Nkazi: What do they say?

I open the door.

Me: they say abort it mahosha.

He grabs me.

Nkazi: What do I have to do for you to keep it for me?

Me: nothing. Go get your wife pregnant dude. How did it even happen? Did you stealthing me? Do you know that is serious offense? I could get you arrested.

Nkazi: The condom teared in the morning and it was too late when I realized.

Me: Leave please.

Nkazi: No.

Me: Nkos yam lendoda.

His phone rings. He looks at it and answer.

I go back to the bathroom. I need to see
Lufhuno.....

.....

ZANELE

He comes in running shouting my name and stops
when he sees me. His lips curve into a side smile. I
asked Noma to call him and tell him I ate poison.

Me: Hey babe.

Mulo: I love the emergency.

He takes off his jacket and comes to me on the
counter. I open my thighs for him to stand in
between. He is looking into my eyes, for a second
I am at peace. I see happiness in his eyes, he is
beautiful and happy to see me. He undo the robe
and takes it off. My breasts are pointing straight at
him. He smells of sweat and deodorant. He cups

my right breast and kiss me. I know it won't last long. It doesn't last long when he hasn't had me in days. He is kissing my neck while gently squeezing my boob. I moan softly. I missed him. Our sex life has only been with each other. We were each other's firsts and hopefully lasts.

He inserts his two fingers in my....

[REMOVED]

....

He comes back with the wipes and clean us both and he lays on the couch and open his arms. I lay on top of him. He kisses me.

Mulo: I did some thinking while I was away.

Me: You did?

Mulo: Yeah. You're only 31. That's the age of gathering everything before starting a family at 35 so. Kids are not important to me more than you and your happiness are.

Me: Thank you sthandwa sam.

We kiss and I lay my head on his chest

I raised Lily's salary for nothing. I feel at ease....

.....

ZIMASA

I munch on the burger and hit the damn thing again. Boxing is actually stress decreasing . I don't feel as frustrated as I was when I started punching.

Martha comes in.

Martha: Oh you're still alive.

Me: I don't understand. Why me? He has a fucking filthy rich wife why did it have to be me!

Martha: Maybe if you stopped talking in riddles things would be easier for me to understand.

Me: First of all he is rude. Why would I want to have a child that would probably be like him. The world has enough problems it does not need another him.

Martha: Who! Leave my boyfriends punching bag alone and sit down and talk to me.

I am literally raining. This is not sweat. I take the gloves off and take a towel and wipe my face.

Me: The stranger is the rude bastard.

Martha: No!

She is laughing.

Me: And for some odd reasons I am fucking pregnant! 4+ weeks. What the fuck does that even mean?

Martha: You're what!

Me: Pregnant! With a married man's child and he wants me to keep it.

Martha: What do you wanna do?

Me: Terminate.

Martha: Whatever you decide you know you have my support.

Me: But he needs it Martha. Mike cried in the hospital saying there is nothing he wanted more than being a dad. It doesn't feel right that I want to terminate but he's married! What if he keeps me away from it? Or keep me around but as an aunt? I would die.

Martha: Talk to him. Tell him how is this gonna go if you are going to keep it.

Me: I could never be able to talk to him he is just beyond rude. I need a bath.

Martha: Should I make another burger now that you are eating for two?

She winks.

Me: Just fries. These were 4.

Martha: It was a whole bowl! Geez.

I laugh and head to the bathroom. I am conflicted.

I turn the shower on and undress. I hear a knock at the door.

Martha: Babe you have a visitor.

Me: Here?

I wrap a towel and go open. Its Amber.

Me: What?

Amber: Sabelo is here to talk to you.

Me: Leave please. I am really not in the mood.

Amber: We didn't come here to fight.

I sigh and nod. I put back the sports bra and tights and I follow her all the way out.

He is leaning on the car.

Me: Hi.

Sabelo: Hi. I came to apologize.

Me: Ok.

Sabelo: You kept every thing?

Me: I did.

Sabelo: I trusted you Zimasa.

Me: I did too.

Sabelo: How did it help you to leak that video?

Me: Were you not suspended? I thought I read something like that in the morning. If you want me to give you these copies then you should beg me

Sabelo. Apologize sincerely not this.

Sabelo: Babe this is stupid. I am not going to grovel to this pathetic bitch. You are seeking relevance and-

I head back inside. I don't have time for this....

.....

I spray my hands and the music starts. Martha came to watch me today. She paid R3000 just to watch me dance. The room is blue today. I am going through emotions. I start dancing. I am lost in the zone, nothing makes everything better than doing what you love.

I am floating. Someone is carrying me. What on earth!

We are out and he puts me down.

Me: What the fuck dude!

Nkazi: You are not gonn hang on poles zobufebe with my child. What are you even wearing! People aren't supposed to see your stomach. All I am asking for is just 8 months of your life then you can go and hang on poles all you want.

Me: This is my job okay! I need to be here to make sure my family is fed! I have to be here to make sure this child is gonna be fed and have shelter because I am not be a married couple's victim.

Nkazi: I am going to take care of you and the baby and you are not going to be anyone's victim. You are pregnant. And that pole yoma-

Me: Call me mahosha one more time in gonna-

Nkazi: Fine. What is your name?

Me: Candy.

Nkazi: Ok Candy. That pole is dangerous. You could fall and lose the baby.

He covers me with his jacket quickly when some guys appear.

Nkazi: And stop wearing these undone underwears. Where were you when I came to take you to the doctor?

Me: Can you buy me a burger?

Nkazi: ok.

He zips the jacket and leads the way.

We get in the car. This jacket smells like him that night.

Nkazi: Are you gonna stop to be a mahosha?

Me: Its stripping!

Nkazi: I don't care. How much do you make a night?

Me: R15-R30K

Nkazi: Oh you're very cheap.

Me: What are you gonna say to your wife?

Nkazi: Leave that to me.

Me: Don't take it away from me shall I decide to keep it.

Nkazi: You haven't decided?

Me: No. You're an asshole.

Nkazi: You don't get to kiss me in my sleep. And ride me all night until the condom tears and now you're pregnant and you want to kill my hard earned sperm?

Me: I was sexually frustrated okay. I was just having fun.

Nkazi: With a man in the dark?

Me: I am a single woman. I can do whatever I want with whomever. Unlike you married man who had sex with a stranger in the dark.

Nkazi: Well I thought you were my wife until the alcohol worn off and I realised the tennis boob I was holding wasn't hers.

Me: Why are you so mean! You make me angry.

He puts earphones on and sing. What did I do wrong dear Lord. How is this whole thing going to work? I imagined my stranger to be sweet not think

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ZIMASA

The Sunday I have been impatiently waiting for is here. I am nervous and happy. I am afraid

something could go wrong. Zamani is on my back because Martha has no time for him. She is busy making sure everything is perfect. I invited Amber. I am not sure she will come but I did invite her. This is our home.

I am kind of sleepy. I didn't sleep well. The rude bastard drove around with me all night and took me back to Mike's after the club was closed. 2am. He said I will go hang myself on the pole yobufebe with his child if he takes me back while the club is still open.

So crazy of me to have the furniture delivered yesterday. The interior designer is doing pretty well. Her team is almost done and I am in tears. I go outside. The deco is up. In fact everything is done now. I have to change and go fetch mom. I go back inside and take my suitcase from the lounge and pull it to my bedroom. I don't have a bed yet. Only the ottoman that was limited edition. I take out a dress and heels and my make up bag.

I go out to Amber's room. It has a bed. I don't want her making excuses why she won't stay over if she comes. I place Zam-Zam on the bed and do my make up. And then dress up. I don't see myself with a huge belly. But it is still very flat. I'm glad I'm gonna be slaying on my mom's birthday pictures.

I pick Zam-Zam up and go out. I look for Martha. I find her talking to Mihlali and Mike. She is shouting at them actually.

Martha: The men are supposed to braaing meat not drinking alcohol behind cars.

Mulalo: But we have money.

Martha: So?

Mike: We don't braai. We hire people to do that.

Martha: Le useless.

I chuckle.

Me: I brought him. I am going to fetch the family.

Martha: OK. Call me when you're close so we can gather.

Me: OK I will.

I hired a big car to accommodate them. I head to the gate. I parked it outside. This is a safe neighborhood.

I hop in and fasten the seatbelt. The knock on the window startles me. I roll it down.

Me: What are you doing here?

Nkazi: Brought my boss. Where are you going?

Me: Somewhere.

Nkazi: Get off I'm going to drive you.

Me: I can drive myself thank you.

Nkazi: I insist. You can't drive, you are pregnant.

Me: Exactly. Not disabled.

He snatches the keys off my hand.

Nkazi: You will not drive a car until you give birth. What if you crash? Cause I am 100% sure you are a horrible driver.

Me: Is this how the next 8 months is gonna be if I decide to keep it?

Nkazi: You haven't decided?

Me: No. Bring the keys. I'm gonna be late.

Nkazi: Move to the other side.

Me: Okay. Just don't talk to me okay.

Nkazi: Oh amazing.

I unbuckle and move aside and fasten again. He gets in and does the same and starts the car and drive away.

Nkazi: Why are you wearing fake eyelashes?

I look out the window. I will not let him ruin my day today.

Nkazi: Those face paints might not be good for the baby. Where are we going?

I type the location and put the phone on the holder.

Nkazi: Aw bazosibamba inkunzi ke la.

His phone rings. He takes it answer.

Nkazi: Babe.... Uhm no.....you can go, my boss is very busy these days plus he has a new girlfriend I am driving her now and she is always going somewhere so this is gonna be me until they break up..... OK enjoy I love you.... Bye.

Nkazi: Why are you looking at me?

I shake my head and turn up the volume. Married men.....

.....

ZANELE

it's been a while since Khosi and I went out and do our best friendly things. Everything has been about amantombazane and I truly miss to chill and catch up with my best friend.

Mulo is on a jolly mood since he came back and every now and then he tells me he loves me. I thought he would get mad when I told him I'm going out with Khosi. He is very selfish with Sundays. They are his days, we sit, talk, eat, drink alcohol, force him to watch rom-coms and have sex all day long.

She walks in and scream and dance. I booked us this apartment.

Khosi: I miss Varsity when I see that.

Me: I stole it from Mulo's stash.

Khosi: He's gonna kill you.

Me: It'll be worth it.

We laugh. I pour it into glasses and we drink up.

Khosi: Wooooo! Keep them shots coming babe!

I laugh and pour some more.....

.....

SABELO

I buckle Sibu up and Amber comes. I take her bags and put them in the boot. We get in the car.

Me: Do we have to go?

Amber: Yes babe. It's mom's birthday and I can't not be there.

Me: But Zimasa bought that house.

Amber: Just stay out of her way okay?

Me: I'll try but she is ruining my life and I'm so angry.

Amber: Sabelo please.

Me: I will behave.

Amber: And don't smoke that thing.

Me: I won't.

We drive off....

.....

ZIMASA

He stops aside the road and hop out. He's peeing.
Great. He comes back and resumes driving.

Me: Third house

Nkazi: Now I have to count?

Me: Stop.

He pulls up. I hop out and head to the gate. They are locking the door.

Me: Birthday girl!

Melo runs to me. I pick her up.

Me: Hi.

Melo: You are beautiful. Can I use a lipstick?

Me: Not yet. You will when you turn 13.

I put her down. She is heavy.

Mom: We thought we were gonna be late.

Me: You're in time. Happy birthday.

Mom: Thank you.

We hug.

Me: Let's go. The restaurant is waiting for us.

Wandile: Can I drive?

Me: We have a driver.

Mom: You love wasting money.

Me: It's not wasting if it's for my family.

I take her hand and we walk out. Finally. We get to leave this neighborhood!

She greets Nkazimulo. I hop at the back with them and we drive off.....

.....

I let Martha know we're close. She has been asking how far is this restaurant really. I have been ignoring her.

We stop.

Me: Driver.... This door won't open itself.

He hops out and comes to open. We get out.

Me: Thank you.

Nkazi: I did this for your mother.

He whispers. I chuckle and walk towards the gate.
It slides open and....

"SURPRISE!!!!!"

She gasps and hold me.

Mom: What is this!

Me: Your house my love.

She covers her mouth with her hands and cries. I hold her. She hugs me and cries for a good 5 minutes. I am staying strong.

Mom: Thank you Ngwane. Ngyabonga Masumpa.

Me: I promised your husband that I will take care of you. This is me doing exactly that.

Mom: God bless you my Angel.

Martha: Okay Mrs Hlongwane. Enough crying we have a party to dance for before it rains.

Me: She's right. Let's go!

I have no friends. It's Mike, Enhle, Mulalo, Martha, and Gogo.

We head in to the tent. She sits on her chair. She's still crying. Amber and Sabelo walk in. The DJ plays a song. Let the party begin.....

.....

Everyone is drunk. I am too. I have been drinking Savanna a bit. Yoh hha a imagine not drinking all this time. I haven't seen him since he dropped us off. Martha is virgin, Zam-Zam is with Gogo.

I disappear to my room to drink and come back again. Wandile comes to me.

Wandile: There is a guy asking for you outside.

Me: Tall?

Wandile: Not too tall.

Me: OK.

Who could it Be?

I walk there. He's talking to Martha. She blushing all the way. Why is she such a whore! Mulalo is just right there.

Me: Hi.

Martha: Oh you're here babe. I kept him company.

Me: Thanks.

She goes back to Mike and Mulalo. Enhle is sloshed. She is laughing non stop.

Lufhuno: Great house.

Me: Thank you.

Lufhuno: Well done.

Me: Thank you. We can go to the back. It's loud here.

He nods and we walk to the back. We sit on the grass.

Me: I thought I'd never see you again.

Lufhuno: Me too but you sounded like you really need to talk.

Me: I do.

Lufhuno: What's up?

Me: I'm pregnant Lufhuno.

It's not bright enough to see his face but I know he's biting his lower lip.

Me: It was just fun and here I am. He's married. He desperately needs a child and it would be so selfish of me to terminate it.

Lufhuno: Do you want to keep it?

Me: I don't know what I want.

Lufhuno: We were kids when we made that promise. Melody is pregnant too so I guess we're even now. Although he's married.

Me: Yeah I know. I am so conflicted. I'm afraid I won't get to be of it's life. I can't...

Lufhuno: Hey hey hey.... Set an agreement. And everything shall be okay.

Me: What if it complicated?

Lufhuno: I will be here for you.

He hugs me.

Lufhuno: I miss you so much.

Me: I miss you too.

We break the hug. He gets closer and our lips meet. He pulls me close and make me sit on top of him. He's grabbing my ass and slides his hands under the dress. I'm horny it must be the savanna. I am grinding against him, he's hard. I want to pull it out and have him Fuck this stress out of me at the back of my mother's new house.

He goes down to my neck and I am moaning lower.

"Zimasa"

I gasp and fall off Lufhuno.

Sabelo: I've always known you were fucking him.
You fucking jerk!

He jumps on Lufhuno and punch him, he fights back. I pull my phone from my bra and turn on the flash for them to see clear. I don't want anyone punching the air.....oh no I should be stopping them.

Me: Sabelo! Lufhuno stop! HELP!!!

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ZIMASA

I keep yelling but they are not stopping. I can't try to stop them because they might hurt me.

Mike jumps in between them and push them apart.

Mike: Seriously!

Lufhuno: He started it.

Sabelo: You were taking advantage of her.

Me: Whoa whoa whoa. Why do you care? I am none of your business, I am not Amber. Let this fine man take advantage of me all he wants. Mind your own damn business.

Sabelo: You're drunk, you shouldn't be making out with-

Me: Pssst!

Mike: You're bleeding. Get a wet cloth. You come with me.

He says to Sabelo. I take Lufhuno's hand and walk with him inside. He has a cut on his lip.

Me: There is no dettol yet.

Lufhuno: I will wash it off with just water its nothing.

I sit on the toilet and watch him clean himself. He wipes his whole face with a towel. The bleeding has stopped.

Me: I'm sorry he hit you.

Lufhuno: Are you still fucking him?

Me: Not that its any of your business but no.

Lufhuno: Then why did he attack me?

Me: I don't know Lufhuno. Go and ask him.

Lufhuno: I'm leaving. Melody is probably wondering where I've gone.

Me: Can I come see Kay?

Lufhuno: No.

Me: Lufhuno please

Lufhuno: Its been a year Zimasa. Let her be okay? She is starting to like Melody, you coming back only to leave again will break her and change things between her and Melody.

Me: I love her Lufhuno and I wasn't just away for a year. I was healing okay.

Lufhuno: You left before that. You chose him over us.

Me: Melody didn't want me there!

Lufhuno: Who has ever Zimasa? But is that a reason to abandon us? Is it?

I look down.

Lufhuno: You are not answering me because you know that wasn't the reason you abandoned us, it was because of him. You shut me out because he didn't want me, you kept hurting my child over and over again just to please him! You can do it to me but my child? I will never let you any where near her until you're ready to be there forever.

He walks out. Tears drop. I go out and head to Amber's room. I find her son crying. I take my

dress off and get under the covers. I put him on my chest and shush him.....

....

I am woken up by a tickling sensation on my boobs. I rub my eyes. He's sucking on my boob. I scream! He startles and cries. Whose baby is this!

I fall off the bed. Fuck!

He's checking up on me. Oh its Siby.

Me: I'm fine dude. You scared me.

He giggles and sits. I get up.

Me: Where did your mom sleep if you're still here?

He is hitting the pillow. Just like his father, never paying attention. I dress up and pick him up. Last night ended very horrible. I still have to speak to Lufhuno.

There is laughter coming from the lounge.

The aroma of whatever it is hits my nostrils, my stomach rumbles same time.

Me: Morning.

Everyone: Morning.

Me: Anyone seen Amber?

Mom: No.

I hand her the baby.

Me: Where's gran?

Mom: Outside. Go help Martha make breakfast, she must not do everything by herself.

Me: I'm going.

She doesn't ask about the fight. Good because I have no explanation.

I head to the kitchen area. It is an open plan. My family loves talking so this is a perfect house for them. Now mom can shout at Melo in the lounge or dining area while she is in the kitchen. I take an apple from the dinning table and munch on it.

Martha: That's my best friend.

Me: Why did you not wake me up?

Martha: You told me to go away when I did.

I laugh. I take the eggs and beat them.

Martha: What happened last night with Sabelo and Lufhuno?

Me: Ugh don't remind me. Sabelo found us making out and he jumped him.

Martha: No!

She laughs.

Me: Lufhuno is mad at me.

Martha: So you guys got hots for each other?

Me: I was drunk.

Martha: He wasn't. He definitely have hots for you. I told you.

Me: He has a fiance.

Melo: Sis Zimasa. There is a lady asking foe you outside.

Martha: Go wash your face. Your eyeliner is all over the place.

Me: Why do I feel heavy!

Martha: That is Savovo for you.

I hate her.

I go to my room and take out make remover wipes and wipe my face. I change into comfortable clothes and go out. There is no lady here. I hear gran crack up. I walk there, I bet she is busy at the garden.

Oh shit! Kana I'm pregnant and this moron is the father. Oh fuuuck! I wonder what's on me that's gonna harm this ugly today. He is trimming the flowers. What is he even doing here!

Me: Good morning.

They don't hear me. Why is he making my grandma laugh?

Me: Sanibonani!

They turn.

Gran: Oh Zim. You are awake. Please tell Wandile to make us coffee.

Me: Ok.

I go back inside and make coffee and take it to them. He is not paying attention to me.

Melo: Sisi.

Me: Yeah

Melo: The lady is waiting.

Oh. I thought he was the lady. I follow Melo. She is sitting on the chair.

Me: Hi.

Lady: Hi. I almost thought I got a wrong house.

Me: No. How can I help you?

Lady: I am your driver. I am taking you to the airport.

Shoot! I am so unorganised.

Me: I had so much to drink last night. This completely slipped my mind. Can I go take my things quickly?

Lady: You have an hour and 40 minutes.

Me: I'll be quick.

I rush inside and straight to the bathroom. I take a 2 seconds shower and go out to my room. I dress up and take my cosmetic bag and my purse and I am ready to go.

I go out the back door. We head out the gate and get in the car. And we drive off.....

.....

SABELO

She is already awake when I wake up. She is busy on her phone.

Me: Morning

She pays no attention. I go to the bathroom to pee and come back.

Me: Babe.

She removes my hand from her.

Me: What's up?

Amber: Do you still love her?

Me: Who?

Amber: Zimasa.

Me: Oh please.

Amber: Then why were you fighting for her?

Me: Because he was taking advantage of her.

Amber: He is her best friend! Even if he was, why did it bother you?

Me: I'm sorry.

Amber: No Sabelo. No!

Me: Babe come on don't cry.

Amber: How can I not? You fought a man for kissing your ex. If you did not love her you wouldn't have!

Me: I'm sorry. I was drunk but I promise I do not love her. Not even one bit.

Amber: I'm gonna go fetch Sibbu.

She takes her bag and walk out. Shit!.....

.....

ZANELE

I feel like death. I passed by the pharmacy to get some headache pills. I push the door with my whole body. Is it usually this heavy?

Pearl is here. She is shooting. Oh dear lord.

Pearl: You are not at work?

Me: I tried trust me I tried but I was sent back home.

Pearl: You look horrible.

Me: We drank the whole bar last nigh where is the husband?

Pearl: At work.

Me: Oh. I'll be in my room. Please mix me one of your hangover smoothies.

Pearl: I'll bring it just now.

The heels feel like bricks. I hold on the rails for support. By God's grace I make it to the top. My phone rings. I reach for it in my bag.

Its Noma.

Me: Mfazi.

Noma: Go home right now and head to the beauty room.

Me: What is going on?

Noma: Mulo. Amantombazane see a child in Mulo's life and its not yours. Do you know what is going to happen if he sleeps with someone and gets them pregnant while he is not under the spell?

The hangover is gone.

Noma: Wash his clothes for this week with our water and make sure he wears them. If there is a woman, she will bleed to death if she touches him or if she touches her.

Tears are stinging my eyes. I hang up and run to the beauty room. I lock and take out my things. I light the candles and take a black one. I stick needles in it and I beat the mixture in the calabash. Tears are streaming down.

Me: Mantombazane...its me Siena the rising star. I am not shining enough, I hear you see a child. Let this candle be whomever might carry that bastard. Ley her feel the pains of these needles. I want her to die! Take Mulo back. Be in charge of him. He would rather die. Ley them both die if he's gonna do that to me! I demand death to that woman!

Pearl: ZANELE! ZANELE HELP!

I get up and rush out.

Me: What?

Mulo is lying on the floor bleeding from his nose and ears. He is curling himself..

Me: Babe...whats-what's going on?

I am touching him but he cries loudly.

Pearl: He said he feels needles all over his body and then he fell and started bleeding. I've called Pele and the ambulance.

I sit next to him and watch him. If he has another woman then he must die. If he cannot be mine alone then nobody else can have him.....

PELE

I am driving like a madman. I probably have 20 tickets because the road has cameras everywhere now. I hope Makhosi Bobo has arrived.

When Pearl called and told me he is bleeding from his mouth and nose and ears. I called Makhosi Bobo asap and drove here.

He is outside the gate with his thwasana. I hop off and rush to him.

Me: Didn't they let you in?

I press the intercom.

Me: Zanele open the gate.

Bobo: I cannot go in there. That bitch got bad vibes. Your brother is in great danger and so is the baby. You need to find the mother and feed her this. I cannot free your brother from this woman because he locked himself in the day he said I do.

Rub this in his nose and a drop of this in his mouth. He shall be fine instantly. I am out of here and never contact me to come to you Zulu. I left a client at home.

I nod. I look at the sky. I am not going to cry. I have to be strong. But how! If I lost him it would be just me without anyone.

The gate slides. I go in followed by the ambulance.

He is lying on the floor. She is sitting next to him crying. I've always known she did something to him. I push her off.

I rub the concoction on his nose and open his mouth and feed him the drop.

She gets up and tries to push me aside.

Zanele: What do you think you are doing?

Me: Ei ei ei! Phuma kimi Zanele. Do you see what you are doing to him? You're going to kill him. And if he dies I am gonna kill you. Do you hear me!

Pearl: Mageba please.

I didn't realize I was pressing her against the counter. I let go of her. Pearl holds me.

Pearl: Its okay its okay. He is gonna be fine.

I hear a gasp. I turn. He is coughing. I move from Pearl and pull him up.

Me: Are you okay?

Mulo: No.

He looks lost. His eyes wander around.

Mulo: Where is Zanele?

Me: Hey hey stop.

He's stumbling.

Me: Are you feeling dizzy?

Mull: Let go of me. I need to find Zanele.

She comes out of nowhere. He hugs her for dear life.

Mulo: I love you. I don't ever want to ne away from you. I don't want anybody else but you.

Zanele: Its okay. I love you more sthandwa sam.

She brings her eyes up to me and smirks. Nx.

I pick my Keys from the floor and head out. I can't stand her....

....

ZIMASA

I landed 2 hours ago and I wasn't feeling well. I concluded the pregnancy is making me sick but its getting worse. I feel stinging on my lower abdomen. I kick the fleece off and try to get out of bed. I am feeling cold. Its still sunny outside but I am shivering.

I close the window. The pains persist. I hold on to the couch and take a deep breath. Thee stop. I check the time. Its still early, some doctors could still be open. I search for nearby surgeries and request a ride. I need to pee.

I rush to the toilet and pee. I get out and there is black hand print on the neat side of the bed. A little hand. What on earth could be this?

I feel woozy. I try to be strong but I keep getting pulled to this dark place. I am screaming for help but my voice isn't coming out. I hear drums, humming, ululation, I smell fire.

As soon as I realize I am floating in the air. I am thrown down next to the fire. I open my eyes. I can't see their faces but they are carrying a very heavy and scary aura. The fire is burning my skin. I can't move. They surround me and sing and dance, drums, I can't stand the noise. My tears are the only thing moving.

“Mantombaze this sacrifice was handed to us by Siena.”

They cheer up and the flames rise high. She...I can tell by the voice. She pulls out a shining sword.

The cheering again. She put a foot on my neck and screams.

“I can't. I can't kill her.”

“Why? Just slaughter her we're hungry!”

“She....she is....oh no. We must only eat the fetus. She is....”

She falls down.

“You're weak!” another foot on the neck. A much heavy and stronger one.

I can't see her face either. She tries to slaughter me but she seems frozen.

“She is right...we can't....mantombazane. hold her legs. We will have to take the fetus.”

No no no no no. Please! Nkazimulo is going to kill me! What did I do to them?

My legs are spread apart. I wanna fight but every part of me is numb.....

I feel a hand being forced into my vagina. I am screaming in my head, begging them to stop

but....i feel an excruciating pain in my womb as is I am being ripped.

“I got it. It was gonna be a boy!”

She gets up and dance and place what would have developed to be our son in a bowl.

“Let her go!”

I gasp. I am on the cold tiles. It was a dream.....no Why am I on the floor? I try to get up. I am laying on a pool of blood. My jeans are torn. My heart races. What happened to me. The abdominal pains shoot again, stronger. I try to get up. I can't. I am shivering. I am crying.

Me: Help!!!!

I sob loud. I need someone to hear me and I need these pains to numb because they are killing me.

Me: Heell....

My body can't take this...light out.....

.....

ZANELE

He is sleeping peacefully. Who the hell does Pele think he is coming here and feeding him things. And he is back under the spell. Now I can sleep freely at night. And if there was a bitch or a child then amantombazane have dealt with them by now.

I kiss him and go out. I need to make him his favourite food because when he wakes up he is going to be a changed man.

I sent Pearl home after she didn't come clean about whether she is dating that barbarian Pele Zulu or not. I could see the way she calmed him down. Why would he listen to her if they are not fucking.

I put on my earpods and jam to our marriage songs and start cooking. I am that bitch who always gets her way. I did not sacrifice my whole family just for my husband to have a sidechick and a bastard child.....

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PELE

She calls my name, as I am about to respond she comes out of the sliding door. She gives me a bowl of popcorn and kisses me. She sits on the other chair.

The air is a bit cold but this balcony is where I'd be.

Pearl: I don't think I can work for her anymore.

Me: But you love it there.

Pearl: Not anymore. You should've heard her asking me if we are together as if it was any of her business. I am honestly starting to see that side of her you always talk about.

Me: I'm worried about him

Pearl: I know. Me too. A part of me wants to continue just to keep an eye on him.

Me: I don't know what I'd do if anything was to happen to him.

Pearl: Try to help him. He needs you.

My phone rings. She gets up and head back in.

Me: Mike.

Mike: I can't reach Zimasa. She is not at her place. They say she left this morning. They don't know where she went.

Me: Okay thank you.

I tap my foot and clench my fists. Bobo gave me strict instructions to find her or else something bad might happen.

I call Nkazi. It rings for a while before she answers.

Zanele: Mulo is eating

Me: Give him the phone.

Zanele: We don't take calls while eating in this home. Call later.

She hangs up. When is this bitch dying!

I warned Nkazimulo about this woman. A month into their relationship she was already making him ditch his friends just to be her only friend and he was head over heels, he did everything she told him to do. Mother never approved of her and now I can see the devil mom saw.....

.....A DAY LATER.....

I glance at my watch. He should be here. I have been failing to reach him yesterday so today he went back to work and I am camping outside Mike's place. I see the car approach. He pulls up and hop out. He opens the door and the little girl hops out. He opens the gate for her.

No laughing or small talk. Not even a hug or holding hands. This little girl is Mulo's shining amor. There is just no way he could not talk to her unless a lot is happening with him. I hop out as soon as he close the gate.

Me: Mageba.

Nkazi: Pele

Me: You've been hard to reach.

Nkazi: So you decided to stalk me.

Me: It was the best option. Why are you avoiding me?.

Nkazi: I'm not

Me: When last did you see the mother of your child?

He shrugs.

Me: Do you still remember what Makhosi Bobo said? Are you protecting her?

Nkazi: That makes you happy does it not?

Me: what?

Nkazi: That I cheated on my wife.

Me: Uyangihlanyela ke manje. Did I send you to fuck that girl?

Nkazi: You're here asking me about her. I don't care where she is. You've been trying to get between me and my wife for so long and I always let you. Leave us alone.

I grab him and pin him against the car.

Me: Just fucking wake up Nkazimulo! She is carrying your child! And she could be in serious danger wherever she is.

Nkazi: Why don't you look for her since you care so much about her.

He is gone...

I have lost my brother. This isn't him. This is just a Nkazimulo Zulu shell, there is a stranger in there. I

let go of him, defeated. I walk away from him slowly.....

.....

ZANELE

It's a wine Wednesday with the girls. They decided to visit me today at work. I brought the most costly wine on my cabinet and glasses. Lily outdid herself with the set up. I am impressed. I sit down and wait for them. They said they are coming up.

They get in. We hug and sit down. Khosi pour us wine and we clink the glasses.

Noma: You are glowing.

Me: How could I not? My man is back and ohh boy did I not this much loving!

They laugh.

Me: I think there was a child and a woman though but it doesn't matter anymore cause he is never gonna be with anyone else.

Khosi: Why do you think so?

Me: I told amantombazane I am sacrificing the baby mama and the baby for him to be back under the spell without any complications and here we are, he is back and there are no migraines.

Noma: Aren't you curious who was it?

Me: Not at all. I'd rather not know. Enough about me. How's everything?

Khosi: Everything is fine on my side.

Noma: Me too except, I've been dreaming a lot about Sydeny.

Khosi: Let her go and stop beating yourself up.

Noma: Its my husband. He doesn't say it but I can see he is dying inside. He misses her so much.

Me: He's gonna be fine.

Khosi: Yeah.

Noma: To a good peaceful life.

We raise our glasses and drink.....

.....

PELE

I thought I was gonna wait for long since I do not have an appointment butt it is now my turn. I sit before him. He drums.

Bobo: He was given enough rope to hang himself and he did. Right now he has kicked off whatever it is that he used to reach the rope and he's realizing what he's but its too late. No one can help him off because he started the fire around the house and locked the door but her....she is not afraid of fire. She is going to pass through and get to him and get him off but every now and then he is going to hang himself and she is gonna keep getting him off unfortunately the baby is gone.

He gets up and leaves me there confused. I am trying to make out what he means but I don't understand a thing. I get up and head out.....

.....LATER IN THE DAY.....

ZIMASA

I have been awake for hours but I close my eyes when a dr or nurse comes in. I heard them talking that I was brought in by a gentleman who works that who said he found me laying on the floor when he came to bring me a drink.

I am not ready to wake up and face my pain. I am not ready to wake up and face my reality. The pillow is soaking wet. I can't stop crying. I touch my stomach. I sob silently. My head hurts. I turn to face the other side. I see my phone. I need Martha. I reach for it. It is fully charged. It was on top of the bed he must've taken it and charged it.

I call Martha. She does not pick up. I call Mike. He picks up almost immediately.

Mike: Oh thank heavens. I've been trying to get ahold of you.

I sniffle. I wish he was here.

Mike: Are you okay?

Me: The baby is gone.

I cry even more. It breaks my heart to say it.

Mike: No Candy. Where are you? What happened?

Me: I'm in Durban. I came here to clear my head.
To adjust to this journey I was about to take
and.....I had this dream. All I remember is that it
was bad and I woke up and I was bleeding.

Mike: Please text me the name of the hospital
you're in and I'm gonna be there tomorrow okay.
I'm so sorry my love.

Me: He's going to think I terminated.

Mike: Nobody cares what that dickhead thinks.
Just focus on being okay. I love you.

Me: I love you too. Thanks.

I hang up. I stay for a while in bed and then get up
and head to the shower. The other patients are
sleeping. I just wanna be out of here.

I get into the bathroom. It is clean. That is why I prefer bathing in the evening. I fill the tub while I sit on the edge. I feel lighter. The bleeding almost killed me. They had to clean me and stop it. I could feel the pains in the womb. I wish I remembered what that dream was about.

I close the taps and undress. I get into the water and sit. I am honestly tired of crying. I don't wanna think about it but its been on my mind all day. I have been planning on doing it. I don't know what might happen if I did it today. It helped me before.

“Zimasa”

My insides turn. It's a different cologne but the cigarette-minty-cardberry scent is taking over. I wanna bring my eyes up but I can't. Why am I so scared? What is he doing here? How did he know where I was?

Nkazi: Why are you here?

Me: I'm sick.

I'm so nervous. I wish I hadn't kept on saying “If I decide to keep it” because now, nothing I am gonna say will sound true to him.

Nkazi: Why?

He is still standing at the door. He's calm and it's a dark situation.

Me: The baby....its gone. And I promise you I did not abort it. I was going to stand being controlled by you for the next....for the next 8 months because I understood how much you wanted a child. You are an asshole but I wasn't gonna rob you off that. I wasn't.

He sniffles. Is he crying? Ohh this is bad.

Me: Nkazi.

He undresses. He better not want us to have a baby making dance. I gets into the tub and sits, leaning on the other end.

Nkazi: Come here.

I'm not too sure about this one but I do. I really need comfort. Even if its from the rude bastard its okay. Tears are just flowing down his face. He is the one that needs comfort.

Me: No you come here.

He does.

I hold him. My legs on the either sides on his waist. He is pressing me against him and sobbing so painfully it shutters my heart.

Me: I'm sorry.

Nkazi: It wasn't your fault.

Me: Maybe I shouldn't have tried to be away.

Maybe if I stayed....

He moves me off and cups my face.

Nkazi: Hey, look at me.

I can't!

Nkazi: Zimasa.

My hoe eyes look at him without my consent!

Nobody says my name like this. He literally sent shivers down my spine.

Nkazi: It was not your fault. I should've been here to protect you. It hurts but its done. You have your life back and you can live it as you planned.

Me: Don't you want a child?

He looks down

Nkazi: I'm scared. I'm going to take you home tomorrow after you get discharged and that will be the last time we see each other. We can both go back to our lives and try to forget about all this.

He kisses my forehead and gets up. He's dressing up. He is leaving the knife in my heart. He is walking out.

Hhaibo jesu make the tears stop...

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ZIMASA

I can't just let him go. I love him and I want to give him another child if that's what it takes for him to stay. I get out of the tub and chase after him. I am failing to run. I can't cry and run at the same time.

“MISS! MISS HLONGWANE!”

I jump when a cold object is placed on my chest. There's people over me. I am being wheeled. What is happening?

I am coughing water. I am trying to think what happened. All I remember is getting into the tub and thinking of doing it. I must've done it and hallucinated about Nkazi.

“What happened?”

“She was committing suicide. I told you to put her through counselling because we saw her medical history but none of you ever listens to me”

“She's always sleeping when we get to the ward.”

“Pump the water out of her”

Me: I'm fine.

I try to get up. Why is it so bright in here.

Nurse: Miss please stay still.

Me: I said I'm fine! And I wasn't trying to commit suicide. I was meditating and I got lost in the moment.

Nurse: Drowning isn't meditation

Me: For you. For me it is.

I get off the stretcher and head out. I don't know where the ward I was in at.

I go back.

Me: Please take me to my ward.

She rolls her eyes and comes.

Nurse: This way

I follow her. For a moment I thought I was 9ff Nkazi's bad books but now I'm even more worried because there is no way in hell he can be that sweet and understanding. It was too good to be true. But I am ready for whatever it is that he's gonna say when he finds out.....

.....

MIKE

I didn't tell him where we are going. I just told him to come with me to Durban and he agreed after asking from his wife. I'm wondering if he wouldn't have come if she said no. Enhle and I stayed up until midnight trying to get a jet that would've flew this morning. We didn't find any until the Obins agreed to swap slots and we took theirs.

The drive to King Albert Luthuli hospital from the airport is quiet. We are all tired. We woke up at 4.

We get there. He opens the door for Enhle.

Me: I'll find you inside.

Enhle: Okay.

Me: Candy is here.

Nkazi: Doing what?

Me: She lost the baby.

Nkazi: Ok.

Me: Do you wanna come in?

Nkazi: That is not on my-

Me: Forget it.

I leave him there. I am not in the mood for his bullshit. Not so long ago he was a normal man but he's this thing I do not recognize. She must have renewed her bhekamina ngedwa. Nkazi wouldn't have been so chilled knowing Zimasa is not where he can see her. His behaviour does not make sense.

I find them hugging and crying. We've lost a baby before. The wounds are refreshed.

I stand below the bed until they calm down. The dr gets in and tells her to sign.

Dr: You'll pass by the pharmacy and get your meds.

Me: Can we buy them?

Dr: Of course.

I take the picture of the meds.

Me: We can go now.

Enhle holds her hand and we walk out....

.....

ZIMASA

I fought to be discharged. I hate hospitals and I wanted to be alone and deal with this the best way I know how.

I wasn't really trying to kill myself last night. I would never do that to people I love.

My heart skips a beat when I see him holding the door open for Enhle. Why did Mike bring him!

I keep my eyes down until I get in the car. He slams the door and gets in and drive off. If Mike does not tell him to slow down then we are going to die.

Mike: Nkazi. We don't have spare lives.

He slows down. I take a deep breath.

Enhle: We booked in the city center.

Me: We stayed at Umhlanga. All of my stuff is there.

Mike: Nkazi and I will fetch them.

Me: No. I wanna go there.

Enhle: Great then leave us at gateway so I can get your meds and groceries.

Mike: Are you gonna be fine?

I nod.

Mike: Leave us at Getway Geba.

The drive is long and quiet.

After what feels like 40 hours we arrive at the mall and leave the couple and he speeds off. I put the location and give him the phone.

Me: I-

Partition!

Did he specify at Avis that he wants a car with a partition? This guy.

He is driving like we have spare lives and there is nothing I can do about it.

In 30 minutes he stops. We are here. I get off and head in. I explain myself and ask the lady for the keys. She gives me and I climb up the stairs. I feel him behind me. What if he kills me?

I unlock and get in. He does too and close the door. I am very brave but right now I am an inch from peeing myself.

I head to the bedroom. He's on my heels. I go straight to the wardrobe where my stuff is. He's not behind me. I let out a trembling breath and take my purse. That is all I brought

I turn. He is standing on the exact spot I fell on that day. He's staring at me. I am staring back.

Nkazi: So you decided you were not gonna keep it.

Me: Excuse me?

Nkazi: I didn't stutter, did I?

Me: Please take me to Mike.

Nkazi: We are talking.

Me: Well if you are gonna be an asshole about it then I am not interested in this conversation.

Nkazi: I wanna know what did you do to my child!

Me: Don't raise your voice at me. I beg of you.

Why can't you ask me calmly like a normal human being?

Nkazi: Calmly? You fucking kill my child and you want me to be calm?

Me: I didn't kill it!

Nkazi: Oh you did. What were you doing here?

Me: I came to clear my head.

Nkazi: And didn't tell me? Or anyone close to you? That sounds like someone who wanted to do abortion so far away and lie about getting a miscarriage.

I so wish that dream was real.

Me: listen here you son of a bitch. I don't owe you anything. If I wanted to kill that baby I would've, I was going to kill it that very night I found out. But I didn't! I was willing to deal with your pathetic controlling ass because I understood that you

really wanted to be a dad! Tell me why would I abort it now!

Nkazi: Because you did not want it. That is no secret. I don't know why I thought I could trust a mahosha.

I throw the bloody bag at him.

Me: fuck you. Just fuck off you pathetic asshole.

Nkazi: I hate you. With every fibre in me.

Me: Well that makes the two of us. If you want a child then tell your wife to give you one. Jusf get the fuck out of my face.

He clucks and head out. Hd slams the door.

Me: fuck you!!

I sit on the bed and cry. Seriously? What an asshole. I wish I remembered what that dream was about.....

.....

NKAZIMULO ZULU

They say indoda ayokhali but how does one just stays strong after losing one thing they would have

given up everything to save. I kept an eye on her every single time. I made sure she is safe. I don't understand how she slipped and came here. If only she didn't try to oppose me everytime maybe the baby would still be here.

I can't see the road. The tears are clouding my eyes. I pull up to the side. My phone rings. I wish she could just leave me alone for a day or 2 or a week, a month or years. I am tired!

Me: Mamkhosi.

Zanele: Geba. Have you arrived.

Me: Yes. 3 hours ago.

Zanele: You don't sound fine.

Me: I am. Its just the humidity here. You know how I get.

Zanele: Well say no more cause I am here at. Southern Sun waiting for you with your medication.

Me: Here where?

Zanele: Durban.

Shit.

Me: Okay. I'll call you when I'm done here.

Zanele: Okay. Bye baby.

Me: Bye.

I can't just leave her there. I turn back. There is a lot of conflict going on in my head. I want to run where Zanele is but the need to go back and take take Zimasa is overpowering that.

I find her about to sit on the pavement but she walks off when she sees the car.

Me: Get in the car.

She continue walking.

Me: Get in the car candy jar.

She stops.

Zimasa: Leave me alone. Okay? Just fucking leave me alone!

She continue walking.

Me: I can't. I am doing my job. My boss is going to kill me if I leave you here.

Zimasa: Oh imagine a world without you.
Peaceful.

Me: seriously. Get in the car and I'm not going to repeat myself.

She stops again.

Zimasa: Why? So that you can be mean to me and call me mahosha? Do you even know my real name?

Me: No and I do not want to. Get in the fucking car woman.

Zimasa: See? You don't know what humanity is. Maybe your wife won't give you children because she sees that the world does not need another arrogant bastard like you. I just lost a child, I don't know how but instead of comforting me you are accusing me of termination. I would rather walk to city centre than to be in a car with you.

I stop the car and hop out. She increase her pace. I run and reach her. I pick her up. She screams.

Me: Not in this neighbourhood. Nobody hears a thing. I put her in the car and lock the doors while I go to mine. I unlock and quickly get in and lock them again before she tries to open it.

Me: Calm down. Would you?

I speed off...

SPONSORED

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ZANELE

Everything is perfect. These girls deserve a 100% tip. Time flies. Its his birthday in 3 hours. We will be having a pre celebration. I booked this lovely planner to set us a little something intimate. He is about to knock off. I know this is gonna cheer him up. I take a picture of me in my robe and send it to him.

“Waiting to be taken off by you”

I pour a glass of wine and wait for my husband....

....

NKAZJMULO ZULU

I have been sitting here. I don't know what is going on. I don't know where to go. Its crazy I know. My wife is just 5 minutes away, I should be driving there. That's where I belong but that freaking Mahosha just won't get out of my mind. I am scared I might call her name when I make love to my wife.

Funny how I felt absolutely nothing for her. I didn't even care that she existed and pregnant. But the minute we got to the hospital something changed. I don't know what It was and I don't know what it is but I feel this everytime in her presence. She feels safe to be around. It feels like it is okay to cry but I could never let myself feel that. I have a wife. And she's waiting for me in a hotel room. But I can't go. The lights in her room are still on. She is still awake, probably crying. Let

me go check on her. I turn my phone off and get out of the car and lock it. I head in.

I explain myself in the reception and lie that she is my wife we fought and she won't let me in. She asked one of the ladies to take me to the room. I could be a killer. This hotel is not safe.

She opens the door and goes in. She comes out.

Her: There is no one here.

Me: Oh she's probably out for a moment. Can I wait?

Her: Yes. Security will be out to make sure you-

Me: I wouldn't do anything to her.

She nods and walks off. 3 guys come and stand by the door.

Me: eita.

Them: Sure.

I open the door and go in. It smells of the scent I try to scrub off me every freaking day. At first I couldn't get myself to be close to my wife. I felt like she would smell it too but she did not. It haunts me and only me.

I hear a snuffle from the bathroom. I walk there. She is on the phone.

She sees me on the mirror. She wipes her tears.

Zimasa: Babe let me call you later. Okay I love you.

She put the phone down.

Me: You said you were a single woman.

Zimasa: How can I help you Nkazimulo?

Me: I came to see if you're okay.

Zimasa: Well you can see that I'm fine.

Me: Come here.

Zimasa: Go away please. I want to be alone.

Me: Do you love him?

She takes and deep breath and turns.

Zimasa: Is your bed itchy or does it have thorns?

Me: I came to put you into bed. Its after 10. You should be sleeping, medication needs to work on you.

She laughs.

Zimasa: Oh you care now? Funny guy.

Me: I don't. Mike sent me to tell you to go to bed.

Zimasa: Well tell him I don't wanna sleep yet.

Me: Go to bed Candy! Why are you so stubborn!

Zimasa: Because you're trying to control me! Just stop! I'm gonna tell Mike that I don't want you popping up in my space anymore because I'm done with whatever made us communicate. Give me my space.

Me: I didn't get one thing you were saying. Come, bed time.

I pull her. She lets me. Good girl. I peel the blanket off, she gets in. I cover her. She's cute.

Me: You look like a dirty sweetpotato.

Zimasa: Get out.

Me: No. I'm gonna read you a bed time story...but first. Did you have sex with your boyfriend while carrying my child?

Zimasa: Yes. Lots of it.

Me: Did he know you fucked a man in the dark and fell pregnant?

Zimasa: Yes but he said its fine cause there is no dick as good as his.

Me: So he's okay with you being a mohosha.

Zimasa: Yes. He knows it brings the food to the table.

Me: Oh he doesn't work?

Zimasa: No. Why would he work? He has a girlfriend that is a mahosha, she hands in poles zobufebe and gets paid for it.

She smiles.

Me: Pathetic.

I turn off the lights and sit on the couch....

.....

ZIMASA

OH I won this round. He's full of shit. First thing tomorrow I am going to tell Mike that I do not wa-

He climbs next to me and pull me closer. He's wearing only his boxers. I feel my blood rush to my feet. I am covering my head, I can smell all of him. I wish I wasn't attracted to him in a kind of a way. As arrogant as he is I find him very attractive. The questions that he just asked, I had fun answering them. I always let him get under my skin and I could see he was annoyed as he asked more questions. What is this?

Nkazi: I'm so sorry about the baby. I know what happened. I saw it when I stood there in that apartment. I'm sorry you had to go through that. I know I am an asshole and I will never change but I am sorry for bringing you into my mess.

If I say anything now the asshole mode is going to be activated.

Nkazi: I hope you heal. You get to live your life as planned. I would've loved to have a child with you though. Its not everyday a man have a child with-

Me: Umahosha.

Nkazi: No. A stranger. Why are you still awake?

Me: Because I'm not sure if you going to strangle me in my sleep or what.

Nkazi: You're safe here with me. I don't like you but I wouldn't kill you.

Can he always be this nice?.....

.....

NKAZIMULO ZULU

Its 02:35. I walked here. I hoped one of the junkies will target me and try to rob me and kill me. Not that I'm tired of living but to avoid what could happen if I continue to see her.

Seems like its someone's birthday.

She is awake. Drinking wine. She is wide awake. There is an empty bottle in her feet, the one in the table is almost empty. I reek of Zimasa and today, if she gets close she is going to smell her for sure.

Zanele: Happy Birthday love.

Oh its mine.

Me: Thank you.

I don't know but I am disgusted by all these balloons.

Zanele: What happened to your phone?

Me: The battery died. Mike and I went for drinks. I just need a bath.

Zanele: You smell very rosey.

Me: Yeah. I hugged Enhle.

Zanele: Can you please look at me?

I take a deep breath and I do look at her.

Zanele: What is going on. I thought you'd be happy.

Me: Oh. Happy about turning 31 with just a wife no children? Nice.

Zanele: I thought you didn't want children anymore.

Me: I just want water and a bed please.

She follows me.

Zanele: So there was a woman and a child?

She is crying. I wish I had time to honestly nurse her feeling but today is just not that day dear Lord!

I undress.

Zanele: Nkazimulo!

Me: What!

Zanele: Who was she!

Me: Who?

Zanele: The woman who was going to have your child.

Me: What woman?

Zanele: That is why you said you were going to stop pressuring me with a child. You knew you

were gonna have a child with her, you broke the vows Nkazimulo. You committed adultery. How could you do this to us? How could you Mulo?

She sobs.

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

I turn the shower on and get under it. She knows.

Zanele: No woman will have you and get to live.

Do you hear me Nkazimulo Zulu. You are mine!

You belong to me! Its gonna be us till the end. She was the first and the last to ever get to fuck you.

Do you hear me!?

Me: I hear you.

She slams the door. I turn the shower off. The only way I can protect Zimasa is to be far away from her as possible....

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ZANELE

I tried to sleep but I could not. In a space of 4 weeks not being under a spell he found a woman and impregnated her? That is not like my husband. Under a spell or not, he would never cheat on me but my gut feeling is certain that there was a woman and she was pregnant.

I have been watching him sleep. Its almost 6am, he is about wake up and go to drive another man, who is his age but calling him boss. I get up and burn my incense. Today. He is going to tell me the whole truth when he wakes up. I spread the smoke all over him and put it out. I pull a chair and sit beside the bed.

Me: Nkazimulo.

He doesn't move. I tap him on the shoulder. He open his eyes and frown.

Me: Who is she?

He sits up straight and do the nkum nkum sound.

Mulo: Who?

Me: The woman you slept with.

Mulo: I never slept with anyone. What is this smoke?

Me: Incense. I was meditating.

Why is he aware of his surroundings? He should be a robot and answering every question truthfully and doing exactly what I tell him. He takes a deep breath and comes to sit on the edge of the bed opposite me.

Mulo: Sthandwa sam.

He takes my hands and kiss them.

Mulo: There is no one. There has never been anyone and there will never be anyone. Yes I've thought of it but I've thought of you more, what it would do to you, to us, our marriage, your hardwork and people close to us. Or that woman, would she be happy? Being with a man who does not love her but wants a child or children from her. Would she stay? Would she agree? So all the answers to these questions are no and bad. I do

need a child, desperately. But I do not need it more than I need you in my life. You're the only family I have, Pele is here but not as you are. You are very special to me Mamkhosini. I love you and only you.

I am crying. He knows how to calm my nerves. Maybe I have been too caught up in what Nomalanga saw. I knew that it was possible hence i felt sure that it did but either way. They are both dead, even if they were there. So I guess it does not matter anymore.

Me: I love you too.

Mulo: I am going to quit working for Mike. Can you talk to your friend for me? Nothing too fancy. Fixing anything would be fine.

Is he for real? I attack him with a hug.

Me: Are you for real? I will talk to him

Mulo: I am all about you Mrs Zulu. I live to make you happy.

Me: I love you so much...but why? Why are you quitting?

Mulo: I knocked off at 2am. I got here and I was accused of cheating, as if.

I laugh.

Me: Let's bath and go eat break fast

Mulo: I think I should go to Mike first.

Me: I will just work till you get back.

Mulo: Ok.

We kiss and I get off him. He gets up and dresses up....

.....

ZIMASA

I open my eyes. He's not here. Married men!

I hop out of bed and head to the bathroom. My phone rings as I am about to sit on the toilet. I race to the bed and take it.

Me: Hey babe.

Martha: When are you coming back?

Me: Today.

Martha: Sabelo was arrested last night. Your sister called me asking where you are.

Me: She must not dare and try me. She must do everything I did to keep that man out of jail. That is the least of their problems. There is a storm coming their way.

Martha: I've got goosebumps. Oh how are you this morning?

Me: I am good. Nkazi put me to bed last night after your call.

Martha: Who is Nkazi?

Me: Oh the rude bastard but he was nice last night and he comforted me. There is some strong connection between us but the signal is strong enough.

Martha: What are you talking about? You like him?

Me: I don't know but I felt it last night when he held me. Nothing else mattered. I wished I could stay there forever, he took away all the pain..

Martha: That sounds very deep and fucked up cause he is married.

Me: I know.

There's a knock at the door. This door, was the main door unlocked? Oh shit Nkazi. He didn't lock!

I pull my shorts up and head to open.

Ok.

Me: Hi.

Him: Who are you and what are you doing in my room?

He reeks of alcohol.

Me: I think you are in a wrong room. This is my room.

Him: This is my room. I slept here.

Me: Where?

Him: On the couch.

Me: You used the key to get in?

Him: No.

His phone rings. He takes it out and answer.

Him: Shit.

He laughs.

Him: I'm so sorry. I was sloshed last night I think its because the door was unlocked. My room is next door.

Me: Its okay. At least you got to the couch.

He chuckles.

Him: Lindo.

Me: Zimasa.

We shake hands.

Such a gentleman. Just ugly.....

.....

MIKE

She sits down.

Enhle: Isn't Zim going to join us?

Me: I'm not sure. Plus she's a sleepy head. She's probably still in bed.

Enhle: Thanks to her this marriage would be over. I know you are not that romantic

Me: Aw baby. I am very romantic.

Enhle: In your dreams. I skipped a month.

Me: Why?

Enhle: I don't know.

Me: We had sex once last month.

Enhle: I was not taking the pill because I had decided to be single.

Me: And you didn't warn me.

Enhle: We were not talking...well I was not talking to you.

Me: So there could be a baby. My God.

She laughs.

Me: Its not funny Mbalenhle. Well its not too late to be a deadbeat.

Enhle: Pregnancy differs bave. It could not be like last time. Plus I was going to tell you we should have another child that day your baby mama arrived.

Me: So you want a huge belly?

Enhle: Its worth it. Kayla is 6. We have to have another child before we hold on too her too much.

Me: Makes sense....but a pregnant wife? Yoh.

She laughs and drink her juice.

There's a knock at the door.

Enhle: Ohh that could be Zim girl.

I told her she'd laugh her. Zim bas this love me energy, get bored without me kind of vibe..

I get up and head to the door. Its Mulo.

Me: Ndabezitha.

Mulo: Can you come out? We need to talk.

Me: Is everything okay?

Mulo: No.

I go out. He closes the door.

Mulo: I quit.

Me: What?

Mulo: Yes. With immediate effect.

Me: Whoa whoa whoa. What-What are you talking about?

Mulo: I don't wanna be your driver anymore.

Me: Is this about Zimasa?

Mulo: I don't give a fuck about that Zimasa of yours. I am doing this for my wife.

Me: You're joking right?

Mulo: I'm done here.

He turns into Zimasa. She is fuming. She slaps him across the face. This is my cue....

.....

ZIMASA

He holds my hand as I am about to slap him again.

Me: I hate you. Do you hear me? I fucking hate you!

Nkazi: That makes the 2 of us. And don't ever slap me. I will strangle you to death.

Me: I would like to see you try.

He pushes me out of his way. I can't stop crying...

And I can't just let him go. I chase after him.

Me: Nkazi!

He keeps on walking. Faster.

Me: Nkazimulo Zulu!

He stops immediately. I am tired of running. I get to him.

Me: Do you not feel it? Is it just me?

Nkazi: Feel what muntu wenkosi.

Me: The connection. Last night, did you not feel it when you held me? If you do not feel it then why did you get in bed with me and held me?

Nkazi: I was doing what I was advised to do to comfort you sisi.

Me: Are you not in denial Nkazimulo?

Nkazi: No. I have a wife that I love. I have done things in my life but I would never have a thing for a woman that does your kind of a job okay? You lack morals.

Me: It sounds like you're trying to convince me.

Nkazi: Mahosha listen here. We may have fucked and I held you last night but none of it meant anything to me okay? You got the wrong signal.

Me: Its fine. You keep well.

I leave him standing there. I dry my face. I am not wasting my tears on this moron. Maybe there is no connection. He was just there when I needed comfort....

****3 MONTHS LATER***

SPONSORED

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ZIMASA

My uterus shakes me up. His hand on my cheek. His head is leaning on the back of the couch. He's gone. Every single night when he's here we promise each other that we won't let it happen again but every single day it happens and when I wake him up he's gonna say it is my fault.

I get up. It's a few minutes after 1. I turn off the tv and go to the bathroom. I moved into my place permanently after we decided to make things official cause he is always here. Well sometimes if I am lazy to drive from work I sleep at Mike's but that has happened 3 or 4 times in the last 10 weeks.

I pee and go to fix the bed. I go back to the lounge to wake him up.

Lindo: What time is it?

Me: 1am. Come. I've fixed the bes.

Lindo: Shit my neck hurts. You need falling asleep in the middle of soupies.

Me: You should not let me.

Lindo: I let you sleep thinking I'll wake you when they end but like every time. I never see them end.

I laugh. I help him up and wait for him to turn so I can jump to his back. He races to the bedroom and throws me on the bed. He gets up and take off his tee. Honey those abs!

He looks so good in capri shorts and he knows it. He pulls me by my feet and press one knee on the bed and take my jeans off.

He tosses them on the rug and kneel below the bed and pulls me to the edge. This is a very nasty man.

He ate me out in the parking lot before our very first date. If he could I'm sure he'd reside in my vagina. Sometimes we gave a very serious conversation with my legs spread, him staring at me and my vagina. He shaves me. He is very sweet and as a fallist that I am. I have fallen deeply in love with him.

My legs are floating on his shoulder he's tongue deep in me. I am moaning, grabbing the sheet with one hand while I push his head in, God forbid he chokes on my clit or it gets stuck on his gap. But he's careful around it. He's French kissing it. I can't stay still I am slowly grinding, his one hand goes up to my boob. I help him squeeze it. Why is sex so good!

He stops and comes up to my mouth and we kiss. He's already naked. I feel it. He puts on a condom and kiss me again and insert himself. I gasp and hold him tight. He kisses my forehead and move slowly.....

.....

ZANELE

He flips over and I put the leg up. He holds my breast as he gets in and humps me for dear life. Weve been at it for minutes and I just want him to cum because its after 1am and we are going to work.

He's kissing my neck.

Mulo: I love you Candy.

He whispers.

Me: I love you too. Ahh...

He turns me to sleep on my stomach now and pound me hard and he collapse on top of me. Things has been so smooth, he even gave me a pet name. He says I am sweet like Candy. So he calls me by it every time we get nasty.

He gets off after a while. I wipe myself clean. He is on the balcony smoking. Something is up with

him today. He does not smoke unless he's anxious, angry or upset.

I put on a robe and go to him. I hug him from behind.

Me: What is going on?

Mulo: I dreamt of mom.

One thing about that woman. She doesn't want to die. People who were sacrificed never visit in dreams because they go to amantombazane. Why does he still dream of her!

Me: what was she saying.

Mulo: She said, "Never let Candy go. She is here to save you from your self because you are dangerous to yourself Nkazimulo. In a few months things are going to be hard for you. You will discover a lot of things, that are going to be too hard to handle or escape but with your by your side, you won't crumble."

Atleast I was not a villain.

Me: She was right. I am here to save you from yourself and to make sure you stand even on hard days.

He says nothing.

Me: We should sleep there is a lot going on later.

Mulo: Do we really have to go to tjis party?

Me: Yes. Its our friend's birthday. She came to yours. We can't miss hers.

Mulo: Why pickup Mike's palace? Its full of omahosha.

Me: They will not be working today.

Mulo: Better. He kills the loose and turns around. He picks me up ans we kiss.

Mulo: I just things to stay like this forever. Jhst the 2 of us. The last 3 months have been about us and I missed that.

Me: Me too babe.

Mulo: Let's skip the party and drive to Limpopo. A little getaway.

Me: We will only stay for an hour there okay and then we can go.

Mulo: Ok.

He walks back inside.....

....

ZIMASA

He finds me dancing with a butter knife in my hand.

Lindo: Whoa. Are in good terms?

Me: Why do you ask?

Lindo: I wanna know if its safe to come close.

I laugh. He's funny, that's mostly why I fell inlove with him.

Me: We are in good terms. Come give me my kiss.

He comes and kiss me.

Lindo: My brother just called me. My dad is flying home from England.

He's one of the cool kids. Imagine working just because you like to not because you have too.
Epic!

Me: So you have to leave?

Lindo: Yes.

Me: I was hoping we'll spend the weekend together.

Lindo: We can. Please come with me.

Me: I'd love too but I have agreed to play the aax at Mike's for this lady's party.

Lindo: I will return tomorrow evening then.

Me: Sounds like a plan...or I could just fly tonight after playing.

Lindo: Your mom.

Eish. Mom summoned me home.

Me: Ai I'll catch a flight tomorrow.

Lindo: I love you.

We kiss.

Me: And I love you

The door I kicked open.

Me: Excuse me!

It's the police. Big guns pointed at me.

"Miss Zamisa Hlongwane"

Me: Yes.

"You're under arrest for being an accomplice to murder"

Me: What?

It all happens too fast. Lindo is telling me to calm down is coming while I am being dragged away. I am crying, what is going on!!!.....

39

ZIMASA

I don't know what to say anymore. Not even screaming that I do not know this woman is going to be clear enough for them to get it that I do not know her!

I am hungry and tired. Its almost 2pm. Mike does not even know that I am here. They left me here by myself about an hour ago. I keep looking at the picture. God knows I am not a murderer and I have never seen this woman in my life.

The door opens. It's a femsle detective followed by a male one that had been questioning me.

Male D: Gained your memory?

Female D: You better talk cause the dark room is waiting for you if you don't.

Male D: By dark room she means the truth is gonna be electrocuted out of you.

Me: No please I swear. I do not know her.

There is commotion outside. The door swings open. It's a man that looks like Lindo but a bit short. He's something in the SAPS community.

Him: I hear you arrest people without warrants.

They look scared. They stutter.

Him: Miss Hlongwane please follow me.

I don't need him to repeat. I am on my feet heading to the door.

He is shouting at everyone. Everyone seems to be on their toes. We get into an office. He gives me water. The door opens. Lindo walks in. I get up and hug me.

Lindo: Can you make it go away?

Him: Take her home. I will deal with this.

He pulls me. What is happening here?

The stares as we head out. I thank God when we get to the car.

Me: Who was that?

Lindo: My brother. He's a constable.

Me: Am I off the hook?

Lindo: Yes. He said something about you helping the soccer star get rid of the murder evidence. So that's what makes you an accomplice. Did you?

Me: I might have, not knowing. I really hate that man.

Lindo: Just don't be that oerson. Never do anything to save a man's skin, especially something he brought unto himself.

Me: Now I know.

Lindo: I will wait for you to perform there and go to your mom's tomorrow then we can fly later. I'd like you to meet my family. We won't stay at a hotel.

Me: Really? I'd love too.

He takes my hand and kisses it. What would've became of me if he didn't have a brother there? I wish death upon Sabelo. Selling me out? Really? Such a low life....

....LATER.....

It is packed. Lindo decided against coming here. He said he will fetch me when I am done playing. Truth is, I don't wanna be here. I'd be snuggled up on my mans watching transporter for the 1000th time. He is obsessed with it.

I go to my room and wait there. There is people everywhere. I sit in front of the dresser and take out my red lipstick and apply it. I put on a mask. I put on a flower clip on my little afro. I text Sushi to bring me the dress and the sax.

I look so beautiful. I hate playing, I just miss my dad. I wonder if things could've turned out different for me if he wad still here. I wouldn't be here playing Sax. I would probably be overseas.

Amber wouldn't have dated Sabelo. I would probably be married to a whiteman. My father believed in the western life style that is why he fought tooth and nail and worked all day long, only slept for 3 hours in a day just for us to go to model c schools.

My thoughts are disturbed by a tap on the shoulder. I turn.

Sushi: We are starting in 5 minutes

Me: Okay.

She heads out. I get up and dress.....

.....

NKAZIMULO ZULU

The air around me changes as we get in. She is here. I wish we can really spend this hour without seeing her. I have not seen her in 3 months and I want it to be years.

We greet whomever we come across and take champagne glasses. The gents save me from the group of women I find myself surrounded by.

“Ladies and gentlemen. As our lady of the hour requested. Please welcome Smoothie Sax”

My heart skips a beat when I send my eyes up where the spotlight is.

It’s the way her body moves inside that silly bottle green maxi dress, the slit keeps revealing her

brown moisturized legs. She may have a mask on but I am tell by the fearlessness I have in me that she is in the room. I can tell by the way I feel like its okay to laugh loud and cry if I want too. She brings me that...peace within myself. She stops at the middle of the staircase and starts playing. She has always been right here before me. I really hate omahosha but I used to go to Razo's every jazz night and I thought it was the saxophone that made ne feel at ease and at peace while it was her, her presence brought me peace. I am obsessed with the sax and she plays it so beautifully. If this isn't a sign that its meant to be then I don't know what is.....

.....

ZIMASA

I bow as I finish. When I bring my eyes up I see him. I shift mine from him. He probably doesn't recognise me.

I run back up as they clap. I get into my room and change. I take off the mask and call Lindo to fetch me. Mike gets in as I button the jeans.

Mike: Can I be honest?

Me: Yes?

Mike: I was holding a fart that they love it. You're so incredible.

Me: I learned from the best.

Mike: I can tell. So, you're going to Durban tomorrow?

Me: Yeah.

Mike: No guy seems to be cuffed here.

I laugh.

Me: How could he not? I mean, look at me.

We laugh.

Mike: Ausuka. Let me go and make sure Nomalanga Jones is happy with our service. She's so demanding.

Me: This is her party?

Mike: Yes.

Me: Nkazi, is he working for her now?

Mike: No. His wife is friends with Nomalanga.

Me: Oh. Wealthy women.

Mike: And good husbands. So odd.

Me: Men obey where there is money.

He laughs and go out. I receive a text from Lindo. He's outside. I put my mask back on and start off at a bathroom. I pee and go out to wash my hands. There is a lady applying lipstick.

She looks at me, looks in the mirror and then back at me. I know her, I don't know where I know her but her face is very familiar. It could've been a magazine.

Her: Sax girl.

Me: Yes

Her: That was beautiful. My husband is so obsessed with that instrument. Can I have your numbers so that u can book you one evening.

Me: You can get them from Mike.

Her: Ok. Keep up the good work.

I nod with a smile and follow her out. I use the less busy door to go out.

Someone grabs me and pulls me to the side and fucking kiss me. I push him off.

Me: What on earth!

Nkazi: I couldn't help myself.

Me: Your wife is inside Nkazimulo Zulu.

I am not loud but my words are very firm.

Nkazi: I don't want my wife I want you.

Me: What? Nkazi, I am not in the mood for your mind games. Do you remember what you said the last time we spoke?

Nkazi: No. What did I say?

Me: You sa-

Nkazi: Can you please kiss me before you tell me what I said?

Me: You're truly out of your mind or probably had too much to drink.

I try to walk away but he pulls me back to him and kiss me, one hand on my ass and the other at the back of my neck. I am trying to free away but he's holding me tight. I can't let him to this to me. I break out. I hear footsteps. Its Lindo. He's walking away, he saw us. I run after him.

Me: Lindokuhle! Lindo! Babe please stop!

I reach him about to open the door. He hits my hand off him.

Me: Its not what you think. I swear to you he kissed me off guard.

Lindo: I'm glad it happened before I took a huge ass decision.

Me: Lindo you're not listening. He took me by surprise. I love you Lindo. Please.

He gets in the car. I rush to the oassenger door nut he takes off as I am about to open. He's standing

there with his hands in his pockets. I hate him. I hate him!

Me: I wish you die Nkazimulo Zulu. You ruin my life!

I sob as I get away from his sight. I call Lindo. He is not answering. The road is quiet. Why won't anything be good in my life! Nothing is permanent....

I am walking, crying and texting and calling him. A car stops beside me. It him. I increase my pace. He drives slowly beside me.

Nkazi: Let me take you home.

I keep on walking.

Nkazi: I shouldn't have kissed you.

I stop.

Me: Well you did Nkazimulo Zulu. You did and you have ruined things for me.

Nkazi: What things?

Me: My relationship! You have ruined my relationship.

Nkazi: Ei ei ei. Get in in the car the streets are not safe.

Me: You aren't either. I don't wanna do this. I don't wanna be that girl you take advantage of. I don't wanna be that girl you go months without seeing and want to fuck her the day you see her. I am truly not umahosha Nkazimulo Zulu stop treating me like one. Yes that night might have been my fault but that does not mean I do it to every man. For an entire year I was a mess. The man that I loved dated my sister, ordered people to kill me, they raped me. The universe has been so harsh to me. But that man came and changed everything. He is everything I want. I lo-

Nkazi: Shut the fuck up. You love him? Not so long ago you were feeling the connection between us now you love him?

He's out of the car.

Me: You said I got the wrong signal and I believe I did.

Nkazi: Get in the car.

Me: No. Go back to your wife and leave me the hell alone! I am tired okay I had a long day.

A red audi Q7 pulls up. Its him.

Nkazi: Your choice in men is a circus. Imbi lendoda.

Me: At least he's not an asshole.

He gets back in the car and speeds off. I run to Lindo and hug him.

Me: I love you.

Lindo: I love you but I am mad and disappointed.

Me: I'm so sorry. Please don't give up on me

I mean it. If he does and let me go. I might wreck a woman's home and that is not me. The connection is still there and it is still strong...

ZANELE

We are drowning in alcohol now. Its been over 3 hours. Mulo is with the gents. He is probably having fun cause the way he didn't want to come here we would be gone by now.

Noma pours herself another glass.

Noma: There is a lot of things I want to do before the year ends.

Me: That's lovely. For me there is just one

Khosi: What is it?

Me: To have an epic anniversary.

Khosi: Oh yes! Its in a month right?

Me: Yes. I wanna invite the sax girl over tomorrow night when I tell him. I know he will not agree to having an anniversary. I want the planning to begin right away.

Noma: Get your Candy boots on and fuck that yes out of him.

We laugh.

Me: I will do it all. He dreamt of his mother today.

Khosi: Can she just die?

Me: Well I think he works for us now, finally.
Because she was telling him that he shall never let go of me.

Noma: No!

Me: Yeah I know. I was afraid that if he keeps dreaming of her she will end up telling him the truth. I am not sure if his gift is gone-gone or just gone.

Khosi: He would know everything that happens on his house.

Me: You could never be sure. Let me go check up on him.

Noma: Can you stay 4 hours without seeing him?

Me: I can aibo.

They laugh as I go away. I am drunk. I look for him amongst the men but he's not there.

Me: Excuse me, have you seen Mulo?

Mike: He's upstairs. Third room

Me: Oh thanks.oh Mike. The girl that played here. Can I get her numbers?

Mike: Uhhh, I don't have them.

Me: She said I will get them from you.

Mike: Ohh she lied. I don't have her numbers.

Me: Ok thanks.

I climb up the stairs. I knock and push the door. He is sleeping, hugging a pillow. He startles me when he opens his eyes as I pull the pillow away.

Me: Hey.

Mulo: Hey.

He comes and sits on the edge. He grabs me by my waist and pull me close. He leans his forehead on my stomach.

Me: Are you okay?

He shakes his head.

Me: What's up?

Mulo: Love me right.

Me: Huh?

Mulo: I said love me right, never ever let me go. Never take me anywhere I do not want to go because....

He lifts his head up and turns me around. He zips down the dress and let it fall to my ankles. He kisses my back . I drop the clutch. His fingers and deep on my stomach.

He turns me around. He looks at me. His eyes are red. He looks like he's been crying but this man of mine does not just cry.

He pulls my leg to hop on top of him. I am sitting on top of him. Staring at each other, this is a magical moment. I see the love in his eyes. I can see the fear of losing me.

We're kissing now. His hands are all over my body. He shifts my underwear aside and he's in. I

hold on to him and ride. His hands are all over, I am moaning in his ear, he loves that.

Mulo: Don't leave me.

Me: I...won't

I find myself beneath him. He is humping roughly and hard. He is not okay.

Me: Babe babe, a low down.

He is not stopping.

Me: Nkazimulo Zulu.

He stops. He's panting.

Me: What is going on?

Mulo: Nothing. Can I finish?

Me: No. Not until you tell me what is going on.

Mulo: Nothing is going on. And please don't call my full name and my surname at the same time. It reminds me of mom and it breaks my heart.

He continues. I hate it when he's weird. I participate until he cums.....

.....

MIKE

I arrive at the same time as Candy. I get out of my car. So does she.

Zimasa: Hey.

She attacks me with a hug. She's drunk. So early in the morning.

Me: You drove drunk?

Zimasa: No. Some guy from the complex did. He left me at the gate. Such a gentleman.

Me: O-kay. Are you working today?

Zimasa: No. I came to clean my room. I can't stay in that place.

Me: Why?

Zimasa: Lindo....he broke up with me because he saw that good for nothing bastard kissing me. So when we got home he....he said he needed space to think about this. I mean, I love him. Why would he be threatened by Zulu? I kept telling him that he

kissed me without my consent but he wouldn't listen to me!

Me: His loss. Come. You need to rest.

She is talking all the way inside. Luckily Sushi is up and running.

Me: Please take her upstairs. Be careful.

Sushi: Did you continue the party at home?

Zimasa: Yes. But a pity party.

I laugh. They head up. I water the flowers. I turn when someone calls my name. Its Zanele. Why is she here?

Me: Hi.

Zanele: Hey. Have you seen my husband?

Me: No I just arrived.

Zanele: If he gets here please fell him I had to rush to work.

Me: Ok.

She rushes out. I hate her.....

.....

ZIMASA

Me: See Sushi, I would be sleeping in my man's arms had that married bastard stayed in his fucking lane. He kissed me, while his wife was here inside. Imagine!

Sushi: Men are like that hun.

Me: But my boyfriend might never come back. If he doesn't come back then I might fuck someone's husband.

Sushi: Aibo. Stay away from him.

Me: I can't if there will be no one to hold on to. I need a distraction. Oh wow who cleaned in here?

Sushi: The cleaning ladies. Rest.

Me: Oh yes rest bafwethu.

I throw myself on bed. Oh I missed it so much....

.....

there's a human behind me. Ans not just any human. The last human I wanna see. His hand is on my boob.

Me: In the name of the father, the son and the holy spirit please send your heavenly fire and burn this married man who has a boner behind me. I am honestly tired of him. Amen.

He's snoring. I look at the clock. It's a few minutes after 12am. The alcohol has worn off. Where's my phone?

I move the ugly hand off me and hop out of bed. I look for it in my bag. I find it. There are missed calls from him. I call him back.

Lindo: Sthandwa sam.

My heart pumps the danone

Me: Babe hey. I...I'm sorry I drank after you left. I just woke up.

Lindo: I love you Zimasa. I talked to my mom this morning. She enlightened me. Now I know I mean a lot to you. If I didn't you wouldn't have chased

after me. You would've hopped into his car. I guess I chickened out because I've heard that people have unbreakable bonds once they get each other pregnant.

Me: Well its not true.

He gets up and head to the bathroom.

Me: I love you okay? And I am grateful to your mom.

Lindo: Can I buy you a plane ticket?

Me: Please.

Lindo: Okay. How did the meeting go with your mom?

Shit.

Me: I totally forgot about that. Ohh she's going to kill me. Let me go.

Lindo: You're such a mess. Bye. I love you.

Me: I lo-

He snatches my phone off and hit it against the wall. I must be dreaming. There is just noway

Nkazimulo Zulu just took my phone and broke it.
There's noway!

We are staring at each other. He looks angry. Well
I am more angry. A tear falls from his eye

Nkazi: You are not going to Durban.

Me: Says you Mr Aeroplane.

I try to walk away from him but he grabs me back
to him.

Nkazi: Don't turn me into something I am not
please. I'm sorry about your phone. I am going to
replace it.

Me: Why did you break it in the first place!

Nkazi: Because you were going to tell him you
love him. You can't keep lying to yourself. .stop
lying to yourself.

Me: I'm not. If you could just leave me alone

Nkazi: You think I want this? You think I want to
lose my mind whenever you're around? I hate this
too because I have always loved my wife, never

ever got turned on by anyone but her. And then you came! All of that changed. When you are before me, I can not think of anyone else but you. I yearn to hold you, to kiss you, to feel the warmth of your body, to hear you laugh, to be....

He caress my cheek.

Nkazi: To be deep inside you, to hear you moan my name, telling me you love me.

He is too close. I gulp. Why am I such a hoe? Why is my clit throbbing. I just told my boyfriend to buy the plane ticket. If this motherfucker kiss me now, we're totally fucking.

Nkazi: Mahlongwane. Please let me into your life. I come with a crazy ass wife but I'll make it all bearable for you. You are my home Zimasa. I know that sounds fucked up but you are, you're my safe place. I feel like I can be a driver and you would not judge me, I feel like I can cry and you would let me, and that who I yearn for in my life. My safe place. The connection has been there, do you remember how you would not keep your eyes

off mine when you played at Razo's, I felt like your safe place right? I calmed your nerves and that's exactly what you do to me.

I bring him closer and we kiss. He picks me up and put me on the bed and pull my dress up, g string down, legs up and his head on my vagina. I am moaning his name as he yearned.....

....

NARRATED

Meanwhile...the phone did not die and Lindo stayed on the line after he heard a man's voice.....

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ZIMASA

I keep hearing Lindo's voice as Nkazimulo devours on my honey. My toes curl.

Me: Nkazi....

I cum. I hear Lindo shout my name. Nkazi comes up to kiss me.

Nkazi: I really want to be inside you.

He whispers.

Me: but?

Nkazi: I was with my wife.

Me: Oh.

Nkazi: I have to go.

Me: Then go.

Nkazi: I am going to make this right okay?

Me: Ok.

He kisses me one last time and get off. I get up and go to the toilet and come back to an empty room.

This is why I cannot do this.

Let me see how broken is this phone. I pick it up and press the lock button. My heart stops. I think I am having a stroke or a heartattack. Its 25:40 minutes and still counting. It is not dead. It has a crack across the screen....ngelosi yobufebe I have always been good to you. Why do me like this!

I was not hearing voices. He was really calling my name. I am crying. Why did I let this happen? Why do I keep losing my mind over Nkazimulo? I have a man that loves me for Christ's sake!

I hear a groan and something breaking. He's angry.

Me: Babe

I don't know what I'm doing but I have to do something.

Me: Lindokuhle....Lindo I'm sorry. It was a mistake. We didn't have sex okay? He...he didn't penetrate.

He curse and more things break. I hang up. I am losing my mind. I need to drive to Durban. I call

Nkazi as I rush down the stairs. He is not picking up.

“I can't do this Nkazi.”

I send him a text and get in the car. My phone rings. Its mom. Not now!

Mike knocks at my window. I unlock. He gets in.

Mike: What's up? Been calling you and you didn't seem to hear me.

Me: Its Lindo. I need to go to Durban

Mike: You can't drive to Durban looking like that or anywhere for that matter. Go back inside.

Me: If I do not go and fix this. He will never forgive me Mike you don't understand.

Mike: Whatever it is it is not worth dying for. Let me take you to your moms.

I nod. I am gonna drive to Durban after I talk to mom....

....

ZANELE

I rushed home to go to the beauty room. I had not been there in 2 week cause Mulo is always around. This morning was my shot. And nothing could've prepared me for what I saw as I beat the mixture.

I saw him with a woman making love. I could not see her face but I saw him. I have been sitting here crying. O have done everything for amantombazane, if I could give them a piece of me to make him have eyes only for me, I would.

He gets in. He throws the keys on the couch and walk on.

Me: Sawbona Zulu.

Mulo: Yebo Mamkhosini. I'm going back to work

Me: Which work?

Mulo: At Mike's.

Me: Is it about her?

Mulo: Who?

Me: You know who I'm talking about.

Mulo: I wouldn't have said who if I knew. Why would you want to ruin such a good morning?

Me: In a space of 6 months, you have gone outside our marriage twice Nkazimulo.

Mulo: Nalokho ngikuzwa ngawe Zanele. I'm tired. I want to bath.

I get up and go to him. He moves away.

Me: Why are you getting away?

Mulo: Because you have a knife in your hand.

Me: If you care about whomever she is, you will end it if it has started, or avoid it if it has not happened because I will stop at nothing to save my marriage. Even if it means killing her with my own bare hands!

I take my bag and head out. I can't be around him. I need to go to Nomalanga. We need to go to the

river, I need to know why is the spell not taking it's course.....

.....

MULO.

I get an extreme headache. My heart is pounding hard. For a moment I thought she was gonna insist on getting close and he would smell her. How did she know? If she knew I was with someone there she would have driven there the minute she found out.

I take my phone out. There is a text from her.

“I can't do this Nkazi”

“I get it. It was a mistake. I was hangover and lustful. I'm sorry for leading you on.”

I press send. I need a shot....

.....

ZIMASA

Oh wow. What a jerk ass. I delete the bloody message and go join mom in the lounge. Mike dropped me off and left.

Me: Lokshin Bioskop every day.

Mom: They are nice.

Me: We've been watching this one for 4 years now.

Mom: Ohho.

Me: I am driving to Durban later.

Mom: Zimasa we miss you. You are hardly home.

Me: that's because I am always working or my boyfriend is here.

Mom: When are you bringing him here?

Me: When he comes to pay lobola.

Mom: Fair enough. I was thinking, are you not ready to fix things with your sister?

Me: I don't know.

Mom: I love you both and I miss having both of you in the same house. I miss my kids.

Me: I know ma but Amber is so full of it.

Mom: Please do it for me. I don't want to die and leave you guys sworn enemies.

Me: I am willing to fix things. For you.

She smiles.

I live to make her happy. I live to keep my father's last wishes true....

....

ZANELE

we've been waiting for hours. I was not talking. I could not talk. I only wanted to cry. I stand there and watch them light the candles. We sit inside the

circle formed in red candles and hold white in our hands.

Noma: Mantombazane. Siena has a problem. You did show her that there is a woman. Please reveal her face so that we can deal with her.

A bird lands on Khosi's shoulder and communicates with her.

Khosi: Zimasa Hlongwane. And only Nomalanga can kill her. We need to follow Mulo wherever he goes. She is a huge threat, she could end your.

Me: Don't you fucking tell me about that. I gave you everything to keep my marriage perfect!

Khosi: This is beyond our power. The spell washes off in her presence.

Me: What does that even mean?

Khosi: It means, she is a special one.

Me: Fuck you!

Noma: Siena!

Me: No! I gave them everything Nomalanga! My whole family! For what? They can't take care of my husband's nyatsi?

Nomalanga: You k know these things happen, it happened to me. Calm down. We will find her and I wll kill her then you will have your husband back.

I sit down and cry. Zimasa Hlongwane, wherever you are. Count your days. Nobody messed with me and live to tell a tail....

ZIMASA

Its been a week. I haven't seen nor head from Lindo. Mike made sure I do not go to Durban after I told him what happened. He said I should give him some time to cool off but I am not too sure if that was a good idea. Why hasn't he called me back or answered my call?!

I bumped into Nkazi about 2 days ago, he did what he does most; acting like he doesn't know me and I really prefer it that way.

Last night I had a very weird dream. This lady was trying to kill me. She was drowning me in a pool. It was like Nkazi and I were married and she was mad at thar fact, so I went to swim. She jumped in out of nowhere and strangled me. I fought her until I woke up.

And then again this morning it cane back. She was chasing me with a knife, Nkazi tied into a chair, he couldn't help me. She did stab me on the arm but I killed her.

I regret telling gran about ut. She told me we are going to a sangoma later. I really do not like sangomas. They fucking lie....well most of them. He's gonna say its my great grandma and she wants me to become a sangoma.

I finish hanging the last load of laundry and sit on the couch and turn up the volume of music.

Martha: Did you take the nap?

Me: No. I just washed our dirty clothes.

Martha: I am ordering. What are you having?

Me: Hake and chips.

Martha: You and Mulalo and Hake. What is nice about that thing.

Me: You wouldn't understand. You should really do the pregnancy test.

Martha: I'd rather see the stomach growing.

I laugh. She's been very weird. Napping every now and then, getting nauseas.

Me: Yoh mfazi. The labor pains.

Martha: I'm on the pill okay.

Me: Shit ain't guaranteed sis.

Martha: I see you want my soul Zimasa.

She gets up and head to the balcony.

Me: See? You're a ticking bomb.

Martha: Fuck you.

I laugh and check the time. Its 3 hours to 4pm that gran picked. I need to bath. I get up and head to the bathroom. I fill the tub and fetch my phone. I find missed calls from Lufhuno. Haven't heard from him since that day. I try calling him but it goes to voicemail.

I undress and get into the tub. Soothing. The door opens. Its him. He looks like a mess. I get out of the tub instantly and hug him. He breaks down.

Me: its gonna be okay.

Lufhuno: She lied to me.

Me: I'm sorry.

Lufhuno: I hate her.

Me: Shhh...

After 10 minutes he finally calms down. I wrap a towel and sit on the edge of the tub while he sits on the toilet seat.

Me: What happened?

Lufhuno: The baby is not mine. I let her in into my life. I let her know my child, my family, you! I am so mad.

Me: Such is life. Her loss, life goes on.

Lufhuno: Babe you don't understand. I paid lobola for this woman, I bought her a house, and a car. I loved her.

Me: I'm so sorry.

Lufhuno: I don't know if I'll ever recover from this.

Me: You will.

I take the towel off and get into the tub.

Lufhuno: How did we get here Zim? Only running to each other when things are bad.

Me: We grew up.

Lufhuno: This isn't what I imagined.

Me: I started it. Its all my fault.

Lufhuno: Yeah but I didn't fight enough for our friendship. I let you go easily.

Me: You didn't. You have always been there when I needed you.

Lufhuno: But this isn't where we should be. I got my big break and you are not even here to enjoy the good life with me. It should be you, me and Kay. Travelling, tasting new food, changing

houses, fighting over which colour to paint the lounge not this. I really miss you.

Me: I do miss you too but I am not good for Kay. You were right.

Lufhuno: That- I was wrong. She misses you. Not a day goes by without asking if I called you. She doesn't trust me with proof reading letters to her mom. She was getting there with Melody cause sometimes she's ask her to help her write it.

I chuckle.

Me: I just need to fix this one last thing and I will be back into her life, permanently, as promised.

He nods. I really miss them.....

.....

ZANELE

Its been a week and we have been taking turns following him around but he has only been driving

Mike and going to steers and coming back home. I am even getting tired of it. She answers.

Noma: Mrs Zulu.

Me: I don't think I am gonna do my shift today.

Noma: Hhaibo madam. Why?

Me: If he was really seeing her don't you think they would have met by now?

Noma: Stop being lazy and go. He's in steers for now. Go.

She hangs up. I am really not going there. I am going home to the beauty room to beg amantombazabe to reveal her face for me cause this following Mulo around business is taking too long.....

.....

NKAZIMULO ZULU

I kill the stub when he appears. I don't wanna know about how cancer is going to kill me.

Pele: You still smoke mfana ka Zulu.

Me: Just burning my frustrations.

Pele: Also damaging your lungs.

We fist bump.

Me: Thank you for coming.

Pele: Although I am worried about why are we meeting on top of a house.

I love this roof top. You can see the most of joburg. Its peaceful. That's why I love the steers.

Me: I wanted to say this freely.

Pele: Okay.

Me: Yeah. So, you were right. Zanele did do something to me. To find other women unattractive.

Pele: I knew it! That bloody bitch.

Me: Yeah.

Pele: How-how did you find out?

Me: I went to her beauty room about a week ago. I saw a lot of things that are dangerous for you to know. Even the baby. It was her.

I look up. I can't keep letting tears out whenever I think of this.

Pele: Shit.

Me: I loved her truly and I still do. I never ever thought of cheating on her. Why did she have to put me under a spell that would take my soul shall I leave her.

Pele: Does this mean your gift is back?

Me: Yes. Since I met Zimasa I think. It comes and goes. I don't know what to do. She knows about Zimasa and they have been following me around. I am so afraid that Zimasa might see me and try to speak to me.

Pele: Mageba, how are you loving umahosha while you're fed bhekamina ngedwa?

Me: Mom said she is my escaoe and I should never let go of her but it seems so selfish to get her into my life with Zanele ready to kill her. And everytime I see her something in me changes. I go

to her apartment every single night to make sure she's safe.

Pele: What if they follow you?

Me: They don't. They rest when I am at home. I leave and come back before Zanele notices.

Pele: Stop going there.

Me: I can't help it.

Pele: We will see if Bobo cannot help you.

Me: He can't. Only Zimasa can. I just need to find a way to keep her protected while I fix this.

Pele: Do it right away.

I nod.

Now I am not even sure if I ever truly loved her.....

My phone rings its Zimasa.

Me: Why are you calling me ntombazane?

Zimasa: We need to talk Zulu.

Why is she not saying my full name?

Me: We have nothing to talk about. I have a wife.
Leave me the hell alone.

Zimasa: Nigga your fucking wife tried to kill me
and you going to tell me that shit? By 6:15 Zulu I
need you at my door step.

Me: I am no-

She hangs up.

Did she just call me nigga?

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ZIMASA

Its 23:40. I have been sitting here waiting for him.
I am not even going anywhere until he gets here.
He has caused me so much pain and as it is I am
being hunted down all because of him.

If he is not here by morning, he will regret the day he ever set his eyes on me.....

.....

ZANELE

I open my eyes. He is staring at me.

Me: Morning.

Mulo: Morning.

Me: Is everything okay?

Mulo: Do I not love you enough?

Me: What?

Mulo: Wrong question. Do I love you enough?

Me: Of course. You've never loved me less.

Mulo: Then why do you think...actually you sound so sure that there is a woman or there's gonna be one.

Me: I have seen it at night Mulo. And you said it yourself, if I do not give you a child you will get a second wife.

Mulo: I did. Can I trust you Zanele?

Me: Of course you can babe. Why would you even say that?

Mulo: Zanele you said you will kill a woman. That was not my wife talking.

Me: I was angry.

Me: You will end up killing a wrong woman. And if any of the women close to me end up getting hurt I will leave you Zanele Mkhosi because I married my best friend. The sweetest woman I've ever known not a killer.

He brings me closer and kisses my forehead and hops out of bed. He's protecting her. He is prepared to leave me if I hurt her.....

.....

MIKE

He almost crash me. The window slides down. He us wearing shades. There's a cup of starbucks in his hand. Sometimes he looks possessed.

Me: Uhm Hi.

Nkazi: Get in. You're late.

Me: What's in the cup?

Nkazi: Coffee. What else would be here?

Me: I don't know. You don't look ok.

Nkazi: I am perfect.

I get in on the front.

Nkazi: Since when do you sit here?

Me: Since today. Is this mine?

He nods and drives off. I take the large cup of coffee and drink. This son of a bitch.

Me: You know I am not drinking.

Nkazi: Oh shit you got the wrong one. Here.

We swap.

Me: why are you drinking at 8 in the morning?

Nkazi: Because I couldn't drink at 6. I had to drive Kyla to school.

Me: I can't let you drink and drive.

Nkazi: I will drink when I drop you off. How's
Enhle?

Me: She's good.

Nkazi: Oh?

Me: Yeah. It's a smooth pregnancy. We're in love
and I get sex tenders twice a day.

Nkazi: Happy man. IS Zimasa still seeing her ugly
boyfriend?

Me: Yes

Nkazi: Ohh.

Me: Do you feel anything for her?

Nkazi: No.

Me: I fail to miss the chemistry between you two.
When you're in the same room its so tense but cute
tense.

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

Me: Ok.

We're here. Whatever it is that is going on between them they should just work it out. Its starting to get on my nerves when they ask questions about each other....

....

ZIMASA

When I opened my eyes and it was the morning and he was not there, I just bathed and came here. I forgot my access card and this guy is giving me troubles with filling the form that I forgot my access card.

I spot the car coming in. Now is the right time. I pull him close and kiss him. By the time he pushes me off he has passed and seen it all. I sign and leave before this man questions the kiss.

Mike doesn't wait for me. The car drives around and head straight at me. I stop. I'd like to see him try. He brakes an inch away from me.

Me: Yeah I thought so.

He hops out and charges at me. He grabs me and drag me to the car.

Me: Let go of me!

He pins me against the door.

Nkazi: What the hell was that?

Me: What the hell was what Nkazimulo Zulu? Let me go!

Nkazi: Hhei wena Zimasa. Why were you kissing him?

Me: How is it your business? You're a married man. What a single woman does should be none of your concern okay?

Nkazi: Can you please treat yourself with respect?

Me: Oh no. I am a mahosha, that isn't what I do.

I try to push him off but he pins me and it hurts. Okay. I want to cry.

Me: You said you saw what happened with the baby. You knew it was her, didn't you?

Nkazi: How do you know?

Me: Did you know it her?

Nkazi: Zimasa-

Me: Answer the damn question Nkazi!

He nods. I can't help the tears.

Me: I don't know why am I put in this position

Nkazi: I'm sorry okay?

Me: You know she's not a good person. You knew!

Nkazi: I didn't.

Me: You did! I don't remember what happened that day, you saw it but you still chased after me. You keep coming and going!

Nkazi: You don't understand.

Me: What do I not understand?

Nkazi: I am trying to protect you dammit!

Me: From what!

Nkazi: From her, I am trying to protect you from my wife. She could hurt you and I wouldn't know how to live without you zinasa please.

Me: If there is someone who needs protection from her it is you Nkazimulo Zulu and only I can. She cannot get to me but she can get to you and she could turn you into a monster.

Nkazi: If I ever see you kiss a man I will be that monster.

He lets go of me and get into the car. Did he hear what I said?

I need something strong. I can't deal with my life sober minded right now....

.....

NKAZIMULO ZULU

I pull up at the side of the road and get out. I put my hands over my head. I don't know but I need to scream loud to ease the conflict inside me. I wouldn't forgive myself if anything happened to

Zimasa. I have seen the kind of devil the woman I married is.

I wish I've never met Zimasa. My life wouldn't be this complicated.

I take my phone and call her. She doesn't answer. I need to tell her she means every thing to me. I just need a little more time then she can be my wife.

I get a light headache. I miss Zanele. I can't fight it. I am calling her.

Zanele: Sthuli sika ndaba

Me: Have you gone to work?

Zanele: I decided to take a day off. Will you be here for lunch? I wanna cook.

Me: I wouldn't miss that opportunity for the world. I am not doing anything even now. I am just gonna drive home.

Zanele: I'd like that.

Me: I'll see you in a few.

Zanele: Ok babe. Let me make breakfast.

I hang up and drive away....

.....

SABELO

I never thought that one day the skeletons in my closet would be found. I let myself be blinded by lust and lost a woman that would've done anything for me to succeed. Zimasa loved me truly, she was crazy but the realest. I let Amber blind me. Here I am today, in an orange overall, chains on my wrists and also on my ankles, I am being transported to suncity. Not so long ago, I was the talk of the town. The best striker The lings boys has ever had but now I am labeled one of the dangerous men in South Africa.

When we get there. I just want to make one call and say I am sorry. She did tell me I will regret it if I do not shoot her as she turned away....here I am not regretting that but leaving her for her little sister, trying to kill her and trying to take her down with me.....

.....

[LATER IN THE DAY]

ZIMASA

I couldn't stay at Mikes. I drove straight here. Lufhuno was gone. He spent the night. Kay is at her grans.

I got here and slept. Its dark outside and I am hungry. I drink the shot I had poured before I slept and hop out of bed. I need something to eat!

There's an aroma hitting my nostrils as soon as I open the door. I rush to the kitchen. He's cooking. Oh I'm so worried.

Lufhuno: You're awake.

Me: and you're cooking.

Lufhuno: Yes.

Me: I am just glad my kitchen is still intact.

Lufhuno: Thag was an accident.

Me: 3 times? Aowa.

He literally burnt his kitchen 3 times. From there on I suggested he gets a maid cause wow.

There is a bottle of black rose and tonic water on the counter. I pour myself some and drink.

Me: Umgowo.

We laugh and clink our glasses.

Lufhuno: We gonna be fine.

Me: I won't. I miss him so much.

Lufhuno: Change and drive to wherever he is.

Me: That....

He's right. I gulp the whole thing and rush to the bedroom. I need to be a snack....

.....

NKAZIMULO ZULU

Today has been a chilled day. I spent it with the wife. Mike told me to not fetch him, cherry on top.

We are watching fantasy bioskop. I wonder who writes this shit. Women have wild imaginations.

Me: aw baby. Are you digging the snow pie?

Zanele: Its too frozen!

My heart beats hard. This usually happens when I see Zimasa or when she is around. I drink water but it doesn't stop. Zanele comes back. She tries to sit on my lap but I stand up. I take my phone. There are 100 missed calls from her. 100!

Zanele: Are you okay?

Me: yeah I am-

“Good afternoon family”

My heart drops. I cannot turn. Zanele stands up.

Zanele: Hi.

Zimasa: My name is Zimasa Hlongwane.

She looks up at me and takes a deep breath and looks ahead at Zimasa.

Zanele: How can we help you Zimasa Hlongwane?

Zimasa: I came to ask Nkazi why is he not taking my calls. Oh and I heard from someone that you were looking for me so here I am. Can I sit? These heels are killing me.

She giggles. She's drunk

I turn. She smiles at me. Genuine smile. She's so beautiful.

Fuck what the hell is she doing here?

Zanele is looking at me with eyes full of tears. What has gotten into Zimasa?

Me: babe I can-

I am disturbed by Zimasa's snore. Zanele rushes up the stairs crying.....

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NKAZIMULO ZULU

I run after her. She is rushing to that witchcraft room. I increase my pace and get to it before she reaches for the handle.

Me: We need to talk.

Zanele: About what Mulo? Huh? That you let your bitch into my house? I don't wanna see you right now.

She turns and heads for the bedroom. I follow her. Sje is crying. I close the door.

Zanele: You denied it. This very morning Nkazimulo and you denied it!

Me: She is not my girlfriend. Wjy would you assume she is?

Zanele: Because I saw you! In a vision. Making love to her, I knew her name but I didn't know her. How could you do this to me Mulo. How could you!

She throws everything in front of her at me. I stand there and let, maybe I deserve it. I mean the woman I fucked in the dark, impregnated, fell in

love with is downstairs, in our house, Zanele's house. This is her house, not mine. I don't even know how much it took to be built.

Me: I'm gonna drive her home.

Zanele: No! She is going to sleep here and she will explain herself in the morning.

Me: I'll watch her.

Zanele: You're going to sleep in your bed Nkazimulo.

Me: I cannot trust you.

Zanele: I need her to tell me everything. I can't just kill her.

She strips naked and heads to the bathroom.

Zanele: Are you joining me?

Me: Yes.

I'd rather keep her where I can see her. How did Zimasa even know where I stay? The gate? Who opened it for her?

I get under the shower. And hug her from behind.
She holds my hands.

Zanele: What is special about her?

Me: Nothing. As I have said. She is not my
girlfriend.

Zanele: Nkazimulo.

Me: Visions aren't right all the time Zanele.

Zanele: This one was. She's down stairs.

Me: We're not together.

She turns the shower off and turns to me.

Zanele: Do you love her?

Me: What?

Zanele: I asked, do you love her?

She's staring right into my eyes. I am afraid if I lie
she will know.

Me: I love you.

Zanele: I need you to hear you say you don't love
her.

Me: I don't.

Zanele: Love her!

Me: love her.

Her eyes drop.

Zanele: I'm gonna call it a night.

She grabs a towel and dry herself. I do too. I am not sleeping a wink tonight.....

.....

ZANELE

I take my phone and write a text to Nomalanga.

“This bitch thinks she's tough. She came to my house, she is here Noma. In my own fucking house! And he is denying her. Next morning I want no trace of her in this life. She's sleeping in the lounge. Be careful with everything you do. He's a light sleeper”

I send and switch it off. Did he fuck her in my bed? How else would she know our house. I turn to face him.

Me: Did you sleep with her in our house?

Mulo: I never slept with her.

Me: How did she know where we live?

Mulo: I don't know.

Me: Please be honest.

Mulo: I am honest. Can we Atleast drive her home?

Me: No! You don't get to cheat on me and call shots. I say she stays and that's that.

Mulo: Good night.

He closes his eyes. Nomalanga better hurry and get this over with and done.....

.....

ZIMASA

I am awoken by noise of people shouting. Can theu please keep it down! My head is exploding. I am wearing heels and my date dress. Fuck. I get out of

bed. I need to pee seriously. There's a door on my right. I cross fingers that it's a bathroom.

It is. Thank goodness!

I pee and I realize that this isn't my place. In fact, I don't know where I'm at. I panic. What if I am kidnapped. I pull my dress down and rush out. When I open the door I see no one. I follow the light until I get to the stairs. I go down and I see him talking on the phone when I reach the last one.

Nkazi: Mageba, I'll call you back.

He puts the down and comes to me. He's angry. Okay let me run. I try to but I trip and fall. He picks me up.

Me: Where are we?

Nkazi: My house.

Me: Doing what?

Nkazi: You tell me Zimasa. She could've killed you dammit!

Me: She wouldn't have.

He picks my bag and pulls me out. Damn this house. How rich is this woman!

I get in the car, he does too and drive off. I remember talking to Lufhuno and he told me to go to him! I hate alcohol.

Me: Is this my car?

It is my car. I drove here, drunk, I tracked his phone. Lufhuno tracked his phone. That's how I got here.

Me: Where is she?

He turns the volume up.

Why am I such a troubled soul?

Me: Did she see me?

I can't remember what happened after I got in the car and I was not drunk. I must've gotten drunk on the way.

I decide to sleep.

After what felt like a 5 hours nap. He calls my name. I jump. We're on underground parking lot.

Me: Where are we?

He holds the door open. I get out and follow him as he lead the way to the lift that drops us off at hallway. He uses the master key and push the door open.

Nkazi: The bathroom is there.

Me: I'd like to go to my place please.

Nkazi: Not after you've refreshed and talked. Please go bath, the tub is waiting.

Okay. I go there. The water is ready. I undress and get in. He follows. I bury my body. He leans on the door and stares at me for some time.

Nkazi: What were you thinking?

Me: I don't know. I really don't know. I am deeply sorry. I had too much to drink. And I made a bad decision.

Nkazi: When I got to the lounge in the morning and you were not there I panicked. I said some things to her. You shouldn't have come.

Me: Well I did and whatever I said I must have meant it because drunk people are honest.

Nkazi: You didn't say anything. How am I supposed to protect you now.

Me: I don't need your protection Nkazimulo Zulu. Isn't enough? The cat and mouse? Are you not tired of it?

Nkazi: I am but I cannot just love you and get you into my life while I do not know how to protect you!

Me: I do not need protection! But you do. The more you push me away is the more you will keep on losing a tiny piece of yourself every day until there's nothing left. Let me in. Let me be your home, your safe place. Let me protect you. That is why you love me Nkazimulo....

Holds the door knob.

Me: If you walk out that door....

Nkazi: I don't want to ruin your life.

I get out of the tub and walk to him. He turns.

Me: What if I was made for you. I take the weave off show him the scar at the back of my head. He touches it.

Nkazi: Who did this to you?

Me: Do you think you could do more damage than the one before your eyes right now?

Nkazi: You don't understand that I love you too much I don't want to see you hurt and crying.

Me: Its part of life.

He turns me around.

Nkazi: There will be people outside. To make sure you're safe. I will go fetch Kayla from the tournament and be back as soon as I can.

Me: Make love to me.

Nkazi: Zimasa.

Me: Nkazimulo.

I bend over and give him a clear view of me. He will not resist. This is vagina. Every man's weakness.

I feel his hands on my add. He's polishing it. He runs his finger all the way down to my vagina and stick it in. I moan. he pulls it out and insert the dick. I gasp and hold on tight to the toilet seat.

Nkazi: Fuck.

He whispers. I could feel butterflies in my stomach as he thrusts deeper and deeper.....

.....

ZANELE

After what felt like forever she comes out of the beauty room.

Me: Tell me the good news.

Noma: I wish. She was not there when we arrived.

Me: What do you mean?

Noma: I mean she was not there!

Me: You mean to tell me she's still alive?

Noma: She could be. Yes.

Tears fall involuntarily.

Noma: I'm sorry.

Me: No. You don't understand! He loves her!

Noma: Amantombazana are going to fix it.

Me: They will not. She carried him a child, if she is still alive they will fuck and she is going to conceive and do you know where that is going to put me?

I sit on the floor and cry. I am ready. I am ready for him to die.

Me: I'll make him the sacrifice.

Noma: Whoa.

Me: I will never share my husband. Right now, go and tell amantombazane I am offering Mulo.

Noma: You do know you cannot take that back right?

Me: I said do it!

I head out. I don't give a fuck anymore.....

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NKAZIMULO ZULU

The sun is about to set. She's sleeping, she has been since we finished taking a bath together after we had sex. I don't think I wanna go home today. I don't want this excitement to leave my heart but it is not fair on Zanele but it is not safe to leave Zimasa here alone. There could be guards outside but I cannot rely on them 100%.

I press her nostrils. She struggles to breathe and opens her eyes.

Me: I cannot stand how much you snore.

Zimasa: So you decided to kill me?

Me: I didn't. I needed a break. Hey.

Zimasa: I need to pee.

She gets up and grab the towel. I follow her.

Zimasa: Put boxers on please. .

Me: Why? Can't you handle this sexiness?

She laughs.

Zimasa: Oh please.

I look her.

Zimasa: What?

Me: What is it that you feel for me
MaHlongwane?

Zimasa: Huh?

Me: Are you here right now because of what you
heard from the sangoma or you're here because
you really want to be here with me.

Zimasa: I have always wanted to be here before I
even knew all that. You kept pushing me away.

Me: Its this conflict inside me. Right now I want to
go to her but I can't leave you alone.

Zimasa : Go. I'll go to my mother's house.

Me: No. I want to spend this night with you.

Zimasa: What does it mean for us? Will you not act like today didn't happen tomorrow?

Me: I won't.

Zimasa: Oh I'm officially a sidechick

She laughs. I bring her close.

Me: For now.

Zimasa: Are you planning on marrying me Mr Zulu?

Me: I could.

Zimasa: I don't see myself having an arrogant rude husband.

Me: We'll see about that.

I kiss her. I still feel like I am being selfish for making this official. I really don't know which extent would Zanele go to be my only wife. I told her Zimasa carried my child. I shouldn't have said

that. It will make her do things she wouldn't have if she didn't know that.....

.....

ZANELE

Me: My mother. My grandmother. My kids. My chances of bring a mother. My aunt. My mother in law. My siblings. Everyone I loved. I gave it up. Its not because I wanted to be wealthy. I did it all for him. I did it all for him to love me and be only mine. And I can't even offer him as a sacrifice. If he decides to marry her. What is going to become of me. I beg you. I beg you to fight for me.

I run out of words. Tears drop. I put out the candles and take off the cape. I go to my bedroom. I did all of this to never be those women who cry themselves to sleep waiting on their husbands to come home.

I know today he might not. He was angry when I left in the morning. It was vividly clear that whatever she feels for her it is strong. I wonder what happened to her....CCTV.

I get out of bed and rush to the monitor room. I search for last night's footage. I see her getting up from the couch heading up the stairs until he gets into the guestroom. I fast forward. She slept here. **NOMALANGA!!!!**

He drove away with her, in her car. I walk back to our bedroom and call him. He doesn't pick up. I send him a text. I'm going to go crazy. I scream and break everything I see.....

.....

ZIMASA

I wake up alone. Life of a sidechick. I check the time. I was working last night. Mike is gonna kill

me. Its close to 9am. I call him as I head to the toilet.

Mike: Baby girl.

Me: Oh you're not mad at me.

Mike: Nope. Nkazi told me you were drunk.

Me: Oh he did?

Mike: yeah. He says hi.

Me: Hi back.

Nkazi: Ntokazi.

Me: Hey. Why didn't you wake me?

Nkazi: I forgot. Don't leave. I'm coming back

Me: Why are you saying that infront of Mike?

“Zimasa Hlongwane!”

Nkazi: Who is that?

Me: I don't know. Let me check

“Zimasa! I know you're in there. Open this fucking door right now!”

Nkazi: That's my wife. Do not open the door.

Me: ok.

I hang up and wear the robe and open the door. The first thing I get is a slap across the face. I return it. She pushes me to the counter I hit my back. I grab the little flowerpot and toss it at her. It breaks on her head. She attacks with a toothbrush holder, it hits me on the mouth I bleed.

We grab each other and fight. She manages to pin me down and strangle me.

Her: I am going to kill you.

I'm running out of breath.....

.....

MIKE

He is driving like a maniac. He is beating the robots. He is not hearing a word I say.

Me: You said there were guards there.

Oh we're here. He hops out. I turn off the engine and follow him.

He takes the stairs. I am not doing that....

I ask the lady to take me to the room they are in and call the police. She does as told and I take the lift.....

When I open the door. He's shaking her, she is crying. He is asking her what happened. She is not saying anything. She has a knife in her hand, dripping blood. My eyes follow the trail of blood. Its coming from the bathroom.

Nkazi: Sthandwa sam talk to me. What happened.

I wish I can move my feet but I am afraid of what I am going to find in the bathroom.

He shakes her harder. The knife drops. She's shaking.

Nkazi covers her with his coat and sits her down.

Nkazi: Tell me what happened. Is she in there?

She nods.

Nkazi: Is she dead?

She shrugs.

I walk there slowly. Nkazi pushes me out of the way and get to her first. He is shaking her. She looks lifeless. I hope she is not because Zimasa will not escape this one...

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SEASON FINALE

ZIMASA

I didn't mean it. She stabbed me first. It was me or her. I fought. I got the knife and stuck it into her

stomach a couple of times. I didn't mean to hurt her. Police are everywhere. I am glued on this couch. There are paramedics, every one is moving up and down. I wish somebody could just wake me up from this nightmare.

I have a 5th scar on my body now. I am bleeding but nobody cares about me, I am still breathing. She could be dead.

Before he felt sick, he took me to EMnambithi. He took me to the river. He told me that's where I got my first scar, the one in the head. He said: I thought you were going to die. I watched your eyes roll back. I remember running home with you so tiny and pink in my hands bleeding. I was crying, calling my mother to come and help me. The whole neighbourhood came out. They all grabbed you and we ran to the clinic. 2 hours away, we kept you alive. I was chased out of the marathon team because I could not run but that

day I ran, without a break. I ran. You were still breathing but I was losing you.

The nurses asked nothing but took you away from me and we waited for the best or worst news. No amount of water calmed me down. I needed to know you were okay and you were going to be fine. Do you know what you did? You survived. You surprised the doctors. I stayed with you at a hospital for 6 months. Your mother and I took turns but I wouldn't leave the hospital. I would stay, because I felt like something will go wrong if I did. You're a fighter Mahlongwane. You fought pain that was way greater than you and that is you I want to be forever. A strong woman because one day I am going to be gone and you will have no shoulder to cry on. The only choice you will have will be to be strong.

He laughed and took my hand.

If a little me could survive that then there is nothing I cannot survive. I see a stratcher, she is on it with an oxygen mask, she is not dead she could still die but for now she is not and that is something.

“Sisi are you okay?”

One of the paramedics asks.

“No. She's bleeding”

Says another.

“She's lost a lot of blood. Get the other stretcher!”

Now I feel light. I see him. He is telling me to keep my eyes open.

Nkazi: Zimasa if you close your eyes I'm gonna kill you!

Only him can say that to a dying woman.....

.....

NKAZIMULO ZULU

They drive away with them. We follow with my work car. Mike is driving.

Mike: Zimasa doesn't have a good history with the law.

Me: She won't get arrested. I took care of it.

Mike: What did you do?

Me: I just have to be there when they both wake up and we discuss what we are going to tell the police.

Mike: Do you think your wife will let Zimasa not go to jail.

Me: If she wants Zimasa to go to jail then will go with her because she started it.

Mike: What are your intentions?

Me: With what?

Mike: Zimasa. I don't want your crazy ass wife trying to hurt her again.

Me: She will adjust to her presence.

Mike: What does that mean?

Me: Exactly that. I'm done talking.

I adjust my seat back. How did she know where Zimasa was and that she was alone?

We get to the hospital. We are told to wait. I don't have time to wait. I need to see them!

.....

Around 8pm, Mike left. I stayed here and I could not see them. They advised me to go home and come back in the morning but I stayed. And the morning staff woke me up. I went to get coffee and now I am waiting for a doctor to tell me I can see them.

Noma and Khosi appear out of nowhere. How did they know about this?

A Dr comes and tell them to follow him. They don't even greet me. I follow them.

Noma stops and looks at me.

Noma: Where do you think you are going?

Me: Where are you going?

Noma: To see our friend.

Me: My wife? Dr, do not let these women into my wives ward.

Noma: Unfortunately that is not for you to decide. That is why she called us here and not you.

I turn away. I look for another doctor. I find her about to get into Zimasa's ward.

Me: Excuse me.

Dr: Hi. Mr Zulu right, I'm about to check your....

Me: Girl friend. Can I see her?

She nods and open the door. She is wearing a gown.

Dr: Miss Hlongwane. What are you doing?

Zimasa: I can't- I can't be here.

Me: You're weak.

Zimasa: Take me home. I am fine. Just weak because-

Me: Because nothing. Sit on the bed and let the Dr check you out.

Zimasa: She is going to kill me Nkazi. She could've killed me!

Me: Dr, can I please talk to her?

Dr: Sure. I'll get the nurse to come and put the drip back.

She walks out.

Zimasa: Take me home. Please.

She is crying.

Me: I will be here until you get discharged.

Nothing is going to happen to you.

Zimasa: You said that yesterday. What did the man at the door do to protect me!

Me: You opened the fucking door! I told you not to. She could've killed you, you could've killed her and I would've lost you. Why don't you understand that I need you to stay alive so that I can love you! Why would you want to take you away from me? Perhaps we are not ready to do this. I told you she is dangerous. I told you she would hurt you, that is

why I need to stay away from you. I would rather not have you than to put your life in danger.

Zimasa: You're not doing this shit again.

Me: I have no choice but to.

The nurse comes in. I head out. I see Noma and Khosi getting into the lift. I go to Zanele's ward.

She is awake. I sit on the chair next to it.

Me: Zanele. I don't know what you said to your friends but I hope it is not killing Zimasa.

Zanele: You left your side of the bed at home cold to be with her.

Me: If there is somebody to kill it is me.

Zanele: I slept alone while my own husband slept in another woman's arms. I cried myself to sleep.

Me: From now on I will be home, in your arms. Every night. You don't have to worry about Zimasa anymore. .

Zanele: Did you have sex with her?

Me: No.

Zanele: I am going to have her killed. I don't care what you say.

I get up and head out. I need the restrooms. She's testing me.....

.....

ZIMASA

A few minutes after they leave the room. I go out and look for his wife. I find her 2 wards away from mine. She is talking to herself.

I get in and close the door.

Me: Now I remember where I know you.

Het: I'm gonna kill you.

Me: And you will be ruined. Do you remember that little lady you bought abortion pills from?

Her eyes widen.

Me: Yeah. That was me. Small world, isn't? Listen here you wicked witch, you might have killed my child but you will never, ever kill me. Now, if you kill me, the video of you getting termination pills from me will go viral. A whole CEO buying pills from black market? Is Nkazi going to stay? Or let you live? I don't know but it will ruin you babe. God forbid I die and you had nothing to do with it. So be a fucking good girl and let me be.

I limp out. I see Nomalanga Jones. She is friends with Nomalanga Jones? Oh no. I rush before she can see my face.

Nkazimulo Zulu truly does not deserve me. I am done.....

*

10 weeks later.....

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SEASON FINALE

NKAZIMULO ZULU

Me: And then one morning the bunny drove to a giraffe's house to-

Kayla: Drove?

Me: Yes Kayla it drove because the giraffe lived so far away. When it got there, it hugged the giraffe and told her I love you so much. I don't

ever want to lose you. You are my best friend! The end.

Them: Awww so cute. Read us another one.

Me: Oh no its 20:33. You should sleep.

Kutlwano: We are big girls now, we don't have a bedtime story.

Me: Oh really?

She nods.

Me: Ok let me switch off the lights then when I go out.

Them: No!

I laugh.

Me: See? You're little girls. Sleep tight my angels.

Them: Good night.

I kiss their little foreheads and leave the room. I find the gents still watching football.

Me: Ai I want to watch wrestling now.

Pele: But we are watching soccer. Are your friends asleep?

Me: Hopefully.

I didn't know women start ordering men around at such a young age. One day on our way from school, they told me, didn't ask but told me to create a bedroom for them in my house where they will sleep when they come for sleepovers. I was given 2 weeks to have it done. I did it. Every weekend they come here. I'm so glad that their parents trust me with them. These are my best friends. They don't like it when Pele and Mike are here because they feel like I give them more attention. I love them. I would be depressed without their cute little faces.

My phone rings.

Me: Sure.

Luc: I think she's had one to many drinks.

Me: Take her home. Or the vip.

Luc: Yes sir.

Yes. I am taking care of my woman. The money that I give her every month she drinks it every weekend. Very soon I will be paying for rehab. I have not seen Zanele in 9 weeks. One day I went to the hospital and she was not there. I appreciate the distance between us. I strongly believe we would've killed each other by now.

Reading bedtime stories has become my skill.
They make me sleepy.....

.....

ZIMASA

“The night is still young!”

We sing and down 4 shots in front of us. We were taken to the VIP because we were buying too much.

Lufhuno: Ok fuck this. Let's go home.

Martha: Were you not listening? The night is still a newborn.

We laugh.

Me: Just tell bae to come here. It'll be fun.

Lufhuno: She is Christian. She would never come to such a place.

Me: Oh ja. Request a ride home.

Lufhuno: I am not leaving you both here.

Martha: Go to Lemonade and come back later.

Me: Ehh. He is going to sleep as soon as he gets hoke lo. Let's just go. Tomorrow is still a day.

We finish our drinks and follow each other out dancing....

We have become the lives of every party we go to. I have been receiving money, I think its from Lindo. I have been drinking it, shopping and every useless thing. . It feels so good to chow money you did not work for. The nerve that men have!

He got married not so long ago. And he thinks its okay to send me money. I wish he dies so that I can go and claim he was my provider and I get to chow his policies.

Our ride arrives. We hop in and I am given the puking plastic. I am now carsick when I'm drunk. Wonders shall never end. Some girl made me lick the tyre one day and assured me that I wouldn't. Did I not mess up my new dress! I hate her.

As much as I have been gowishing over the past weeks, I am grateful of 1 thing: I fixed things with my best friend and now both my best friends are best friends. I love each and every moment with them....oh here it comes, I hate vomiting! What a waste of my expensive alcohol!.....

.....

As usual. I wake up to a terrible headache. I feel like I am going to die. Everything is felt, and

remembered. Amber and I physically fought it landed mom in hospital. She got discharged a day ago. I just need strength to go home and see her.

I keep on dreaming about that witch but I conquer her every time. She does not get tired. I am no longer in her man's life she must learn to leave me alone. Lately I have been focusing on me, my happiness and my work. I bought myself a brand new car, we went to Zanzibar with Martha. I have been living, stressed at most times but living, without a man. I have accepted the fact that I have the worst luck in men and I am going to be single until I feel the need to like a man again.

I don't want to lie. I had a pity party for about 2 weeks after Nkazi left me, again. I discharged myself from the hospital. As much as I knew she wouldn't risk getting exposed, I still couldn't risk getting killed.

Martha: Zim!

Me: Yah?

Martha: What happened to the booze!

Me: I don't know. Why?

Martha: There is no alcohol here!

Me: I'm coming.

I take off the heels and the dress. I put on a robe and go out. There are empty bottles. On top of the counter.

Me: What happened here?

Lufhuno: I think alcohol thieves came here, drank and cleaned.

Martha: All the alcohol? There's no way.

Me: And cleaned? That's crazy. Call the police.

Lufhuno: No. Let's check with the police. This complex does have cameras right?

Me: Yeah but hhaibo. This doesn't make any sense. This alcohol was poured down the sink.

Lufhuno: Whom else has the key besides us?

Me: Mike.

Shit. He wouldn't dare try me. I head back to my bedroom to bath. I am going to kill a man today.....

.....

ZANELE

“The day has come my daughter. When the sun rose today...it rose with good news. It told me you were ready...you are now a graduate....you carry the most powerful ability and that us to control minds....whatever it is that you want done, it is going to be done. Your husband, he will remain yours and yours alone. He shall find no woman attractive, every woman will smell like a bag of rotten potatoes. Your marriage has been strengthened. When you get there make sure you're the first person to see him; before that girl does and he shall forget her.....

Go home my child.....go home"

She pours ice cold water over my head and I gasp. I start walking, naked until I get to the hill where I find Nomalanga waiting for me. She gives me clothes. I dress up and we walk to the car.

It was a do or share my husband. I went to the headquarters of Amantombazane. I needed more strength to be able to control Mulo because that bitch was going to win. And nobody wins against me. That is my man!

.....

NKAZIMULO ZULU

Mike left with the girls in the morning. I bathed and now I am driving to mom's house.

I lock the gate. When I turn I see a car speeding straight into mine it almost hit it. Oh its her.

I smile. She has seen her empty bottles.

Why is wearing heels so early in the morning.
She's angry.

Me: Baby mama.

Zimasa: You piece of shit.

Me: How are you Mahlongwane?

Zimasa: Why won't you leave me alone?

Me: Because I love you.

Zimasa: You stole my key from Mike and got into my house and emptied my bottles? What the fuck is wrong with you!

Me: I have my own key and I'm tired of you drinking alcohol like an idiot. Fine at first I understood but now? You're becoming an alcoholic and you could be pregnant

Zimasa: I am not!

Me: I had a dream-

Zimasa: Listen here Nelson Mandela I don't care what you dreamt okay. Just leave me the hell alone please!

Me: No. Get in the car.

Zimasa: Fuck off.

She walks away to her car.....

.....

ZIMASA

As I reverse, I see a black G wagon. Its Nomalanga Jones. As it passes by me, she is also there.

I reverse and speed off before Nomalanga Jones sees me...

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SEASON FINALE

ZANELE

I am trembling. Noma is trying to calm me down. I can't. I can't. She saw him first. He's knocking on the window. I am running out of breath.

Noma: Zano. Calm down

Me: You don't understand!

I open the door on his face, it hits him. I hit him.

Me: Why! Why was she in my house!

He is trying to hold me. I am crying and scratching him. He grabs both my hands and pins me against the car.

Mulo: Calm down!

Me: No!

Mulo: Zanele. Look at me. Its not what it looks like. Please calm down.

Me: I want divorce.

Mulo: No. You're irrational right now. Let's get inside and talk like adults

Me: I am gone for a few weeks and the first thing I see when I get home is her! I am done Mulo do you hear me? Go inside and take everything that belongs to you and leave my house!

Noma: No. He must leave as he came. Even this car, leave it. He must walk. Let go of her. You're full of shit Nkazimulo. After everything she has done for you, for this marriage, you chose you thank her with that 18 year old cheap whore? You're ungrateful. Come sisi.

She pulls me and gets me in the car. I am really done. He stands still and watch the car as we drive in.....

.....

ZIMASA

My phone rings as I park at the chemist. Its him. He must just leave me alone.

.I get off and head inside. I buy pregnancy tests. A text comes through. Its him.

“Please fetch me. Zanele chased me out”

“now how is that any of my business?”

I am stressed. I haven't seen my menses in 2 months now. I could be really pregnant.

“Please MaHlongwane. I will pay you”

I sigh.

“Is Nomalanga Jones there?”

I am not going there if she is. I loathe that woman.

“I am heading to the garage. You will meet me on the way.” .

Okay better. I drive back.

In 15 minutes, I see him. I turn around. He calls me.

Me: Yes.

Nkazi: Reverse.

Me: You're a man. Run.

Nkazi: Why are you so evil.

Me: If you're not here in 2 minutes I am going to leave.

I hang up and look at him on the side mirror, he's running. Fascinating.

I drive off as soon as he gets in.

Nkazi: She thinks you slept there. .

Me: Its all your fault. Had you not broken into my house and poured out my alcohol I wouldn't have came into your house.

Nkazi: Its her house.

He leans back on the seat.

Nkazi: Zanele doesn't see me. She thinks a man has to have money in order to get respect. Her words always cut deep. Every once in a while she reminds me of how of much of a worthless man am I. How everything is hers, the house, the cars, and everything. I don't understand why would she go through so much trouble for me to love her if she is not willing to respect me as her husband. I wouldn't have never bring you to where we stay. I was mad you came there....please exit.

I ask nothing but do as told.

Nkazi: You know I never wished for another woman. I wished for her to respect me as much as I respect her.

Me: I'm sorry

Nkazi: Its okay.

He takes the plastic with tests.

Me: Where are we going?

Nkazi: My mother's house. So, you think you are pregnant.

Me: No but I have to be sure.

Nkazi: When was the last time you saw your courses? .

Me: I don't know

Nkazi: Zimasa

Me: What? I hate periods okay? So if I do not see them I get happy. And I wish I am not.

He sighs and turn up the volume.....

.....

ZANELE

I have cried my eyes out and its enough but I cannot stop. Noma gets in with a veg soup and I sit up right. Tissues are all over the floor. I can't stop picturing him with her, making love, laughing with her, telling her he loves her.

Me: I don't know if I can live without him.

Noma: Do you know what they say?

Me: No.

Noma: Bring your friends closer and your enemies even closer. Do not let that little girl take your husband. Call him right now and tell him to come home and talk. Tell him he can be with her, the closer she is the easier it is going to be to kill her. And you will have your man back.

Me: Pretend that I understand she is in his life?

Noma: Yes.

Me: I can't.

Noma: Do you love him?

Me: You know I do.

Noma: Then do it. It will only take less than a month to take her out.

She gives me the phone.

Noma: Call him.

I do.....

....

NKAZIMULO ZULU

My phone rings. Its her. I put it on silent.

Me: Zimasa

She comes out.

Me: What does it say?

Zimasa: Its negative.

I nod

Zimasa: Where do we stand?

Me: What do you mean?

Zimasa: I mean, who am I going to be in your life from today onwards?

Me: I want you to be my second wife.

Zimasa: Are you ready for that? Are you not going to wake up tomorrow and leave again as you always do?

Me: I am committed.

Zimasa: Do you promise?

Me: I promise. Nothing can keep us apart. I have seen. You are special to me. I love you Mahlongwane and I am done playing games.

Zimasa: Swear on your mother's grave.

Me: I swear on my mother's grave.

Zimasa: Are you going to stop being rude?

Me: That is who I am but I'll try.

She gives me the tests. They have 2 lines.

Zimasa: No fuss this time okay?

Mother gave me two children in that dream. She will never be out of my sight. We should get married before she starts showing.

Zimasa: Did you hear me? I don't want you controlling me.

Me: I will not.

I unlock my phone.

“ Please fire Zimasa tonight she's pregnant. She can't be hanging in those deadly poles”

I send to Mike and delete it. I stare at the tests.
This better be not a dream...

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SEASON FINALE

ONE MONTH LATER

ZIMASA

Mom thinks things are moving too fast but she is happy. She has no idea I am expecting. We are going to break the news after the negotiations. The 'I am pregnant' mentality is killing me. I am lazy. I have been up since 2am to cook, now I would kill for a bed. There's a lot of surprises today. They do not know I am willingly getting into a polygamous marriage.

Amber is here and helping out. We are not speaking though. She chowing Sabelo's savings while he rots in jail. Almost every day I get a call from Suncity and I decline it. I do not want troubles in my life. And Nkazi is too jealous.

Martha finds me peeing in the bathroom.

Martha: Go to sleep.

Me: I can't. Mom is going to complain.

Martha: Do you want to have dark circles under your eyes when your inlaws come?

Me: No.

Martha: Then go to sleep. Amber and I got this.

Me: I appreciate this so much.

Martha: You know I'd kill that Zanele for you.

We laugh. Speaking of Zanele, she invited me to lunch 2 weeks ago after Nkazi told her he is taking me as his second wife. She told me how much she is hurt about the whole thing but she agreed because her husband's happiness comes first.

She left a R1000 on the table for me to settle the bill when I finished eating. Rich ass wife. Of course Nkazi kept me in doors for 2 days as a punishment to put his kids in danger. I can't even wear heels because they are dangerous. I might trip and fall and get a miscarriage.

Its too much but I try to be understanding. Mike and my uncle will be representing me because we don't have old male relatives any more.

I hope every thing goes well. But it will. Bobo did his things last night and I am drinking some concoction he made me to keep me safe. It is a good thing we don't get to chose our destiny in life. I wouldn't have chosen Nkazi. I wouldn't have chosen to be his escape from his evil wife, while she could continue to do what she does and may end up succeeding in killing me.

My phone rings as I am about to fall asleep. Its him. Oh he's talking to me now. He found me eating cinnamon buns and got mad because there's a list of things that are not good for pregnancy that he sent me and the cinnamon is there. So he was mad at me.

Me: Hey.

He keeps quiet.

Me: Nkazi.

Nkazi: Zimasa.

Me: Hey.

Nkazi: Are you still okay?

Me: I am. Why are you up?

Nkazi: I can't sleep.

Me: What's wrong?

Nkazi: The cinnamon bun you ate.

Me: Its harmless Nkazimulo Zulu. I only ate 2 not the whole bakery.

Nkazi: Zimasa, you're still on the first trimester. You should be eating healthy.

Me: I am eating healthy. I just needed sugar.

Nkazi: You must eat normal muffins sthandwa sam. I miss you.

Me: Come see me.

Nkazi: Pele would kill me. I tried escaping but he caught me.

I laugh.

Me: I'm sorry babe.

Nkazi: Zanele and Nomalanga are coming to the ceremony.

Me: I don't want Nomalanga here Mageba.

Nkazi: I know. But that's Zanele's condition.

Me: Then she must not come. I can't be uncontrollable in my own home. .

Nkazi: I understand.

Me: Thank you. Let ne sleep.

I hang up before he can respond. I want to cry. I'm not going to be those obeying every thing kind of second wife. If that's her condition then she must not come. Its still going to happen either way.....

.....

ZANELE

I am awoken by my phone ringing. Its Mulo. I sigh and answer..

Me: Mageba.

Mulo: I'm sorry to wake you.

Me: Its okay. Is everything alright?

Mulo: Yes. Pele and Babomncane just left. About later, Zimasa is not comfortable with Noma coming.

Me: Haw Geba, who am I going to talk to when I get there? I know no one.

Nkazi: Bring Khosi at least

Me: Its too short notice. Is it okay if I don't come?

Nkazi: No. You have to come.

Me: I'll see who is available to come with me. Hopefully Lily isn't too busy.

Nkazi: Let's hope so. I'll see you later then. I love you.

Me: I love you too.

I hang up and take a deep breath. If she is not dying today then when!

Noma was going to poison her food today but now if she cannot come. When is that going to happen? I want my husband back. I hardly saw him this week. He was up and down. He spent on one night

here. He's staying at his mom's for now. He says we fight a lot when we're together. After these fucking lobola negotiations we're going to a marriage counselor to advice us on how to deal with each other. I was hoping she will be dead by then but now, my plans are disturbed.

I call Noma.

Noma: Hey.

Me: I'm sorry to wake you. That bitch says she doesn't want you to come to the celebration.

Noma: Why?

Me: He didn't say. How are we going to do this? She should not be here on Monday.

Noma: Throw a party tomorrow, to welcome her home.

Me: I can't host a party at such short notice Noma..

Noma: You can and you will.

Me: At least lunch.

Noma: Whatever it is. As long as we will both be present and I touch her with this.

Me: I don't understand why she can't be killed by anyone but you. I would've long killed her.

Noma: All in due time my baby. You will get your husband back. Any new leads with your father?

Me: Nothing yet. Let me wake up and go to the gym.

Noma: Everything is going to be fine.

Me: It doesn't feel like that anymore.

Noma: Have faith.

Me: I'll try.

I hang up. Finding my father is my marriage's last hope.....

.....

ZIMASA

My mom's side of the family arrives in a quantum. The rich aunts and cousins in their cars. This side of the family is very dramatic. I wish my dad had any close relatives but there is no one. We just have the Mlotshwa's in our lives and I don't like them so much. I was called an hour ago to confirm that I do know the Zulus.

The stretch tent has been up since 5 and the deco is done. I am watching through the window. I am not happy with this outfit. Its too tight. Mom comes in. She is already dressed up. We smile.

Mom: Why are you not dressed?

Me: Its right.

Mom: What do you mean?

Me: I need something else to wear.

Mom: The ceremony is starting in a few minutes
Ngwane.

Me: Do you think I am making the right choice?

Mom: What I think does not matter, what do you think?

Me: I am not too sure but I love him but its going to be a hell of a marriage.

Mom: No polygamy is a joy ride. But whatever happens, just know that lobola or marriage isn't jail, you can always back out and come back home.

Me: Thank you mama.

Mom: Your father is proud of you. You took care of us before you left for a man. I couldn't be more grateful for you. I love you so much.

Me: I love you more.

Mom: Get ready okay. Your inlaws have started arriving. I can't wait to see my son in law.

I chuckle.

I get up. She is still here. I can't undress in front of her. She will see the bump.

Mom: Undress. I will help you put the dress on.

Me: Amber said she will. Please tell her to come.

She smiles and nod. She walks away.

I lock the door and try to be as quick as possible.
My make up is sweating off by the time I am done.
Martha walks in. Just in time.

Me: Please zip me up.

Martha: Zanele is here with Nomalanga Jones.

My armpits itch.

Me: Please zip me up.

She does and I walk out the door as soon she
finish. I head straight to the tent. Tears are always
gushing down by the time I get to them.

I grab her and pull her to the gate. I don't know
where is this power coming from. I am angry.

Noma: Little girl let go of me!

Me: Why are you here?

Noma: I came to support my friend!

I slap her

Zanele: Zimasa!

People hold her when she tries to hit me.

Me: Why did you bring her here?

Zanele: I'm sorry. She was the only friend available

Me: I don't want her here. I don't want this woman anywhere near me Zanele do you hear me? I want her gone!

Noma: Well tough luck cause I am not going anywhere. Do you think this is easy for Zanele? You want her to have no one by her side while she watches you take her husband away? Think again.

Me: Well if it means having you here then she can take her husband and you all fuck off

Mphumeleli's house!

I kick the heels off and run off. I don't wanna be here. I can't be here!

I am getting dizzy. I hear a car honk and tyre screeching and I am down. Screaming follows.....

“ZIMASA!!!!!!

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NKAZIMULO ZULU

Her mother is sitting on the opposite row of chairs. This isn't how I imagined meeting my mother in law.

I am still shivering but its 29° outside. My intestines turned and became ice cold. I can't help but think of the worst that could've happened if I didn't brake sooner. We haven't said much to each other. She is just staring at me. I have been getting up and going to get some fresh air. And now I am about to do that cause she hasn't blinked in a minute. I wonder what is she thinking.

Mrs Hlongwane: If her father was here, he wouldn't have allowed it.

She says as I get up. I sit down.

Mrs Hlongwane: She meant the world to him. If you wanted to get to Mphikeleli's good books, you had to love Zimasa and treat her with kindness. She had a friend, Lufhuno. Her father adored him cause we all could see he loved her, he protected her. With you, he would've chased your people out the moment they said she is going to be a second wife because he would've felt like you will not be able to give her enough love and polygamous marriages involve a lot witchcraft and that is not the life we want for our daughter. I am not too sure if I should ignore my gut and let you marry my daughter Zulu. You don't seem to have control over your wife.

Me: I love your daughter and I was rushing to your home to make Nomalanga Jones leave after my brother told me she had come. I'm really sorry.

Mrs Hlongwane: I am refusing with my daughter's hand.

Me: Ma-

Dr: Miss Hlongwane?

We get up.

Mrs Hlongwane: I am her mother.

Me: I am her-

Mrs Hlongwane: Nothing. I am family.

Dr: Please come with me.

She follows her. I sit down and stand up again. I see Zanele coming my way.

Me: Well are you happy now?

Zanele: Happy about what? I came here to offer support. How is she?

Me: Why do you care? Why did you bring her?

Zanele: I didn't think it would be a problem Mageba. We were going to stay at the back and not cause trouble. She came out and dragged Noma away. Had she been civil, we would be at her home celebrating your love.

Me: Did you make this happen? Did you do something for this day to go wrong?

Zanele: Hhaibo Nkazimulo. I am your wife. You don't get to treat me this way!

Me: I wouldn't put it past you, its not like you're happy I am marrying her!.

Zanele: Yes I am not but there isn't anything I can do about it. Right now you're using my card to settle the bill, I could take it and-

Me: And what?

I take it out.

Me: Take it. Right now. I am sick and tired of you feeling all superior than me just because you think you have more money than I do. You're not going to bully me about that anymore.

Zanele: I shouldn't have came here. This girl definitely fed you a love potion. And I Zanele Zulu cannot do anything except sitting and watching where this is going.

I get up and head to the exit. When I get to the parking lot. I see her. I head to her. I pun her against the car with my elbow on her neck.

Me: If anything happens to her. I am going to fucking murder you. Do you hear me!

Someone pulls me off her. She gasps for air. I am cuffed and dragged away. I will still kill her if anything happens to Zimasa and my kids.....

.....

ZIMASA

"The babies are fine" has been stuck on my mind. Babies? 2 of Nkazi's genes on this planet? Being their mother? Raising them? Plus him on top.

And in 9 months time I'm gonna have to push them out my tiny vagina hole? Why does God hate me so much?

Mom: Zimasa!

I startle.

Mom: Did you hear me?

Me: what did you say? Sorry I'm just distracted.

Mom: Why didn't you tell me you are pregnant?

Me: We were going to announce it today.

Mom: I am your mother. You're pregnant for a married man and I do not trust that wife of his.

Me: I have it under control.

Mom: I don't want you to marry him.

Me: What do you mean?

Mom: He is not good for you.

Me: Well, are you not a bit too late to say that?

Mom: No. He has no control over his wife and a man who cannot put his wife in place cannot be trusted. He can't protect you from her.

Me: I can protect myself.

Mom: Is this what your father would've wanted for you?

Me: Mom please don't start. I know what I am getting myself into. And you need not to worry. Is he here?

Mom: Maybe.

Me: Give us your blessings. Do you want your grandchildren to be born out of wedlock?

Mom: If that wedlock has another wife then I do not mind them being born at home.

Me: I will be fine. We love each other.

Mom: Love isn't enough. Is there security?

Me: There is.

Mom: You could've died if that car hit you. That seems like witchcraft to me.

Me: But it did not. That means I am protected.

Mom: You really irritate me when you're stubborn.

The dr walks in with a discharge form.

Dr: Monday morning please do visit a doctor with this note and mama please make sure she doesn't get too worked up because her sugar levels are a

bit unstable. Shall you feel light headed please consult a doctor immediately.

Me: I will do.

Dr: Here are your meds. Don't take anything not prescribed.

Me: Thank you doctor.

Mom takes the meds and put them in her bag. We still have time to resume the celebration.....

....THE FOLLOWING DAY....

My body hurts. When we got home the party began, Pele had to go and fetch Nkazi from the police station. He was trying to assault Nomalanga Jones.

None of that matters now because we had fun on our day of reunion. We didn't announce the pregnancy. We'll just tell close friends when we are ready.

As usual, my full bladder shakes me up. He is fast asleep. He drank his poor liver out last night and made us laugh the whole night.

The drive here felt like a Trevor Noah show. He headed straight to the bedroom and passed out.

I finish peeing and get out. He is not there anymore. I search for something to wear. I find his robe. I put it on and head out. He is coming up with a box.

Me: What is in there?

Nkazi: Come and see.

We walk into the bedroom. He gives it to me.

Nkazi: Open it.

Me: What is it?

Nkazi: Open it.

He looks excited. I pray I like it because if I don't.
That excitement is going to wash off.

I undo the bow and open. Its flowers and a box of
a ring I assume. I take it and open it. It is a pear-
shaped diamond ring.

Nkazi: Do you like it?

Me: I love it babe its so beautiful.

I jump on him. He falls with me.

Me: Haw baby.

Nkazi: You're 3 people. Even superman cannot
carry 3 people at once.

I laugh and kiss him. I send my hand down to his
boxers. He grabs it.

Nkazi: The kids.

Me: What kids?

Nkazi: In your stomach. We will hurt them.

Me: What?

Nkazi: We need a Drs go ahead.

Me: Pregnant women do have sex.

Nkazi: We will have it tomorrow if the doctor if the doctor says yes.

Me: You're joking.

Nkazi: I'm not. Let me eat you uo.

Me: I want a penis.

Nkazi: It is not safe.

He moves me aside and gets up.

Nkazi: Let's take a bath. Zanele invited us.

Me: I'm not going.

Nkazi: We are going. We're a family now.

He picks me up and goes to the bathroom.....

.....

ZANELE

I position Nomalanga's chair next to Zimasa's. She can't sit next to my husband today and she can't

choose where to sit because this isn't her house. Its mine and we live by my rules.

Khosi: She will never forget.

Me: She deserves a bit of love before she dies. Because honestly today has to be the day. I don't know how long I can keep up with this act. Sleeping alone burns my skin.

Khosi: Noma is in spirits today. It is going to be quick.

My phone beeps.

“I am running late hun.”

Me: she is running late. The couple will be here very soon.

“Zanele!”

Me: Oh they're here. The garden!

They are matching.

Me: You look beautiful.

Zimasa: It was a coincidence.

Me: One thing about him. He wears nothing but white. Let me see if I can get a matching dress. This is my friend Khosi. Khosi this is my sister wife Zimasa.

Khosi: You're so cute.

Zimasa: Thank you.

Mulo: Sidla nini? Ngilambile. Is Ndalo joining us?

Khosi: Yes he is. Let us go change.

Me: Make yourself at home Zee.

Zimasa: Thank you.

We leave them and go inside.

Me: Imagine having to do that for a day more yoh no. She has to die tonight.

Khosi: Calm down mama.

I wish I could. I really wish I could.....

.....

Ndalo arrives as we finish changing. We introduce Zimasa and sit down to eat.

Mulo: uhm before we start. I would like to announce something.

Khosi: You've decided to quit your job and get a decent one since you have two wives now.

I so wish because he is not getting a cent from me anymore.

He chuckles.

Mulo: No. I will never quit my job and I can afford both my wives thank you Khosi.

Afford my foot.

Mulo: We have new family members coming.

I hope he is not saying what I think he is.

Khosi: You're pregnant?

Zimasa: We are.

They look at each other and smile. I try to smile but I fail.

Khosi: So fast.

Zimasa: It's the second time.

Khosi: What happened with the first one?

Zimasa: I got a miscarriage. But there's nothing I would not do for my fiancé, I decided to give him another one, got doubled it up this time.

She's looking straight into my eyes brushing her stomach and the bling in her hands blinds me.

Me: Mulo, can we talk?

"Family. I hope I am not too late"

Her face turns. Noma sits next to her. Now let's see if those babies are going to live....

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ZIMASA

I can't control my breathing but I am trying to remain calm.

Khosi: How is pregnancy treating you so far?

Me: Its crazy. You know how- oh you guys don't have kids. You wouldn't know.

Noma: And we don't wanna know. We busy women aren't interested in falling pregnant. Especially for married men.

I turn to her.

Me: but you do know how pregnancy feels like Sizakele Dlamini. Or you've never told your friends?

Khosi: Okay that's it. You've got a stinking attitude.

Me: Oh I wonder if I did not inherit it from a woman who chose a flashy life over her own child.

I am looking her dead in the eye.

Zanele: Mulo get your dog on the leash. Why does this girl hate my friend so much!

Zimasa: Because I don't want to be in her presence! I feel like if I am she is going to realize its me and finish me off!

Noma: Do I look a killer to you?

Me: Yes. You do look like a kiler Siza-

She slaps me.

Noma: Stop calling me that!

I slap her back.

Nkazi holds me.

Nkazi: Calm down Mahlongwane. Calm down.

Me: I was only a child. Why couldn't you give me to mu dad? He wouldn't have stopped you from joining that stupid cult you sick twisted witch.

I pick up a jug and throw it at her. It breaks on her forehead, she falls down. I hope she's dead.....

.....THE END.....