



Chapter 1

"The meeting of two people it's like the contact of two chemicals : if there is any reaction, both are transformed." - Carl Jung

I look around, awake cannot seem to move I know I need to get away before I lose my sanity. Every minute that passes, I feel like I am becoming a ticking time bomb. The years of silence and endless sacrifice finally catching up with me, the years of taking a care a fully grown up man, the years of putting up with both the verbal and the emotional abuse. I laugh aloud as I reminisce over the pathetic advises that my mother and the other married women gave me on my wedding day, truth be told none of them fully prepared me for what lay

ahead. I thought marrying him would be a dream come true a fairy-tale but the fairy-tale ended before it could even begin. It ended the very night my wedding night ended.

I look at my husband and I slip off the bed, he is snoring and he turns farting in the process as he scratches his big fat belly, if he were a woman I would say he is heavily pregnant. I cannot help but wonder what attracted me to him and why I fell for him. He is gigantic, fat with a very pregnant tummy while on the other side I am petite with frail little body. Sometimes I look more like his daughter than his wife. I guess the years of being at the receiving end from him and his family also have a hand in my body

size.

Tumelo: “Inathi, what is the meaning of this? Why did you not wake me up?”

I set my cup of coffee down and look at my bags once more. This is it, it either now or never. I convince myself once more that I am doing right by me, for once I am going to put myself first instead of my husband, his family, his career or his children first. For the past 8 years, everything has always been all about him and today I need to make everything about me. While my age mates are out there busy building their careers as chartered accountants, bank managers, engineers and all sorts, I am stuck home to take care of my husband as

well as his 2 illegitimate children. A constant reminder of his infidelity, as if it is not enough, he is now going out there embarrassing me, showing the world the shame and disappointment I have settled for.

Inathi: "You have a cell phone Tumelo, its time you use it to wake you up."

Tumelo: "What did you just say? No scratch that, what are the bags for? Do I have an upcoming trip I forgot about?"

Inathi: "No you are not going anywhere, but I am, Tumelo. I need a break from all this."

(He looks at me and burst out laughing. I

look at him sternly waiting for him to finish.)

Tumelo: “Don’t think it is a bit too early for you to be throwing your usual dramatic tantrums and tactics. She says she needs break!

(Chuckles) Just what do you think this is Inathi, some sort of workplace where you get breaks and holidays?”

Inathi: “I need to be free, to spread my wings and learn to fly again. I need some air, I’m suffocating. I can’t be taking care of you and your children all the time.”

Tumelo: “How many times should I say it Inathi, it’s our children not my children,

ours.”

Inathi: “I don’t have time to do this. I will be back tomorrow, in the meantime learn to do things by yourself. The children are still sleeping their bus will be here anytime. Try not to burn the house down.”

(I reach for my bag)

Tumelo: “If you walk out through that door Inathi, don’t bother coming back.”

(I look at him as much as I hate doing this but it has to be done. For myself, no one else but myself. I look at my husband one

last time and walk out of my marital home.)

I spend the whole day pampering myself something I never get to do. Bontle will only be able to join me for lunch to kill time I get my hair done at Maxine Makeup and Hair Studio following by a spa retreat. My phone has been ringing none stop from my mother and aunt, I knew they will be the first people he runs to but I need to do this and it is not like I expect them to understand, frankly it is only those who have walked this journey who truly ever understand.

After my spa, I have my lunch at Table 52 waiting for Bontle to grace me with her presence.

Bontle: "Tell me my eyes are deceiving me. Is this really you?"

Inathi: "In flesh, your eyes are working perfectly fine."

Bontle: "Tell me what you have done with Gog'Ina?"

Inathi: "Bontle!"

Bontle: "(Hugging me) Oh! Ina I am proud you finally decided to take my advice."

Inathi: "I am glad you talked me into this. As much as I hate to admit but this was much needed."

Bontle: "I am always right. Nevertheless, none of that it is important, come on let us eat. We have some shopping to do after this."

(Just then, my phone decided to ring. I pull it out and look at it. I roll my eyes and put it back.)

Inathi: "He has been calling none stop."

Bontle: "He will be strong today it's all about you."

(After lunch, we go shopping at Game city followed by her house in Extension 10. She is keen on the idea of going out; I actually thought we would watch movies and drink the night away.)

Inathi: "I can't believe I let you talk me into buying this. I cannot wear this Bontle. It is too revealing."

(I point out as I pull the black body con dress down. I feel exposed and more like if I will go out wearing this, I will just be exhibiting my body for all the perverted men out there.)

Bontle: "You are so used to wearing baggy clothes like you are grandmother. You are so used to being shut down. (She takes my hand and makes me stand in a mirror) Look at that girl Ina, that young girl with beautiful marble eyes staring back at you is you before Tumelo stole all your confidence. I understand that you are married but do not

let this marriage steal so much from you. You are stunning Ina. (She beat my hand away) You look stunning.”

Inathi: “I don’t know Bontle I feel like I am betraying Tumelo. Maybe I should go back home. This is not how a married woman should behave.”

Bontle: “(Rolling her eyes) this is not about Tumelo or his bastard children. Tonight is all about you. Now whether you like it or not we are going out and end this day on a high note.”

Inathi: “Alright Cardet Cutie”

Bontle: “And we are leaving behind your ring and cell phone.”

Inathi: “(groaning) Bontle”

Bontle: “I am listening; I am not having any of it Nathi.”

(2 hours later, we are sitting in Avani Resort having our cocktails. I look around and feel out of space. It is obvious that this place is for classy people and I am totally out of my league here. I glance at the bar behind me and my eyes land on a particular man sitting by the bar, the last buttons of his shirt undone and tie loose. He looks tired holding a glass of whisky in hand, I watch

as he gulps down the contents in the glass. He has the most awkward yet mesmerising eyes ever with an unusual colour almost copper glinting the sun, black eyebrows and eyelashes. He has dark stubble on his face and his mouth quick upward to reveal very beautiful perfect white teeth. He says something to his friend who twirls around looking my way. I am immediately embarrassed to be caught starring.)

Bontle: “He is quite a catch!”

Inathi: “(innocently) who?”

Bontle: “The guy you have been undressing with your eyes for the past 5 minutes or so.”

Inathi: “(defensively) I was not undressing him.”

Bontle: “You can have him just for tonight. Have a feel of what good sex is. We both know Tumelo is one stingy man and does not care about your pleasure with his tickling tiny crotch.”

Inathi: “(warningly) Bontle! Have some respect that’s my husband you’re talking about.”

Bontle: “(she waves her hand carefree dismissing everything I just said.) I am not insulting him. I am telling it how it is. Anyway, if I were you I would forget about

Tumelo and have that finer breed tonight. “

(She says as she stands on her feet)

Bontle: “I am going to talk to that guy he has been staring at me the whole night. Try not to sulk about your miserable marriage while I am gone and actually let loose and have fun tonight.”

(With that, she leaves me to my boring company. I order one more drink and continue enjoying my mojito enjoying the lively music.)

“Care if I join you?” a deep masculine voice

says behind me as I drowned into his woodsy musky scent with a hint of spice. He moves to stand in front of me, the hunk from the bar. Beautiful is an understatement for him; he looks like some Greek God, a masterpiece of God's finer work. His olive dark skin, his broad shoulders and chest that the immaculate suite could not hide. Thick wavy black-as-in-sin hair crowned his jaw structured features. He has this dark aura that I can't explain and power of him radiating through me. Towering over me, he looks like a complete dreamboat.

"Yes! Have a seat." I finally manage to say, my voice sounding huskier than normal, my heartbeat escalates and body hums with tingling sensation.

“Raphael!” he says in a low raspy voice and smouldering eyes. I extend my hand not prepared for the effect; electric sparks fly as our hands meet. The connection is too deep to deny and this stranger has unamiable effect on me that sends my brains on frenzy.

“Inathi!” I say lowly as my tongue dart out to moisturise my almost dry lips.

Raphael: “I am not a man of many words I am just going to be frank with you, I would like to spend the night with you, ravish you the whole night and slip away from your bed in the morning as if nothing has happened.”

I choke on my drink; I didn't expect him to be so darn straight. Nonetheless, his words warm me up, this hunk finds me attractive enough to take to his bed. Heat rolls through my body, from my hidden aching breasts down to my belly coiling tightly to a throb between my legs. I look down at my finger, where my wedding band is missing before I get any second thoughts I blurt out.

Inathi: "on one condition, I get to come first."

INATHI! My inner woman warns me but I am not having any of it tonight. Tonight is all about me as Bontle said. "What am I doing?" I do not know this man from a bar of soap yet I am ready to throw my

marriage vows away and jump in bed with him. He could be a mass murderer for all I know. Killing his victims with his sheer beauty.

Raphael: “(flashing me a daring cocky smile) I will be waiting upstairs.”

(He hands me his room access card and smiles, lips curling and eyes twinkling. Kill me now! My fingers dig a little deeper, just so I remain or I will be swooning at his feet in a pool of wet mess.)

(I gulp down my drink with the urgency to leave soon and attend to my suppressing needs. The minute I step into his hotel room,

he is all over me. Pinned against the wall his hands cup my face and my stomach flutter with butterflies as his cold lips meet with mine. His tongue slips inside my mouth exploring every crook and crevice. The ache between my legs blooms as powerfully as I feel his crotch harden against my belly. As if he can sense that my knees are wobbling, he gently picks me up and walks towards his bed. His eyes promising nothing but a night of pure passion.

Chapter 2

“We revisit old feeling for the same reasons we re-read books- comfort in words familiar even though we know the endings.” –

Unknown

I stare into the mirror my lips are swollen and my hair is all over the place evidence of the rough but amazing night I had. I splash water over my face before I tiptoe back to the bedroom. I try looking for my undies but I cannot find them. Instead, I slip on my wrinkled dress.

I look at him once more, knowing that I will never forget him or the previous night. He is so handsome laying there between the

white covers. He is an epitome of African men. I know this is my cue to leave before I break all the rules of our agreement. I scribble down a message for him.

“Thank you for last night. Take care Ina.”

With the note by the pillow where I slept, I slip out of the room. I am not ready to head home and let Tumelo ruin my day. So instead, I decide to go to Bontle’s apartment.

I step out of the hotel into the street. The sunshine on my face, it is good enough keep me warm, the hail of the morning has worn off leaving behind a bit chilly wind. The fragrances of sweat, colognes, food,

and coffee clung in the air. People in all different attires were walking in all directions, it was the busiest hour of the morning with every one going to work. I smile to myself as I wait to cross the road. I have not felt this good in a while.

“Power of a good dick with a good game neh?”

My inner women with a smug look on her face makes the comment that I absolutely ignore. I do not have time to deal with Pequeño and her nasty comments today. A spanish name for Petty!

Inathi: “B are you home?”

(I call out for her as I step into her apartment. I used my set of spare keys to let myself in.)

The first thing I do is kick off the heels and slip my feet into her comfortable sleepers.

Bontle: “(calling out) I am in the bedroom.”

(Walking into her room, I drop myself her bed and watch with admiration, as she gets ready for work. Part of me envious, Bontle is an independent woman who is busy climbing the ladder in the corporate world as a chartered accountant. While I got married immediately when I finished my high school, she and other girls my age went to varsity to pursue their studies more.

I tried to go to school but Tumelo and his family believes a woman should stay home and take care of the family. I once took classes learning to play a violin but never got to finish it because I had to take care of his first born when the mother decided to dump him on our doorstep.)

Bontle: “(waving a hand in front of me)
Hello anybody home?”

(I immediately snap out of my extravagant conceit and look at her.)

Inathi: “I am sorry baby you were saying?”

Bontle: “Never mind, you look miles away what is wrong?”

Inathi: "Nothing just thinking about Tumelo. I am wondering if they are coping in my absence."

(She rolls her eyes at me. According to Bontle, I should leave Tumelo and actually try to turn my life around. She hates the idea of me being nothing but a housewife to a man who is emotionally abusive.)

Bontle: "Don't bore me tu! My day just started. However there is someone I would very much want to talk about."

Me: "Who?"

Bontle: "The hunk from last night? The one who you spent the night with?"

Me: "What about him?"

(I do not even try to deny the fact that I spent the night with him.)

Bontle: "What is his name? What does he do? At least tell me you got his number?"

Me: "I forgot his name. Moreover, no I did not get his number. He was just a booty call B, nothing more."

(I lie through my teeth how can I forget his name when he made sure his name stays at the tip of my tongue the whole night. Raphael! As if it is a tattoo imprinted in my brain.)

Bontle: "Please tell me you are kidding, you let him go without even getting his number."

Me: "Yes I did. I am happily married Bontle. Activities of last night should remain in the past. "

(I reply her as I slip my wedding ring back into the finger and reach for my phone.)

Bontle: "If you were happily married like you claim to be, you wouldn't seek pleasure from total strangers and take breaks from the marriage. I just fail to understand you at times."

(She says as she walks out of the room. I do not expect her to understand. 7 years of marriage is not something I can just throw down the drain like sewage. Not after all my patience, compromises and perseverance.)

I step out of the shower feeling refreshed. Bontle has left to work leaving me in her apartment. I am not yet ready to go home and face the music. So instead, I get in bed intending to get some sleep.

I roll my eyes as I receive an incoming call from my mother. So much for a peaceful day! This old woman can't seem to get the message that I don't want to talk to her at the moment. Therefore, I have no choice but to take her call.

Inathi: "Mma!"

Gloria: "Inathi Jessica Modise, are you trying to embarrass me and the whole of the Khumalo clan?"

Inathi: "(sarcastically) I am good ma! Thank you for asking. How about you? Are you well?"

Gloria: "Hey! I do not have time for your clever mouth right now. Mokgwenyane called saying you left home saying you need some break. Are you insane?"

Inathi: "I am tired ma! I do need a break."

Gloria: "They must be bewitching you. A break from what exactly? Young lady stop this nonsense once and for all. Return home before I send your uncles there to talk some sense into your stubborn head."

Inathi: "With all due respect mama but you have no idea what I have to put up with in that house. I don't expect you to understand, sethako se fisa morwadi."

Gloria: "So what? You think we got where we are by running off every time the heat got stronger? No one promised you that marriage would be a walk in the park. Return home this instant Inathi and stop behaving like a spoilt brat."

(She flicks her tongue before hanging up.)

“She has a nasty attitude.” Pequeño makes her presence known. While other people were blessed with wise peaceful inner women I was given a petty nasty old woman who calls everyone cunt and lives to make my life living hell.

Immediately after my mother’s call, I get another incoming call from Tumelo. They are failing miserable at picking the signs. I have no wish to talk to anyone. I should be enjoying my break not being bothered from left to right.

Inathi: “RragweTumisho?”

Tumelo: “ Inathi? Tell me mogatsake, when are you intending on returning home?”

(It’s as if him and mom are cut from the same cloth, or grew up in the same household, taught no cell phone manners.)

Inathi: “I thought you said I must not bother coming back.”

Tumelo: “(sighs) I say a lot of things when I am mad which I never really mean. The boys need you.”

(Aha! I knew there has to be something.)

Tumelo: “Plus my brother the one who lives

abroad he is in the country for a few days and he would like to finally meet you.”

Inathi: “As I already said I will be home tomorrow I am sure you and the boys can survive one more night without me. Your brother I can always meet him tomorrow for how long is he visiting?”

Tumelo: “I forgot to ask him.”

Inathi: “Okay. I will come home the next day.”

Tumelo: “Okay, I guess I will have to buy takeaways again today. I just wanted you to know that we miss you and I love you Ina.”

Inathi: "Okay. I love you too RragweTumi. "

(I hung up and almost feel guilty for taking this break more especially knowing that my husband can't even cook to save his own life. I can't help but wonder about his brother, half brother. He and Tumelo share a father. Apparently, he left Botswana to the UK for further studies and did not return afterwards instead he started working there and lives there. Tumelo has been missing him I guess he is thrilled that he finally decided to visit after disappointing him on our wedding day. Enough with the mysterious brother it is time I catch some sleep.

I put my head on the pillow and let my

thoughts wander off to Raphael. How his sweet seductive voice felt against my skin as he spread kisses and whispered sweet words. I never had a man worship my body as he did. He awakened and ignited fire on parts of my body that I thought were dead. With a smile on my face, I fall into a deep sleep with only beautiful thoughts of Raphael!

CHAPTER 3

"Every night she lies awake blaming insomnia. But it's her troubled thoughts that keep her restless. Wondering if she will ever find her peace of mind." - NH

Back to reality, it was fun while it lasted. By lunchtime, the Deluxe Cab pulls in front of my marital home in Block 7. I take a huge breath; it is time to do this. I give myself a pat in the back as I open the door.

"You can do it Ina I trust you. Fighting", Pequeño cheers for me as I open the door and step inside. The first thing I notice is Tumisho and Katleho sitting on the carpet watching cartoons.

Inathi: "Hey boys!"

The look on their faces is priceless as they look at me and get up running my way. I put my bag down so I can receive their affectionate hugs. They might not be biologically but I love them like they are mine moreover they too innocent to know what is happening.

Tumisho: "Mommy!"

Inathi: "(kissing their foreheads) my two favourite boys in the whole worldwide."

Tumisho is turning 8 this year. A child who

was born 3 months prior to our wedding. He had been seeing the woman behind my back for almost a year and even had the decency to marry me knowing he has impregnated Mbali. Or maybe it was because our marriage was long arranged by our parents that's why he felt obligated to marry me instead of his pregnant lover. 3 years down the line after countless tries to have a child of our own , Mbali once more came with another child Katleho. To prove that I was the infertile one my husband impregnated her. While she became the child bearer, I become the child caretaker.

It is not like i had much of choice but had to accept that I will have to take care if his children because I failed to give him children of our own. I failed to "that swa lesire" as my mother in law would say when

she wanted to tell me how much I do not suit her child. If it was up to her I wouldn't even be married to Tumelo. In her eyes, Mbali would be a better suiting wife to her precious son.

Katleho: "(excitedly) mama!"

Inathi: "(picking him up) Katli wa mama!"

Tumelo appears by the door wearing an apron over. Poor thing! He looks exhausted. I walk to him and kiss him lightly.

Inathi: "Hi"

Tumelo: "MmaModise, we missed you."

Inathi: "I can tell. What are you doing?"

Tumelo: "Clearing the dishes from last night?"

Inathi: "You cooked?"

Tumisho: "No! Mommy-Mbali came here and cooked for us. She even....."

(Tumelo moves and covers his son's mouth with his hand.)

Inathi: "(calmly) OH! I see! Let me change and prepare for your lunch. Katli what would you like to have for lunch, my boy?"

Katleho: "Meat!"

Inathi: "Meat it is."

(I put him down and pick my handbag where I left it.)

Here I have been feeling guilty for sleeping with a stranger. Whereas he was busy playing happy family with his mistress. It should not hurt anymore, I should be used to it moreover I am no different from him. However, it still hurts does. At least if he respected our marital home.

(I walk to our bedroom with him trailing

behind me and stare at our bed wondering
if he did the deed with her on our bed

Tumelo: “Baby I can explain.”

Inathi: “Don’t it is okay. She is the mother of
your children after all. “

Tumelo: “You are scaring me, why are you
not shouting? Throwing things at me as
usual?”

Inathi: “Will it stop you from seeing her? Will
it stop you from disrespecting our marital
home?”

(He opens his mouth to say something but
to only close it again.)

Inathi: "I thought so."

Tumelo: "I didn't do anything with her, I swear. She only came to check on the children and could not go because it was already late. So I let her use the guest room."

Inathi: "Okay."

Tumelo: "Darn it! Inathi say something?"

Inathi: "What could I possibly say? I have long accepted that I share you with Mbali. I guess I have to prepare for baby number 3."

(I say as I walk back to the kitchen and prepare them lunch. While they enjoy their meal, I go back to the room and change the bedding. I sit down and let the tears fall. Maybe Bontle is right why I am holding on when at the end of the day I keep getting hurt repeatedly.)

“Stop playing victim Ina, You and Tumelo same WhatsApp group. You also cheated on him. The only difference is that he got caught.” the old woman in me once more argues.

She is absolutely right! While Tumelo has no burden because I know about his shenanigans. I carry a burden on my shoulder a heavy secret that I cheated.

(I reach for my phone and call Bontle.)

Bontle: "Don't tell me you are missing me already?"

She is absolutely right! While Tumelo has no burden because I know about his shenanigans. I carry a burden on my shoulder a heavy secret that I .

Bontle: "Jess why are you crying? You don't even have hours there but he is already making you cry?"

Me: "(sobbing) she was here B, in my home, playing happy family with my family in my home."

Bontle: "Who? Oh hell no! Don't tell me it's who I think it is?"

Me: "Who else could it be? Mbali!"

Bontle: "You got to be kidding me! Doesn't that man have any sense of respect? Now he is bringing his random fucks into your home?"

Inathi: "He swore nothing happened."

Bontle: "Don't even tell me that you believed that shit! The problem with you Jess is that you are too much of a good girl. I would have long taught that lying cheating bastard a lesson. Fried his nuts if I had to just to teach him to keep it in his pants."

Inathi: "We just the same, I don't even know why I am crying because I also slept with that guy from the hotel."

Bontle: "It does not even start to pay for the years you had to put up with his shit."

(The bedroom door opens; Tumi comes in followed by Tumelo holding Katleho.)

Tumi: "Mommy are you crying?"

(I immediately wipe away my tears)

Inathi: "B! I have to go. We will talk later."

(I hung up and smile looking at Tumisho.)

Inathi: “No my baby mommy has something in her eyes.”

Tumi: “Daddy is taking us for ice cream. Come with us mommy.”

(I look at Tumelo almost tempted to tell him to go ask Mbali to accompany them.)

Inathi: “Mommy can’t go with you my boy she has to prepare supper, your uniform for school plus she has a slight headache.”

Tumi: “Don’t worry, we will get you, one right daddy?”

Tumelo: “Of course my boy. Come on let us go.”

(I watch as they leave the room.)

Apart from all his flaws I love the fact that he is a good father to his children.

Sometime I wish I wasn't barren maybe my child could be filling the emptiness I feel in this marriage. Giving me a reason to keep on fighting because right now I am on the verge of calling it quits, giving Mbali what is hers, the children and the man.

“The prince married the princess and they lived happily ever after.”

(I close the book and look at them peacefully sleeping. So cute I cannot resist but kiss them on their cheeks before I turn off the main light in the room leaving only the bedside lamp on.)

As I walk to our bedroom I wonder if I will ever have my happily ever after or if I am destined for sadness throughout. I am relieved to find him sleeping or so I thought until I feel him shift near me, his hands under my nightwear caressing my skin.

Inathi: "(pushing his hand away) not tonight I am tired."

My plea is only met by a dead-end silence.

As he shifts even more closely and kisses my neck.

Tumelo: "Have I told you that I like your hairstyle. It suits you."

Inathi: "Thank you."

(His hands reach for my breasts and he caresses my nipples.)

Tumelo: "Please let me make it up to you Ina. You do not have to do anything just lie there. I missed you so much."

(He turns me around and kisses me as he

gets pushes my dress up and removes my undies getting between my legs.

I am not even wet enough but I let him have his way with me like a good obedient wife I was taught to be.

He grunts and thrusts faster as his climax nears.)

“Oh! Fu*k Mbali!” he murmurs her name aloud as spills his seeds in me.

(I shudder! And turn my face to blink away the tears. He is not even aware that he said his name instead of mine. After some time he shifts lays on his side on the bed and kisses my forehead.)

Tumelo: "I love you Mamakhe."

Inathi: "I love you too. Goodnight."

(Once he is snoring by my side, I slip out of bed and walk to the bathroom. Locking the door behind me, I sit on the toilet sit, with the hand on my mouth to cloak my cries I let it all out. The pent up tears I have been holding.)

Chapter 4

“Anyone can have a child and call themselves a parent. A real parent is someone who puts that child above their own selfish needs and wants.” Unknown

Two days after my husband called another woman's name while on top of me. Two todays of having to pretend, everything is okay for the sake of the two innocent children in my life. Sometimes I wonder how we even got here. We were so in love when we got married despite the fact, it was arranged but I grew up knowing he was my destined husband. I fell in love with everything about him, by the time I finished my high school he was already working

waiting for me. Immediately after I turned 21 I legally became his wife. I never imagined we would be here one day. I look in the mirror as I apply make up to my face to hide the dark circles around my eye. After thinking hard about everything, I decided to pay Mbali a visit so we can have a chat woman to woman about my husband.

I check myself once more in rear mirror of the car to see if my lipstick is not smudged to the sides.

“You are meeting with sister wife after all. You should look the part.” The old woman within makes the comment.

“You are not helping at all Pequeño” I scowl back as I knock on her door.

As much as I hate to admit it but I am very much threatened by Mbali. She is light in complexion with natural curly hair and a beautiful tiny waist with a huge ass. I do not even know where her baby fat goes because she is like those women you find in magazine covers, those ones who look like they soak their skin in milk baths to have perfect glowing skin.

(As she pulls the door, she looked startled to see me. I keep on a straight face and stare at her.)

Mbali: “(astonished) Inathi!”

Inathi: “Mbali!”

(For the longest time, we remain looking at each other no words uttered.)

Inathi: “Are you not going to invite me inside?”

Mbali: “Or sorry, (she opens the door wide open) you can come in. “

(I walk in and sit on her couch while she closes the door behind me.)

Mbali: “Can I get you anything to drink?”

Inathi: “No! Thank you. I am okay. Please sit I would like us to talk.”

Mbali: "Is it the boys? Are they not okay?"

Inathi: "No, my children are okay. I would like us to talk about you and my husband."

Mbali: "With all due respect but I have nothing to discuss with you when it comes to Tumelo."

Inathi: "Sit then I will do the talking."

Mbali: "In....."

Inathi: "(interject) I said sit down."

(She looks at me, studying me for a few minutes and sink in the couch opposite me.)

Inathi: "I would like to know how much it would take to make you stay away from my man."

Mbali: "Excuse me?"

Inathi: "You heard me. Go on name your price."

Mbali: "I have not seen your man in years."

Inathi: "Do you think I am a foul? I know you were in my house 3 nights away even spent the night."

Mbali: "I came to check on my boys?"

Inathi: "When I took the children we had an agreement that you wouldn't come to my house, the children will come to you if I approve. Are you forgetting Mbali?"

Mbali: "How can I ever forget when you remind me all the time?"

Inathi: "Take this as my final warning to you Mbali, stop whatever you are doing with my husband."

Mbali: "or what?"

Inathi: "I will make a move this time around. I have let you do what you want with my

husband for years but it ends now. Stop it before I drag you to the courts and sue you for home wrecking. Before I drag your name through the mud with tabloids.”

(I get my handbag and stand to walk out.)

Mbali: “I love him and he loves why can’t you see that?”

Inathi: “if he truly loved you Mbali then he wouldn’t have married me. I hope you live to get married and have another woman put you through the turmoil you are putting me in.”

Have you ever felt like the walls are closing in around you? Suffocating? I wipe my tears and look around me. Happy families and happy faces surround me. Why can't God let me experience this kind of happiness even if just once? Am I not worthy of being happy?

My cell phone rings in my bag snapping me out of my depressing reverie.

Inathi: "RragweTumisho!"

Tumelo: "MmaModise?"

Inathi: "Rra!"

Tumelo: "I just received a call from Mbali. She said you went to harass her."

(I roll my eyes.)

Inathi: "So she ran to you to report?"

Tumelo: "No she called threatening to take the children and disappearing because you are harassing her."

Inathi: "Maybe she should take her children if it means I can have peace in my home. Maybe if she takes her children my husband can stop calling out her name when he is on top of me."

Tumelo: “Stop it Inathi. I don’t know how many times you want me to apologise for that. Ae man! You need to stop this childish behaviour. You had no right to go and harass Mbali in her house?”

Inathi: “Are you defending her right unow?”

Tumelo: “I am not. How many times should I tell you that Mbali is the mother of my children I cannot have bad blood with her. Are you forgetting she is the reason you have children calling you mommy every day?”

Inathi: “(sarcastically) how can I possibly forget? I am indebted to her; I am a mother because of her.”

Tumelo: “Yes you are. Now stay in your lane Jessica and stop behaving like a ghetto queen. It does not suit you. For a barren woman you got guts. Remember your place.”

(He hangs up and I remain starring at my phone but I promise myself that I will not cry this time around. This is something I should be used to. I decide to call my mother.)

Gloria: “Hello!”

Inathi: “Ma!”

Gloria: “Yes my girl. Are you okay? Mogwe wame called this morning to let me know you have come back to your senses and returned home.”

Inathi: “Ee mma! I am good. I wanted to check if you are well.”

Gloria: “yes I am well ngwanaka, why do you sound sad are you okay?”

Inathi: “Yes I am. I was just wondering if I could come home this weekend.”

Gloria: “Your home is with Tumelo and your in-laws Inathi. This is no longer your home.

If you want to go home, go to Kanye I am sure Dorcus will be happy to have you.”

Inathi: “I am married but I am still your daughter. I just want to visit you for a few days.”

Gloria: “M-m! You are no longer my daughter; you are a daughter to the Modise family. Tumelo is my son. Are you forgetting whats at risk here Inathi?”

Inathi: “ How can I possibly forget mom when you remind me and make me remember everytime that im just a sacrificial lamb.”

Gloria: "Ohh!! stop with the self pity, this had to be done, you also have a roof over your head no longer dying in poverty."

Inathi: "When I agreed to this I never thought I would be signing up for this ma, Tumelo is cheating. I want out."

Gloria: "You know very well divorce is not an option, you know the terms and conditions of the contract. Don't let your dead father down, don't let your family down Inathi we are all depending on you. Tumelo is cheating so what men cheat that's how they are if he comes back to you at the end of the day that's all that matters."

Inathi: " What about my happiness?"

Gloria: “ You are happy Inathi. Just stop being a drama queen and focus on your marriage. I told you to stop hanging around with your unmarried friends they are poisoning your mind especially Bontle. Look I have to go; you go down to Kanye if you miss home.”

(I sigh and put my phone in the bag. It was worth a try.)

IF LUCKY YOU WILL GET ANOTHER BONUS
INSERT

#AuthorSMods

Chapter 4 continuation

"Its funny, isn't it?? How the little moments we take for granted turn out to be the biggest in the end? " - Nicole Lyons

"Lunch?"

I say as I swing my head inside and she her the bags. She is the only friend I have and feel like at times I just exhaust her with my baggage.

Bontle: "Of course, I can never say know to

food.”

(I walk inside and settle down on the couch.
She comes and sit next to me.)

Bontle: “Were you crying?”

Inathi: “No, come on let us enjoy our food.
Tumelo is expecting me at home soon.”

(She sighs and reach for the food.)

Inathi: “ I went to see Mbali.”

(I say as I continue eating my food.)

Bontle: “You are still giving her the power, we talked about this Jess. Why cant you walk away?”

Inathi: “I cant work away, you know that. You know this you have read the contract B.”

Bontle: “The old man is dead how long are you going to let a dead man hold you hostage in a loveless abusive marriage.”

Inathi: “ I cant let go, Basadi is in varsity, what will happen to her tuition fees, and the depts, mom will go to prison. It does not matter how much I suffer letting go is not

an option.”

Bontle: “Okay fine , if you cant leave then lets make him leave you.”

Inathi: “ How? We have tried that are you forgetting?”

Bontle: “ I will come up with a plan. But for now let us give you something to fall back on. Let me sponsor you so you can finish your violin classes. You are talented and that talent can open doors for you.”

Inathi: “I cant do that, it will be too much.”

Bontle: "let me do this for you, its not like I have anyone to spend my money on except my mother of course."

Inathi: "I don't know what to say,"

Bontle: "(interjecting) say thank you B. And promise me that you will give it your best and actually finish this time around."

(I jump and hug her)

Inathi: "thank you, I wont disappoint."

Bontle: "Anything for you."

Inathi: "Enough about me. When do you intend settling down? Marry and have kids?"

Bontle: "don't start, you and mom have taught me that marriage is not all that glam. So I will pass that stage."

Inathi: "Just because my marriage and your mother's marriage did not work put does not mean yours will not work also."

Bontle: " I saw divorce break out family, break my mother and worst of all the divorce did not only break them but it affected us the children most. Left us with scars that still hurts today. That's not the life I will put my children through no matter

what. I long made my mind that I will not get married and have children and that's final."

(I sigh and put my head on her shoulder. Kindered spirits.)

I feel emotionally exhausted as I park the car in front of the garage. There is an unfamiliar expensive car parked in front of yard. I can hear people laughing in the living room so I walk there. My husband is talking to someone who has his back at me standing by the window starring outside. Tumelo gleams and smiles at me when he sees me. Something I totally did not expect. I must have caught him in a good mood.

Tumelo: “Babe glad you are back in time. Remember my brother the one who you have not met yet well he finally decided to pay us a visit. You almost missed him.”

(I walk to him and kiss his cheek)

Inathi: “About time I have been dying to meet this mysterious brother.”

(He slowly whirls around and my face goes pale, and my whole words stands still for a moment. My eyes widen and my mouth agape. His face remains stoic as he stretches his hand forward for a handshake)

Raphael: "I heard so much about you, I am Raphael."

(What has my daybreak led me into? How did it even get here? So I have slept with my husband's brother. The impact of my little hiatus is a whole lot more than I expected. I feel faint as I look at his hand once more. I take a step forth but darkness fades in and I faint on the spot.)

Chapter 5

"To be wronged is nothing, unless you continue to remember it."- Confucius "

RAPHAEL

I stand in the living room of my hotel suite looking outside, watching the world from the top. I may be in the top floor but it does not feel like I am on top of things or at the top, as I would like to be. With all in the money in the world I can buy anything but it cannot buy me happiness, give me back my mother, or even restore my innocence that was stolen from me. I lift my glass and

have a sip of my whisky; now with all the money in my bank account I am going to make sure I destroy them all. The family my father chose over my mother, the woman who had a chance to help me but turned a blind eye. 22 years of planning their downfall, I have finally come back to get back at them. The old man is no more he left everything for his evil wife and son, my half-brother Tumelo. I am going to destroy them and leave them on the cold just as they did; if it was not for Tumelo's mother I would have grown up in a loving home, it is true when they say bana ba swela dibe tsa batsadi ba bone. Tumelo's mother is about to learn the hard way. I put my hands in my pocket and smile to myself. I remove the undies and smell them. She has an exotic scent, the mysterious Inathi, ran away

leaving her lacy thong behind. I put them back in my pocket somehow I am glad she decided to ran away before I woke up because I am not quite sure I would have let her go despite our agreement. For the first time in years, I never felt awakened by a woman's touch as Ina awakened me. She made me feel alive and I got drunk in the euphoria. As much as it was fun but I cannot let my emotions and an erection get in the way, there is no place for a woman like her and love in my life. Love is just a weakness, look how loving my father drove my mother to her grave.

Iris: "Sir!"

(My secretary's voice snaps me out of my

thought and I turn to look at her.)

Raphael: "Yes Iris?"

Iris: "Your bro...."

(I give her a cold stern look that makes her close her mouth. I do not have a brother and I have made it clear to her.)

Iris: "I am sorry, I meant to say Mr. Tumelo Modise called again, he would like to know if you will be able to join him & his family for dinner tonight."

Raphael: "No! You tell him I am busy."

Iris: "Okay, I will call him right away."

Raphael: "On second thoughts tell him to send directions to his house."

(I should keep him closer; he will not even see me coming.)

Iris: "Your parents also called they were asking for how long are you intending on staying?"

Raphael: "I am going back immediately after my plans are complete. You tell them I will move permanently after I have secured my

deal with Mr. Brownley.”

(After moving from one foster home to another I was finally lucky to get adopted by a couple that was struggling to have children, Mr. & Mrs. Hudson. That is when I was provided with care financially, and a roof over my head that is all I needed. Love was already something farfetched for me an emotion people used to trap you into their abuse. God did eventually bless them with a child of their own Lorraine. Princess Lorry as we call her became the spotlight in their life, the adopted son was forgotten or should I say become the sexual weapon for the pedophile Hudson. Eventually Molemogi my adopted father managed to secure me a position into Oxford University and that was

my escape. There I met two other fellows who also did come from not so good background like me, Miguel Mokoena, a royal prince awaiting to take the realms from his father and be a paramount chief. Just like me, Oxford University was an escape from home, he was sent away from to protect him from the evil deeds of his father wives. Then there was Ethan Brownley an illegitimate child, born from an affair. In his case, his stepfather banished him to Oxford so he could not be a constant reminder to the man of his wife's infidelity. Together we became an unstoppable team but later parted ways when Miguel had to return and Ethan to go take over family business after the father passed on. Instead of coming back home as everyone expected, I chose to remain in England and

continue my life there. 20 years later with only one mission to destroy the Modise family along with the pedophile who gave me life yet destroyed me in ways unimaginable.

I take my glasses off as I step out of my car. I look around the neighborhood. It is not shady like all the places I have seen around the city. I would not mind living here in future but I am sure Melinda will sure mind, she is a Mokgatla princess who likes all the nicer things in life. My father is determined to marry me off to her, one of the reason that have been making me reluctant to move back home. The idea of sharing my bed or even coming home to a wife is very appalling to me. I just like random fucks

and that's it or contextual sex where we draw a contract about how many times we fuck in a week or month. If it goes beyond but it never really does because I get bored easily and normally when I feel like the girls are becoming clingy I leave them and scout for the next ones. Now London is different from Gaborone, there are models not just normal models but high profile models who understand and ready to have an agreement with a man without expecting nothing but a good time. Now Botswana is still very cultural, I don't even think there is even sex clubs in the country apart from the Dlamini Club the only reason why it's operational or existing despite the laws it's because high profile people in power like ministers are members. Now who would want to leave a land of milk and honey like London to a

cultural, uncultivated and boring country like Botswana? That is second reason why I am reluctant to move.

Tumelo: “(astonished) Raphael is that you?”

(A very pregnant man who I almost did not recognize asks me. It takes his voice to make me realize that this is Tumelo my half-brother.)

Raphael: “In flesh!”

(He is all over me the minute he gets his confirmation like a woman who just saw his long lost lover. I roll my eyes.)

Tumelo: "Oh my! Raofe, I still cannot believe you are actually here. How long has it been, 20 years! I have missed you."

(Oh! Brother how I wish I shared the same sentiments and if you could read my thoughts, you would not be embracing me or even wanting me within your radius.)

Raphael: "I missed you too."

Tumelo: "Come in."

(His house is warm and you can tell just by looking that it has a touch of a woman. I

mean look at Tumelo he cannot take even take care of himself so it is obvious that he cannot even take care of the house.)

Tumelo: “Boys come and meet your uncle.”

(Two innocent boys join us. I think the hospital made a mistake. They are not his not even a single trait of his. Maybe they take after the mother.)

Tumelo: “Raofe meet Tumisho and Katleho my sons. Boys this is the man I have been telling you about, Uncle Raphael.”

(I brush their head and watch them run back

to their rooms.)

Tumelo: “come in, my wife is out for a bit, she is dying to meet you.”

Raphael: “The feeling is mutual after all the praises I heard.”

(I say as I follow him to the living room where we sit catching up.)

The door closes; finally, I can meet the wife and get out of here. I do not think I can carry on playing happy family anymore. I continue standing by the window starring outside with my back to the main entrance

listening to her faint footsteps.

Tumelo: “Babe glad you are back in time. Remember my brother the one who you have not met yet well he finally decided to pay us a visit. You almost missed him.”

(I twitch a little when he says brother. I wish he would stop referring to me as his brother.)

Inathi: “About time I have been dying to meet this mysterious brother.”

(No! No fucking way! The angelic soft voice that has been tormenting me on my dreams

ever since she left my warm bed sheets. It cannot be her. I slowly whirl around as if I am afraid of getting the confirmation. Oh hell no! The big brown eyes is the first thing I notice before my eyes trail over her dark flawless skin even in her cheap rack clothes she is still the most attractive beautiful woman I have ever seen. I do not even know what hurts between the two; the fact that I still very much want her even now under the circumstances or that she is fucking married to my enemy that means she is also the enemy. I watch her go face pale, and eyes widen and her mouth forms an O that makes me think all the canal nasty things I can do on it.

Time to place, move the phony across the

chess board, my face remains stoic as I stretch my hand forward for a handshake)

Raphael: "I heard so much about you, I am Raphael."

(I look at her confused face and almost feel sad for her. A married woman caught in her act. She looks at my hand once more and take a step forth before putting her hand over her head and crumpling to the ground. I move a little bit faster than her pig husband and catch her in my arms. She feels light yet fitting into my eyes. Her eyes pop once more when I scoop her on my arms and move to the couch where I place her nicely on the couch like a delicate cargo she is.)

Tumelo: "Inathi are okay?"

Raphael: "Must be the heat bring her a glass of water."

(He does as I say giving me a chance to study Inathi at least she did not lie about her name.)

Raphael: "(touching her hand) Relax will you, you dirty little secret is safe with me you wanton thing."

(She flinches when I touch her. I move away as Tumelo comes with the glass of water. I

almost laugh out, this will be much easier than I expected. I am winning without any effort.)

Chapter 6

“Nothing weighs on us as heavily as a secret” - Jean de La Fontaine

I feel light headed, he is sitting directly opposite me, beneath the table his legs keep brushing against mine. Reviving the spark. I am in complete danger where he is concerned.

Tumelo: “Thank you for agreeing to stay for dinner. In fact I don’t see the whole reason why you must stay at a hotel when we have

an empty room you can occupy. Right my love?”

(I take a sip of water and look at Tumelo like he just grown a pair of horns.)

Inathi: “Im sure Raofe wants some privacy that’s why he chose the hotel.”

Tumelo: “Nonsense, come on Raofe say yes, it would be nice to have you here while you still in the country.”

(I look at him begging with my eyes that he says no but he just smirks at me and winks)

Raphael: "As long as you are sure I'm not intruding. I don't see a reason why I can't stay to bond with my big brother for a few days."

Tumelo: "Good it's settled then, Jessica will prepare the spare bedroom for you."

Raphael: "(puzzled) Jessica?"

Inathi: "Me, Inathi Jessica Modise."

Raphael: "Oh okay, Jessica."

Tumelo: "You will spend the night and move your things tomorrow."

Tumelo: "Are you okay Inathi? You look pale?"

Inathi: "provably coming down with a flu or something."

(Tumelo's phone and he stands up to go and take it. I hear him say Mbali as he walks away.)

Raphael: "Finally some alone time, Jessica it has a nice ring to it."

Inathi: "We agreed that it was once off and I didn't even know you are the mysterious

brother. Why are you doing this?"

Raphael: "You disappeared before I woke up. You owe me Jess."

(I stand up and start clearing the dishes.)

Inathi: "I owe you nothing, I held my end of the bargain."

Raphael: " I wonder if Tumelo knows that he has a pretty wanton wild cat for a wife, who left her nails imprints in my back and screamed my name over and over as I gave her countless orgasms."

Inathi: "stop it, please don't do this."

Raphael: ",Why shouldn't I, give me a good damn good reason why I shouldn't remind you of the magical night we had, how you enjoyed my cock buried in your sweet tight cunt."

Inathi: "because I am married, worst of all to your brother."

Raphael: "So you pull the married card only when it suits you. When you legs were wide spread for me and letting me eat up your cunt did you forget that you are married?"

(He looks angry as he pushes back his chair and stands up. His eyes promise something dark, my saving grace comes when Tumelo comes back in the room.)

Tumelo: "I am sorry I have to cut this short there has been an emergency at work. I have to go there and check it out."

Inathi: "This late?"

Tumelo: "Yes I am sorry let me go. Raofe we will continue this catch up in the morning."

Raphael: "No problem. Let me not keep you."

I'm sure I will be safe in capable hands of your wife."

(I excuse myself as I rake the dishes to the kitchen. I start washing them so I can distract myself from the memories eating away my sanity. Before I know it I feel him behind me, his breath on my neck, his hands on my sides trapping me between him and the sink.)

Raphael: "Even in this rags you are putting on, you are still the sexiest woman I have ever laid my eyes on."

(I close my eyes and listen to breathing as it gets heavy.)

Inathi: "Please Raphael, don't do this?"

Raphael: "Why not? Don't insult me again with the Im married card. Because I can't promise what I would do next. We make fireworks me and you."

Inathi: "I am your brother's wife?"

Raphael: "That's what baffles me most, you can have any men you want Inathi, so why are you still with that pregnant pig?"

(He turns me around and makes me look at him.)

Inathi: "I love him. I love him that's why I am with him."

(He throws his head back and laughs out loud.)

Raphael: "Are you trying to convince your self or me?"

(He put his band on my chin and makes me look straight in his amber eyes.)

Raphael: "Now that I have tasted I cant get enough. I am going to ruin you for my brother, I am going to ruin you for any other

man out there.”

Inathi: “Rapha.....”

(He silence me with his lips and the words die from my lips as the fireworks he was talking about explode. His masterful lips take ownership of my mouth, as his hands go underneath my skirt to my womanhood. His hands brush against my already soaked undies and he groans.)

Raphael: “I will have you in every surface that is there in this house to explore. I will have you right under his nose. See you tomorrow Inathi, and be prepared to be ruined. And I don’t go around making

promises I can't keep. So remember this promise Inathi, I will ruin you for my brother and other men."

(He gives me one last look and walk out. I only breath once I hear the front door close. What have I gotten myself on?)

RAPHAEL

How dare she? How dare she use me to satisfy herself? How dare she make me lose control all over again. Damn you Inathi! I take the glass I was holding and smash it against the chimney. As I reach for my phone and call my assistant.

Iris: "Mr Hudson?"

Raphael: "Get my clothes packed tomorrow morning. Cancel my appointments for this week. And let Peter know that we are staying a bit longer so he is to handle the bank in my absence for a while."

Iris: "Yes sir. Is that all?"

Raphael: "I am moving to my brother's house, but don't check me out yet. If the Hudson's or Melinda ask about my whereabouts you let them know I went back to London. Miguel or Ethan let them know that there had been a change of plans but I

will keep them posted. That's all."

(I hung up and pour myself another drink as I sit down and concentrate on my chess game. I move the phony as I reach for my phone ad call Daniel.)

Daniel: "Hudson!"

Raphael: "Hold off on the plans. I need you to do me something first."

Daniel: "What is it?"

Raphael: "Inathi Jessica Modise find out everything you can about her. I mean

everything. Don't leave any stone unturned."

Daniel: "does she has anything to do with what you had already planned?"

Raphael: "Yes she is the key to everything."

Daniel: "Im on it Boss."

Raphael: "that's what I like to hear "

(I hang up and relax back in the arm chair. I am so going to enjoy stripping the Tumelo of everything he has including his adulterous wife.)

BINDED

CHAPTER 7

"Fear can keep you safe at the same time
kill off the parts of you that are most alive."

- Jm Storm

"What is going on? I got your sms and why
are you putting on that strange hat and
glasses?"

Bontle says as she joins me, she looks
around and I look at her wondering why did
I decide to follow her advice? I wouldnt be

in this mess if it was not for her and her slutty advice. But then again she did not hold a gun to my head and force me to jump in bed with Raphael. I did that on my own accord. If there is anyone I am going to blame myself and of course Raphael for his sheer beauty that drew me in until I throw caution into the wind.

Inathi: "we have a crisis at hand B!"

Bontle: "what is it? Did you kill Tumelo in his sleep?"

(I roll my eyes as take off the glasses and hat)

Inathi: "you remember Raphael?"

Bontle: "Am I supposed to remember him?"

Inathi: "yes that guy from Avani, the guy I slept with."

Bontle: "You mean that African beauty how can I possibly forget him. Wait! I thought you said you forgot his name."

Inathi: "You are not paying attention B. I lied I did not forget his name."

Bontle: "Stop giving me strip teases just give it to me girl."

Inathi: "Well turns out that he is Tumelo's mysterious half brother."

(Bontle looks at me then burst out laughing.)

Bontle: "At least he is hotter than his elephant brother."

Inathi: "Is that all you are going to say."

Bontle: "What am I supposef to say? You enjoyed him and he had a great time. What Tumelo does not know cant kill him. And I hope you are not regretting anything because I will smack you right across the

face."

Inathi: "How can I not regret such a grave mistake? I slept with two brothers. If that does not make me a slut I dont know."

Bontle: "Sometimes I wonder why you are my friend at all. Look Inathi, you only live once. So never regret anything that made you happy. So what if you slept with brother, what if you are the mother of all sluts. That does not change anything."

Inathi: "Tumelo has invited him to stay with us. He moved in 2 days ago. All I want to do everytime I see him is strip him and have him over and over until I drop dead from

exhaustion. Dont you see this is so wrong?'

Bontle: "Then have him,nothing is stopping you. Dont let morals stand in your way. They wont take care of your sexual hunger. If you have to seduce him , seduce him."

Inathi: "Bontle."

Bontle: "I am very serious. Enjoy him while he is still under your roof. God is on your side, so use this opportunity wisely girl,vuka, tshuba dipone. Ga o bonya wa jewa."

(I sip my drink as I look at Bontle trying not to think about her bad idea)

Bontle: "In fact I have an idea, a solution to our problem."

Inathi: "This cant be good."

Bontle: "Your contract stipulates that only Tumelo can divorce. We are going to use his brother to get Tumelo to leave you."

Inathi: "We know Tumelo will never leave me. He has made that clear."

Bontle: "Not if he catches you with his brother intimate right under his roof."

Inathi: "thats your big plan?"

Bontle: "it will work, you will see. We just need to make sure we excute it properly."

Inathi: "But sleeping again with his brother. Isn't that a bit much."

Bontle: "you already slept with him. I told you, your morals wont get you anyway. If you this to work. You need to to leave them behind you and get dirty because we live in a dirty world. I can only help you to a certain extent,the rest is upto you. Your fate lies in your hands. Do you want to be a prisoner forever or be set free to make your own rules."

Inathi: "Do I have a choice?"

Bontle: "there is always a choice Inathi in everything. You can let fear and self pity hold you back and you can take the reigns back and show fear that you stand back for nothing."

Inathi: "what do I have to do?"

Bontle: "its simple we are going to use Raphael. Make him fall for you , sleep with him and make sure Tumelo catches you."

Inathi: "I dont need to make him fall for him."

He already wants to get back between my legs."

Bontle: "Viva Pussy, viva. When God created us he gave us a deadliest weapon no man can ever stand against. Our vagina, it can take you from being a beggar to being a queen of riches. Right now we are going to use your massive weapon to break your chains and set you free."

Inathi: "Great! As long as I am free."

Bontle: "Great, I like that enthusiasm. I wonder if it's because you want to be free or you just want to ride his dick again."

Inathi: "maybe both."

Bontle: "Tumelo won't know what hit him. If he is good you can keep the younger brother."

Inathi: "I will think about it."

Bontle: "Okay, come on let us go do some shopping. You need something sexy to lure the predator to the prey."

(We stand up and walk to the shops.)

Raphael

I go over the reports that Daniel has given me regarding her. The contract makes me even angrier. I take it and throw it in the blazing fire. She has been sold into this marriage. And to think I was about to use her as pawn in my own revenge plan. She has been suffering for 8 years now. I look at the photographs of her and the two illegitimate children. How can she love them as her own when they are just a reminder of his infidelity. Inathi did not have my respect before but now she has all of it.

But she angers me, how she is selling short just so her family can survive. A family that is very much capable of taking care of themselves. Is she a fool or what.

She irritates me because she just ruined my whole plans. I was raised better, to never kick a dog that already down. I cant use her as pawn, because she has suffered enough. It will be inhumane of me. If there is anything I just want to set her free to live the remaining years of her life happy without any burden.

I reach for my phone and call Daniel.

Daniel: "Raph!"

Raphael: "where is she? "

Daniel: "currently at the mall with her sexy

friend."

Raphael: "keep an eye on her til I get there."

Daniel: "Okay."

Raphael: "And we are aborting the mission. I will come with another plan that does not include her."

Daniel: "What?"

Raphael: "You heard me. Also clear everything, the debts and the tuition. Everything."

Daniel: "Raphael, what is going on? Dont tell me you are falling for this girl? Are you forgetting what we came here to do?"

Raphael: "Of course not, but my mother before she died, she taught me to never use people with genuine hearts to get ahead. She is innocent in all of this. And I am not going to stand by and watch those vultures ruin her like they ruined my mother. I will be damned."

Daniel: "Understabdable. But you cannot fall for her Raphael,she has no place in your life, Melinda is already there."

Raphael: "I am tired of you and Molemogi

reminding me about Melinda, if you are gaga about her why dont you marry her. I know my duties Dan, stop stressing. This Jessica chick is not even my type. Just relax."

Daniel: "Okay. How many days should I give?"

Raphael: "Two weeks max, if things go well I will have the samples ready before the end of this week. Now work on making the company go bankrupt."

Daniel: "Alright."

Raphael: "Be ready to take the friend wherever she wants. Im kidnapping her buddy."

Inathi

We walk next to the road. Hoping to catch a taxi that will pass by.

Bontle: "I knew it was a bad idea to leave my car behind."

Inathi: "stop whinning a taxi will come by soon."

Bontle: "I wouldnt hold my breath if I was with you."

Inathi: "You are just being negative."

(I am about to walk away when two Audi Q7 pull by our feet blocking us.)

Bontle: "If they have any bad intentions we are going going down without a fight. "

Inathi: "Roger that."

(To my suprise Raphael and the guy from the bar get off from the cars.)'

Raphael: "Get in"

(He says as he opens the door')

Inathi: "im actually good."

Raphael: "I never asked. Get in or I will make
I."

(I look at Bontle and she just shrugs.)

Daniel: "Ms Moloji I have been instructed to
take you wherever you are going."

(He says as he opens the door for her and

the nerve of this girl she smiles and gets into the car.)'

Bontle: "What! you know I can never say no to a free lift."

(Before I can even reply her, Raphael picks me up and throws me into the passenger seat.)

Inathi: "hey! That's manhandling me."

(Totally ignoring me, he puts my seat belt on and goes to the driver side. He starts the car and joins the road. Sebetse sa ntate ,yoo.)

Binded

Chapter 8

"You are a forbidden fruit that I am prohibited from consuming. But baby, Poisoning never felt any better than this." - Ankita Chodankar

(He is silent tapping his hands on the steering wheel. He has not said a word to me since he threw me in his car. I look at him, he is so handsome it is hard to believe he is Tumelo's brother. He swallows and his adam's apple move a little. I bit my lower lip, his dark olive skin and amber eyes makes him look like a black American. He has not shaved making me wish i could rub my chin

on his stubble. I have never met a man who can just give me multiple orgasm just by looking at him admiring.)

Raphael: "Like anything you see sugar?"

(I turn away facing the window, embarrassed to be caught staring.)

Raphael: "I am going to pull over so you can either choose to walk in there on your own two feet or let me mishandle you. The choice is yours?"

(He says as he pulls into the Masa Hotel parking. I look at him puzzled as he gets off

and hands the keys to the Valet as he walks to my door to open it for me.)

Raphael: "Come let us go?"

(I cross my arms over my chest and look at him with attitude. He raises his eyebrows at me.)

Raphael: "Have it your way then."

(He says as he removes the belt and moves to pick me up.)

Inathi: "wait! I will walk."

(I get off as he grabs my shopping bags. And takes my hand as he pulls me inside the hotel. He does not let go of my hand even inside the elevator. We go up to the hotel room. I don't even bother to ask him why he changed from Avani.)

Inathi: "What are we doing here? I need to go home the boys will be home anytime soon now, and they normally come back very hungry."

Raphael: "Taken care of."

Inathi: "Still i have to go "

Raphael: "Why? You don't trust yourself that much around me? "

Inathi: "Of course not."

Raphael: "Good!"

(He says as he take off his jacket and put it on the couch followed by this tie.)

Inathi: "What on earth are you doing?"

Raphael: "You said you trust yourself around me so you have nothing to worry about."

(He reaches for his shirt and pulls it off his head. Revealing his beautiful torso. I immediately turn and move to go stand by the window. Hoping to hide the fact that he really does affect me.)

Raphael: "Hiding sugar, or you are afraid that yiu might accidentally land of my dick again and land baby number 3? I mean its clear that those babies are not Tumelo's so it could mean only one thing. They are your bastards, from your one night stands."

(I turn around and slap him right across the face)

Inathi: "Dont you ever again insult me again,

those children are not even mine. They are Tumelo's bastards. I am barren you arrogant prick. Just because i slept with you once does not make a whore."

(I turn again and face the window again. As I fight to keep the tears at bay, i never loose my temper but he sure knows how to push all my wrong buttons.)

Raphael: "Then why are still around, those kids are not his, and its clear that Tumelo is not respecting you, or you wont be running to his mistress in the middle of the night in the name of emergency at work."

Inathi: "Its none of your business."

(He holds my waist as he moves close and hugs me from behind. I wish he wouldn't because back hugs are my weakness)

Raphael: "What if i want to make it my business. Make everything about you my business."

Inathi: "(whispering) why?"

Raphael: "Because you are the forbidden fruit I can't have but i fascinate about. You are the forbidden fruit i cant be selfish with but every fibre in my body compels me to be selfish with you."

(I turn around and face him. I put my hand over his bare chest and i feel him tense a little before relaxing under my touch.)

Inathi: "The reason why i am staying despite its sorrows because I have been sold to the highest bidder. I have sold my soul to the devil."

Raphael: "Resell it to me, sell everything about then to them."

(I look at him and smile sadly.)

Inathi: "Oh Raphael! How i wish it was that

simple. I only have one soul and its already tied to someone."

Raphael: "For as long as you are breathing that can always be fixed."

Inathi: "They say the devil you know is better than the angel you don't know."

Raphael: "Then we better fix that. I want to be the devil you know better in fact the only devil you know."

(He says as he pulls me close and crush his lips over mine. His kisses are always possessive, full of aggression, with a bit of

darkness that overpowers the light that fights to stay on. What we are doing is bad but our souls long for this. To consume each other. he is a charm i cant begin to explain. I guess in the end the roman historian Publius Cornelios Tacitus was right, "forbidden fruit has a secret charm."

Im shook as he tears the T-shirt i am wearing in two followed by my bra. He is a man who knows what he wants and goes for it without any hesitation. #Scissored)

RAPHAEL

I stand by the window watching her sleeping between the white sheets like she was made for them.

Dan: "Raph are you there?"

Raphael: "I am still here. You take a bouquet of flowers and kalahari chocolates to Ms Bontle Moloji, tomorrow to thank her for her help."

Daniel: " No im not going back to that crazy girl again."

Raphael: "Yes you are, you are personally delivering those flowers."

Daniel: "Why are you doing this? You know i can't deal with women especially creatures like her."

Raphael: "Maybe a little exposure to them won't hurt."

(I look at Jessica as she stirs up.)

Raphael: "I have to go. You'll do as i asked right?"

Daniel: "Do i really have a choice?"

Raphael: "No you honestly don't."

(I hung up as Jess sits up and yawns. Exposing her perfect little boobies. She makes me want to crawl in bed and have her again until the hunger, craving for her is sated.)

Inathi: "What time is it?"

Raphael: "25 minutes after 9."

Inathi: "Shit!"

(She says as she throws away the covers and start searching for her frantically. I walk to her and grab her.)

Inathi: "Don't do this, I cant stoop to his level."

Raphael: "Tumelo is out of town for a business workshop he will be coming back tomorrow. He sent a message an hour back. The children apparently are with their mother. She asked to have them for the night. So you can relax."

Inathi: "You read my messages?"

Rapahel: "We agreed that from now on your business is my business."

Inathi: "And there is also a thing called privacy. You can't invade my privacy like that."

(I look at her and smile. She is cute though trying to be serious.)

Inathi: "Why you even laughing?"

Raphael: "Don't tell me o mmaspekere, bo tsoga re omane."

Inathi: "Of course not."

Raphael: "Good! Normally in London this is what women do when they wake up."

(I pull her and bend as i brush my lips over her and kiss her. Her stomach growls and we both burst out laughing.)

Raphael: "Come let me feed you."

Inathi: "I need to wear my clothes first."

Raphael: "No! You are just okay that way. Perfect."

Inathi: "I dont feel comfortable."

(I roll my eyes as I grab the gown and help her wearing it.)

Raphael: "There sorted, now let me feed you."

(I take her hand and lead her balcony where i asked for our dinner to be set. We sink into the cushions and I start serving her.)

Inathi: "I can feed myself."

(She says as she reaches for the fork.)

Raphael: "No allow yourself to be cherished just for one day. You deserve it."

(I start feeding her and enjoy watching her

as she enjoys her meal. I grab the whip cream and the strawberries as I move next to her and loosen her gown.)

Inathi: "This is not a good idea."

Raphael: "We already established that."

(I kiss her neck, her most sensitive area. And she shivers.)

Inathi: "I should go home."

Raphael: "To an empty house i dont think thats safe when there is a party here. I don't think so."

Inathi: "I am not safe when i am with you."

Raphael: "You words wound me sweet-lips but not to worry we shall make you feel safe as ever before. We rushed early on this time i am taking my time and your pleas wont work."

(I as as i whip the cream over her pretty little boobies.)

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NB: All scissored parts are posted in the group Silentville.

Binded

Chapter 9

"if my absence does not affect your life
then my presence has no meaning in it " -
Unknown

A MONTH LATER

Raph: "That was just bravo."

(I turn around to find him standing by the door. He is in his casual wear probably because its a Saturday evening. I had a late afternoon practice. I am becoming perfect at playing the violin all thanks to Bontle.)

Inathi: "What are you doing here?"

Raph: "Teaching you manners is going to take a while."

(I look at him and frown. He always preaches the same. He walks to me and sits by the piano looking as he starts playing Yiruma- River flows in you. This is the second time i have heard and seen him play the piano and he is so perfect with it. I close my eyes and let music take over as i start playing my violin to his piano tune. Raphael supports me and my dreams in ways no one has ever did. He is the so perfect version of his older brother.

We are still at it screwing each other every chance we get. And have not yet put a name to it. Sometimes i feel guilty for what i will do to him soon. He has been nothing but good to me.)

Raph: "Come back to earth. What is on your mind?"

Inathi: "Nothing! You still haven't told me what you are doing here."

Raph: "I was sent to pick you up."

Inathi: "let me grab my bag then we can go."

"

(He grabs my hand as i am about to walk away and pulls me into his lap.)

Raph: "Are you going to tell me what is on your mind or will i have to drag it out later, under your husband's roof. You know very well that being silent when im inside you is always a challenge for you."

(I blush and put my head down on his shoulder.)

Inathi: "I think the only reason why Tumelo has not caught us doing the deed in his

house is because he is stressed about his company. He says the company is sinking. About to go bankrupt."

Raph: "Too bad for him. But he shouldn't worry about his lovely wife, she is in good capable hands."

(I look at him and laugh)

Inathi: "You are so wicked."

Raph: "Can i show you just how wicked i can get?"

"

Inathi: "Postpone it to later."

(I stand up to go and get my bag.)

I look at him puzzled as he pulls up in front of Bontle's house.

Inathi: "What is going on?"

Raph: "Nothing she wanted to talk to you. So i promised to bring you around. Go on inside, she is waiting."

(I get off the car and walk inside. I find her inside with a glass of red wine.)

Bontle: "You finally decided to join the party."

Inathi: "What are we celebrating."

Bontle: "You need a glass first. Taniele, bring my girl a glass hoo."

(I look at her gobsmacked.)

Bontle: "What! You of all people know that i cant resist a nice dick."

Inathi: "Daniel as in Raofe's friend."

Bontle: "The one and only."

(Daniel walks in with a glass and hands it to Bontle and walks outside.)

Bontle: "(handing me a the glass with wine)
Drink you are going to need it."

(I take the glass from her and have a sip.)

Bontle: "I have both bad and good news."

Inathi: "Give me the good news first."

Bontle: "I got a job offer, the salary is huge

and the benefits are yummy. It is everything i ever wished for."

Inathi: "Oh B, i want to get excited but i am afraid that i have a feeling that this new job will come with pretty bad strings."

Bontle: "It does, I have to move to UK. The job is there."

Inathi: "That's it?"

Bontle: "Yes basically that's it."

Inathi: "Are you crazy? There is nothing bad bad there, i must admit it's bad that you

have to move away to another continent, but B, you always wanted to stay overseas. So i am happy for you. This is your dream go for it."

Bontle: "Nathi, what about you and mother?"

Inathi: "Are we kids?"

Bontle: "No, bu....."

Inathi: "(interject) No but, we will survive just fine without you. Plus its not like you are being sentenced to death you are just moving. We are no longer in the olden days there is skype, WhatsApp video calls. I love

you, and i will be a selfish friend if i did not encourage you to go for your dreams."

Bontle: "When did you become so wise, normally i am the one who talks sense."

Inathi: "Spending time with wise people makes me kind of wise i guess."

Bontle: "I leave tonight, my flight is tonight
Inathi."

(I look at her and smile even though my heart is breaking in pieces.)

Inathi: "Wow! So soon."

Bontle: "Yes they want me to start early.
Inathi."

Inathi: "Yes B!"

Bontle: "You and my mother are the only family i have, the only family i will ever have. If you dont want me to go tell me now, and i will cancel all this and stay right here."

(I move next to her and hug her.)

Inathi: "You are my sister B, my best friend and my number 1 supporter. I admit that i might still need you but I do want this for

you. Who knows this might be an opportunity for me and MmaBontle to visit. Dont hold back because of us."

Bontle: "Before i go, promise me one thing before I go."

Inathi: "Anything."

Bontle: "I know you have developed feelings for Raphael but promise me you wont hold back when its time to execute out plan. Promise me that you will use that lazy, untidy pregnant pig."

Inathi: "I wont hold back. I will grab that

opportunity and use it."

Bontle: "Great, that all i needed to hear."

(I wipe away her tears.)

Bontle: "Promise me, you will call every night."

Inathi: "I promise, no day will pass by without us talking."

Bontle: "And you will be happy, after you leave Tumelo you will put yourself first, you happiness first."

Inathi: "And you will let the walls around you down. Try to have a relationship this time around."

Bontle: "(rolling her eyes) here we go again."

Inathi: "Promise B."

Bontle: "I promise."

(I hug her. Bontle has been my friend since childhood, the only friend i have. I guess this is another test, if our bound will survive the test of time. I look at her hoping she will not find friends there and replace me.)

By the time i get home its already 9pm. The lights are still on, meaning Tumelo is still up. I asked Raphael to drop me off from the airport. He said something about having work to go and do so he will be home a bit late.

I walk in the house and the first thing I notice is huge fat belly sprawled over the couch. He used to be slim, how he got to be a huge fat bimbo. Its still a mystery or not I mean the man can literally feed on a cow all alone. So it comes as no suprise that he is this huge. I walk to him and kiss him on the cheek.)

Inathi: "Evening!"

Tumelo: "You have been drinking."

Inathi: "I had a glass of wine with Bontle before coming home. Where are the boys? Already sleeping?"

Tumelo: "They are with my mother at Mbali's home."

Inathi: "Oh okay. Did you have supper, can i fix you anything to eat."

Tumelo: "Inathi Jessica Modise are you

cheating me?"

Inathi: "What? (Laugh) Are you being real now? "

Tumelo: "Do you think this is a joke? Do I look like a fool to you? You think i have not noticed your latest trend? Or the hickey you had nit so long ago."

Inathi: "You are letting your insecurities get you paranoid again,are you forgotting that I now have late classes for Violin."

Tumelo: "I want you to drop out of that stupid class of yours. Your duty is here

home taking care of your husband and children."

Inathi: "They are not even my children, I am not going to drop out of my classes. I am not a baby minder, maybe Mbali should just move in here with us so she can take care of her children."

Tumelo: "Inathi! Are you forgetting who you are talking to here? Are you forgetting your place in this house?"

Inathi: "You always preach to me how barren i am. So let your woman your baby making machine move in here to take care of its products. I am tired of being your

punching back. You think i cant see what is happening here? You are losing your precious company now you are taking out the stress in me. You are such a coward Tumelo and i am done bending my knee to man who does not respect me."

Tumelo: "Shut up! You barren witch! Are you forgetting what's at risk here? Do you wish to see you family pay for your sins? I made you Inathi, i took you out of poverty and made you the woman you are now? You were such an ugly duckling now that you know water and have an ass you think you can walk over me just the way you want. I made you Inathi and i will break you until you are nothing but an ugly duckling i found you as."

Inathi: "What are you waiting for then? Lets see you break me Tumelo. You know you can't, you know why? Let me tell you because you are a fat dog,ntswa hela ya mokgwerwa that only knows how to bark without teeth. Nywe-nywe i made you, are you God wena? "

Tumelo: "Inathi, dont you dare insult me. I will...."

Inathi: "(interrupting him) Ohh stop it with your empty threats. They dont scare me not anymore."

(I turn to walk to the bedroom but he blocks

my way and his hands come around my neck as he blocks my air passage.)

Tumelo: "I will kill you and bury you where they will never find your body. O seka bata go twaela Inathi, o ta nkgolega."

(I clap his hand countless times my eyes begging him to let me go. There is a whole new rage i have never seen in his eyes. A monster in his eyes that i can barely recognize.)

BINDED

Insert 10

"Our destiny unfolds in accordance with the decisions and choices we make." - Author S
Mods

I get hold of myself and kick him in his nuts making him release my neck and stumble a bit back. I take a deep breath ,not believing that i almost met my maker.

Inathi: "You have completely gone off the rails. Are you insane?"

Tumelo: "Shut up."

Inathi: "Or what? Are you going to strangle me again? I bet you will, because that all you know. Picking on defenseless women because you are afraid of your size you spineless pig."

Tumelo: "Shut the hell up."

Inathi: "I won't the truth hurts that's bad. You are going to get what's due, you just wait and see Tumelo Modise."

(I turn and walk to Raphael's bed room and lock myself inside. I sit by the door, my heart beating erratically. Tumelo almost killed me.

I take my phone and call the Raphael.)

Raph: "You cant stay away can you?"

Inathi: "Come home, Tumelo just almost killed me."

Raph: "What?"

Inathi: "We had an argument and he strangled me."

Raph: "I will be there in 10 minutes. "

(I hung up and put my aching head on the door. And let the tears fall. I promise myself that this would be the last time I would let myself cry because of Tumelo. Its time I put myself first. I let people dictate how to live my life for so long.)

Raph: "Inathi! Jessica!"

(I can hear him screaming from the living room. I stand up and open the door. He stops on his trail and he looks at me looking worried and furious. Assessing me, I keep eye contact. Our eyes communicate.)

Raph: "He did that to you?"

(I nod my head and i see the rage coming back to his eyes.

Raph: "I cant believe that fucker put his hands on you. Where is he? If he want someone to beat he should pick someone of his size."

(He takes off going straight to pick our bedroom. I run after him. He kicks the door open luckily Tumelo is no where in sight. I am glad because i think Raofe would have beaten him to a pulp. He punches the wall and turns to face me.)

Raphael: "Where is he?"

Inathi: "Raofe, i think you need to calm down."

Raphael: "I just need to find that fucker where is he hiding? How dare he put his filthy hands on you?"

(I walk to him and hug. Hoping it will calm the storm. He stands there still and tense eventually hugs me back.)

Raph: "(kissing my forehead) Are you okay?"

,(I nod my head.)

Raphael: "I shouldn't have dropped you off

and left."

Inathi: "You didnt know that this would happen. Don't worry about Tumelo he will get what's due to him."

Raphael: "Soon!"

Inathi: " Please take me to the Police Station, he is spending the night behind bars."

Raphael: "You are pressing charges?"

Inathi: "Hitting me was the last straw. I have endured enough in this marriage. Today I

claim back my life."

Raphael: "That's great, come on then let us go."

2 hours later

I am with Raphael and the two police officers banging on Mbali's door. She comes to open as she ties her gown.

Mbali: "Officers!" Inathi."

(Tumelo comes to the door, wearing his boxers and oversize vest, his mother right

behind him. In a gown also.)

Pogiso: "What is going on, why are Police Officers banging on the door so late at night?"

PO 1: "We are sorry to disturb you late at night, I am sub-inspector Joshua with constable Mogomotsi. We are looking for Mr Tumelo Modise."

Tumelo: "Thats me. What is going on?"

PO 1: "Tumelo Modise you are under arrest for assault and threats to kill . anything you say can and will be used against you in the

court of law."

Tumelo: "What!"

(I watch as they cuff him and drag him to the waiting car.)

Tumelo: "Ma! Do something, i can't spend night in jail."

Pogiso; "Don't worry my boy i will get you out of there as soon as possible. Inathi, if you still want to be married to my son, feed your family and keep your mother out of prison. You will drop those charges against my son."

Inathi: "I am done succumbing to your threats. I am not dropping any charges against Tumelo. Not after he tried to kill me."

(She raises her hand to smack me)

Inathi: "Go ahead smack me, so you can join your son mo mmadisefo."

Pogiso: "You will regret this moment from now on till the day you die."

(I look at Raofe)

Inathi: "Let us go."

(I turn to leave)

Pogiso: "When Raofe i heard you staying in my son's house. I want you gone, i thought I made it clear to you years ago that you will never get a dime from my husband's fortunes. Even the stupid inheritance he left you, you will never claim it for as long as i am still alive."

Inathi: "I am Tumelo's legal wife, I get to choose who stays in our home and not you. Please know your place mother."

(I walk to the car with Raphael by my side. As we approach home, my phone starts ringing. I roll my eyes when I notice it's my mother.)

Inathi: "(picking up) Yes mother."

Gloria: "Have you finally lost your stupid mind Inathi?"

Inathi: "No I finally found my head."

Gloria: "You will go back to the police station right this instant and drop those charges against Tumelo."

Inathi; "No! I will not do such a thing. He can rot in jail for all i care. You better have a contingency plan mother or you will do jail for a long time."

Gloria: "What are you saying?"

Inathi: "Exactly what you are thinking, i am not staying in this marriage and wait for Tumelo to kill me before you all realise how toxic this marriage is."

(I hung up and turn to Raphael)

Inathi: "please take me home and make sweet slow love to me, make me forget

about today and it's sorrows."

Raph: "Consider it done."

(He says as he increases the car speed.)

BINDED

INSERT 11

"No one is more hates that he who speaks the truth."- Plato

RAPHAEL

Raphael: "Have the tickets ready we are going tomorrow evening."

Daniel: "Are you sure?"

Raphael: "Just do as I say Dan, stop questioning my every decision. Of course I am sure, we have accomplished what we

came here for. Now time to return back home. "

Daniel: "Alright! I will have everything ready for tonight."

Raphael: "Great! Thats all I would like to hear. Dont leave no room for recovery."

Daniel: "Yes, I have done everything you have asked for."

Raphael: "Tell Iris to send Melinda roses, and let her know I will be taking her to dinner today before I return to London."

(I hung up and look at Inathi peacefully sleeping. I remember, the fortune teller, I met a year ago. At that time I laughed at her face when she said I will meet a woman who will shake my world up, make me believe in absurd things like love. If she should've told me that person is my brother's wife, at least I would've avoided her like plague. She is too innocent to be painted with my dark brush mostly, she has suffered enough , 8 years in a hopeless marriage to jump into another suffering with me.

All I can do now is slipback into those covers and steal as much of her innocence as I can. I crawl back in bed and climb on top of her, spreading her wide. I look back

at her cunt and its overlapping clits. Growing up we were told culture practices and stories amongst them including pulling a woman's clit, it was said to enhance their sexuality, I always thought it was a myth until I met her. I smile, as I position myself at her, I cant get enough of her. I slip into het dripping cunt and lazily stroke. She moans as he sleepy eyes open. I move close and kiss her slowly, savoring the taste, the smell hoping I will carry it with me forever.)

Raphael: "Morning Sugar."

(She bites her lower lip to stifle a moan and I change the rhythm tapping into her g-spot. The wanton Jessica comes out as innocent

Inathi steps back. Her nails make contact with my back and her teeth finds my lower lip, biting! I hump into her as my own climax build up.)

Raphael: "promise me that you will never forget me. Promise Inathi."

Inathi: "I promise to never forget you Raphael Raofe Hudson."

(I smile as I lean over and kiss her.)

Raphael: "We have company any minute now, that door, will open and we are not stopping for anyone. I am getting off you

after we are both sated. Am I clear?"

(She nods her head same time at the door opens. I pick her legs, putting them on my shoulds and hold her hips.)

Tumelo: "(gobsmacked) What! Raofe, Inathi, what is happening?"

Pogiso: "I knew it, I knew this bitch was busy fucking this bastard."

Raphael: "Forget them, come for me sugar. Im waiting for you. Let it go motho wame."

(She closes her eyes, and moans my name

as pur orgasm split through us. Making firecrackers explode around us. After I have calmed down I cover Inathi, with my cock still dripping from our juices I walk naked to pick my briefs just at Mbali's feet.)

Raphael: "Moment of regret, Mbalz, wishing you came for the younger brother instead of the fat bimbo."

(I pick up my shirt which I help Inathi into. Tumelo takes off and his security personnel go after him.)

Raphael: "Put something on, they are waiting in the living room. I will do the talking. You just listen."

(She nods her head.)

Inathi

Everything has fell in place without even my input which still puzzles me. I follow Raofe to the living room is his baggy shirt and a pair of leggings. He is so calm about this whole thing which scares me.

Tumelo: "Ma! How could they do this, under my roof. This betrayal hurts so much."

Pogiso: "Stop crying and man up. Divorce Inathi its long due. Mbali is here marry her

and raise your children together."

Tumelo: "I will be damned if I let Raofe take my wife. I love Inathi. I am not letting her go."

Raph: "Isn't that just cute, but man you need to up your game when it comes to showing her your love. Your current ones are whack."

Tumelo: "Raofe, what did I ever do to you? I have been nothing but supportive. How do you sleep with my wife, my wife Raofe?"

Raph: "Oh stop whining? Ga o monna wa nthu go jelwa. And like they said, children

pay for their sin of their parents. I knew that to get your mother, I had to go through her most loved treasure, you and the company of course."

Tumelo: "I was going to give you your inheritance."

Raph: "It was never about the stupid inheritance or the money. Sit down Tumelo before o onkgolega and for your sake I hope you are have medical insurance, (looking at Pogiso)you might want to sit down for this."

(He looks at his wrist watch.)

Raph: "Before the end of the day, Police are going to knock on your door looking for Tumelo for money laundering and fraud. That's not all your company is bankrupt, that means your shares are going to drop, and it will be better to sell the company to me, since you are family, I will buy them at a fair price. Your shareholders have already sold their shares to me, making me major shareholder. "

Pogiso: "You can't do that, take the company away from you. This is a family legacy, your father's legacy."

Raph: "Funny how you finally acknowledge that he is my father when you told me my whole life he is not my father. Watch me, I

will destroy that company until there is no life to it , unless you sell those shares to me."

(He glances as Mbali.)

Raph: "Since this is a secret sharing moment, you should know that, Inathi & I have been shagging for over a month. And she is leaving you whether you file for divorce or not because you no longer have any power over her. I cleared her mother's debts as well as paid her sister's tuition fees. But thats not the big secret there is even a more sinister secret, right Mbalz and P-girl?"

(He chuckles)

Pogiso: "You have done enough damage for one day, don't do this, I beg you Raofe. Leave Tumelo out of this, he is innocent. Deal with me I am the one you want."

Raph: "How cute! Do you want to do the honors or should I? Should I tell Tman how he has been raising his cousin's sons thinking they are his. (Clapping his hand over his mouth) Oops! Me and my big mouth."

Tumelo: "Mama what is he talking about?"

Pogiso: "I can explain ,Tumie."

Tumelo: "please do."

Raph: "well the thing is, Mbali has been paid off to stay with you. She is in love with your cousin Martin. He is the father of the children. Your mom paid off Mbali to say the children are yours. You are infertile, barren!"

Tumelo: "You are lying. Those boys are mine. Tell him Mbali. Tell him he is lying."

Mbali: "I am sorry T."

Pogiso: "I did it all to make you a worthy man Tumelo. Children are pride of a man."

(He stands up and walk to Mbali.)

Tumelo: "How could you d..... (trails off as he holds his chest.) Ouch, ouch ouch."

(He falls to the ground. Like a pack of potatoes dropped from a moving car.)

Pogiso: "Tumie, Tumie, oh my God what I done to my poor boy."

(I am in shock to even move. All the activities happening in the room and I am

glued in one place. Raph stops in front of me and snaps his finger bringing me back to earth.)

Raph: " I know you intended to use me to get Tumelo, to leave you. This was my gift to you Inathi. Now go on fetch your life, dont let anyone ever dictate to you again how to live your life. Thank you for making my stay here memorable I will never forget you Inathi. Be happy and enjoy your newly found freedom."

(He kisses my cheek as he walks back to the room he was staying in. I dont know how I am supposed to fee; devastated, happy, sad or even cry.)

BINDED

Insert 12

"The goal of life is death."-- Sigmund Freud

The words still play on my mind over and over again. It is hard to believe it, denial is the only crutch to hold onto that gives false hope. I keep hoping someone will wake me up from this whole nightmare. I wanted my freedom but never at the expense of his life. I have his blood all over my hands. Pogiso was right, I am a murderer I killed his son so I can only have freedom. I close my eyes as I relieve the moment again.

*****Flashback*****

Tumelo: "How could you d..... (trails off as he holds his chest.) Ouch, ouch ouch."

(He falls to the ground. Like a pack of potatoes dropped from a moving car.)

Pogiso: "Tumie, Tumie, oh my God what I done to my poor boy?"

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to you Inathi. Now go on fetch your life, dont let anyone ever dictate to you again how to live your life. Thank you for making my stay here memorable I will never forget you Inathi. Be happy and enjoy your newly found freedom."

(He kisses my cheek as he walks back to the room he was staying in. I dont know how I am supposed to feel; devastated, happy, sad or even cry.)

Raphael: "I called the paramedics, they are coming but I wouldn't hold my breath if I was you."

(He says as he walks out and shuts the

door behind him. I walk to the arm chair and sink into it, continue to stare into the open space. I can hear , Pogiso's empty cries and Mbali begging him to wake up. I jump to my feet as soon as the paramedics knock on the door. I stand a few feet away from them as they give him a cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Paramedic 1: "We have a pulse but weak. We need to get him to the hospital now."

(I watch as they load him in the stretcher and leave in an ambulance with Pogiso inside.)

Mbali: "(grabbing her handbag) What are

you still waiting for? Let us go."

(I grab my purse and house keys as I rush after Mbali to her car.

Two hours later we are in the waiting area at Bokamoso hospital, waiting for the doctors to come out and give us an update regarding Tumelo.)

Pogiso: "What are you still doing here, haven't you done enough damage already?"

Inathi: "As far as I am concerned, I am still Tumelo's legal wife and I have every right to be here. Moreover I am not the one who lied

to the man his whole life. "

Pogiso: "Shut up, you know nothing."

Inathi: "I am not going to shut up. I have endured enough from you for the past 8 years that ends now."

(She is about to reply me when the doctor clears his throat behind us. We all stand and rush towards him')

Inathi: "Doctor! How is he? Is he going to be okay?"

Dr Ace: "Morning, we would like to talk to

Tumelo Modise's family."

Inathi: "We are his immediate family, I am his wife and that's his mother. How is my husband doing doctor?"

Dr Ace: "I am so sorry Mrs Modise, we did everything we could but we did not manage to save him. Your husband has passed away while we were still operating him."

(For a second I lose lightness, I can see the doctor's lips moving but I cannot hear what he is saying. My whole body had gone into shock. Pogiso falls down and they all rush to attend to her. While I grab my handbag and walk out of the hospital. Reality

refusing to sink in. I walk out of the hospital without even looking where I am going and almost get run over by a car. Luckily a handsome man in a firefighter outfit plays hero and saves me from the almost tragedy.

The last thing I remember is his handsome face as he keeps saying

"Ma'am are you okay?"

Firefighter: "You are awake, you gave me such a fright."

(I turn and he is standing there holding flowers and a big balloon printed "Get well soon". He is mr macho muscles wearing faded blue jeans, white sneakers and a dark blue tshirt that hugs his biceps and well-built chest. Coffee coloured and with a nicely cut beard.)

Inathi: "I am sorry I should have watched where I was going."

Firefighter: "Don't beat yourself up, its okay. The doctor say you were under great shock. I am Thabisang or you can call me Thabi."

(He says as he extends his hands)

Inathi: "Inathi or Jessica."

(i shake his hand quite disappointed that there is no that electric moment I always feel when I shake Raphael's hand.)'

Inathi: "Thank you for the flowers they are beautiful."

Thabi: "Anything for a beautiful lady."

Inathi: "How long have I been here?"

Thabi: "Two days now, I just signed your discharge papers. You are ready to go home."

Inathi: "Thank you. Can you please give me some privacy to change."

Thabi: "Sure I will wait outside."

(I reach for my phone with hope that at least I will find missed calls from Raphael or my mother but there is nothing. I take a deep breath and call my mother.)

Gloria: "Hello!"

Inathi: "Ma!"

Gloria: "What do you want Inathi? ,Haven't

you put this family through so much? You have dragged our dignified name through the mud."

Inathi: "I need you. Can I come home, Tumelo is dead."

Gloria: "Didn't you hear anything I just said? Or are you deaf? You have embarrassed us Inathi and we want nothing to do with you. I'm sure your father is even turning on his grave. You always wanted to be free now enjoy your newly found freedom and leave us out of it."

(She hangs up. I stare at my phone. I wonder where to from here, Pogiso would

never allow me to set foot in our home at block 7 and married out of community of property and with a signed prenup on top. There is nothing left for me but to build from scratch. In the admidst of my worries my phone rings, its like she predicted that I was thinking of her.)

Inathi: "Baby."

Bontle: "I have been trying to reach you for the past two days. Please tell me you are okay?"

Inathi: "Well I blacked out, just woke up. Homeless, with no family. I really wish you were here B."

Bontle: "Just say the word and I will be on the next plane there. I will be there right next to you."

Inathi: "No its okay, you just got there, focus on your job. I will be okay."

Bontle: "His death is all over the news plus his crimes. The media is having a field day babe."

Inathi: "I know, Raphael had already warned us. Maybe he is better off dead, he would have never survived."

Bontle: "Well Tumelo is out of the picture now, its time for you to pick up the pieces and move on. I talked to Ma, she is willing to take you in while you find your feet."

Inathi: "What did I ever do to deserve a friend like you?"

Bontle: "Don't worry when you are the world's best violinist, I will start reaping all the friendship benefits."

Inathi: "You better. I love you B."

Bontle: "I love you more baby girl."

(I hung up and prepare for myself.)

I look at my bags on the verandah, the house is locked with new locks. She has really chased me out but then again what did I expect. She never wanted me in her son's life. And I guess I am not going to be even allowed to attend his burial or have a mourning period like our setswana culture would suggest. It is embarrassing that Thabi has to see dirty laundry aired to everyone. He insisted on bringing me here.

Thabi: "Need help loading them in the car?"

(I turn to look at him as the tears fall.)

Thabi: "Hey! Don't cry."

(He walks to me and hugs me, letting me soak his tshirt with my water works.)

Inathi: "Its okay, I will see what to do from here."

Thabi: "You are insane if you think, I am going to leave you here all on your own. God knows what might happen this time around if you walk absent minded again."

Inathi: "(smiling) You know I am not a damsel in distress."

Thabi: "I never said you were. Where to from here?"

Inathi: "Molepolole."

Thabi: "Then let us go, we don't want to be chasing dusk."

(I sigh and let him help me load the bags in his Golf 5.

By 5pm I buzz the intercom and let her know I am outside. The gate opens and I find her standing outside waiting for me. I get out of the car and walk straight into her

arms. Mother's love I have been craving all my life. In her arms I let go, I weep like never before.)

Rose: "Its okay baby let it out, cry it out my love."

(She kisses me forehead and I hug her tightly wishing to hold onto this feeling forever.)

BINDED

Insert 13

"As much as you love certain friends and family members, you shouldn't keep them around if it means harming your mental health. You shouldn't keep them around if you feel like you've outgrown each other" - Holly Riordan

She draws back the curtains letting the sunlight rays light up the whole room. As I try to cover up myself with the covers she pulls them away.

Bontle: "You are not going to get drunk in self pity. Not on my watch."

(My eyes snap open and I look at her before rubbing my eyes. I think my eyes are playing tricks on me or I am still dreaming.)

Inathi: "I got to be dreaming."

Bontle: "Dream, don't dream I dont care, what I care about is that you are getting up from that bed and we are attending Elephant's funeral."

Inathi: "When did you get here?"

Bontle: "Last night, after Ma told me you have not left this room or bed for a week

now."

Inathi: "Stop scolding me just come and give me a hug."

(I open my arms and she jumps into bed and hugs me. I did not realize I missed her this much.)

Inathi: "What are you doing back here?"

Bontle: "Well you cant take a village girl to big cities and expect her to flourish."

Inathi: "B, this was your big break what are you talking about?"

Bontle: "Well to be honest I was lonely there, my place is here in Botswana with you and mom. The bank that recruited me is moving here, so they needed some people here to oversee things for the next 5 years. So I volunteered to come back."

Inathi: "Tell me you are joking, you don't even have 2 months there, why would you choose to be amongst those sent here."

Bontle: "The position comes with benefits plus its a win-win. I am back home to my two favourite people. Now get up, we need to be in Kanye so we are there when his corpse arrive at home. You deserve to be

sitting in that mattress not Mbali."

Inathi: "It does not matter plus I am good here. I would like to put Tumelo, Pogiso and my mother behind me."

Bontle: "I know you Nathi, you have to say goodbye that's the only way you will ever be able to move on, as for Pogiso and your mother, lightning that going to strike them is still doing push ups just wait and see."

Inathi: "I don't wish them bad. God will bless them. Yes I want to say goodbye to Tumeli but Pogiso will never allow me, she made that very clear in the text message she sent me. So let's just give Tumelo a dignified

burial and not cause any drama at his funeral."

Bontle: "Okay, if you say so baby. How about we if I drive us there then we will just stand at a distance, watch them bury him and leave before they see us."

Inathi: "Okay that could work."

Bontle: "Great let me confirm our reservations at the B&B the you can tell me about muscle guy mom said brought you here."

Inathi: "Is there anything that you and your

mom dont talk about?"

Bontle: "No! She tells me everything. Get up and make the bed im coming back with breakfast."

(I sit up and watch her as she dashes out of the room.)

Bontle

My phone rings and I watch it. Knowing its him, he is persistent and does not give up. I thought by returning back to Botswana he would take the hint but he is really ignorant.

I watch it as it starts ringing again.

Bontle: "Donovan I thought I made it clear that I dont wish to ever talk to you again."

Don: "Dont be like this B, we can make this work."

Bontle: "I made it clear that I will never stoop to that level. I wont be your mistress just focus on your marriage and leave me alone."

Don: "Are you sure about that? So you think running away to Botswana will save you

from the shame once I release the photos and videos."

Bontle: "You are not that cruel, you will not destroy your father's political life and image just to spite me."

Don: "You think so? Clearly you don't know me that much. I can even think of the headlines, "Prime minister caught in bed with Botswana's most paid hooker, while wife fights for her life in a hospital."

Bontle: "Don't do this, I beg you. Why are you doing this? You are not only going to destroy his image but my image, no one knows I am a hooker, they just know me as

a respected chartered accountant. Now a branch manager to one of the most respected banks."

Don: "Its simple you know what I want, I want you to quit being a hooker and be mine exclusively."

Bontle: "Donovan, you know that impossible. I get hired for a yead, I already signed up contracts that are binding, I dont have money to cancel them."

Don: "Money has been an issue. I will take care of it, just agree to be mine and everything will take care of itself."

Bontle: "Give me a day to think about it."

Don: "A day thats all I am giving you Bontle Moloji."

Bontle: "Okay no problem."

Don: "I will be looking forward to hear from you."

(He hungs up and I put my phone down. And put my hand over my eyes. I am screwed this time around. How did I get myself in this sticky situation in the first place? My phone rings and I reach for it answering without checking first who it is.)

Bontle: "You said 24 hours and two minutes have not even passed yet. Can you please give me breathing space?"

Daniel: "Hello to you too? Hooking up gone bad this time around?"

Bontle: "What do you want Taniele?"

Daniel: "I will take that as a yes. Told you to quit that nonsense you are worth much more. And Raphael will drop your ass like a hot potato if he ever finds out."

Bontle: "Thats why you are never going to

tell him. I am sure you did not call me to scold me about my business, what do you want?"

Daniel: "I have a package for Inathi, final package from Raphael but she seems to have disappeared from the face of earth any idea on where she might be."

Bontle: "I will tell you on one condition."

Daniel: "Lets hear it?"

Bontle: "I want the contacts of the hit assassin company."

(He immediately hangs up. My burner phone then rings in my handbag.)

Daniel: "Are you insane?"

Bontle: "No I am not, are you going to help me or what? I know you have their contacts because I heard you talking about it to Raphael."

Daniel: "Bontle, these guys are dangerous. More dangerous than that fuckhole threatening you."

Bontle: "That's why I need them, they will do the job without any sloppiness or come

backs."

Daniel: "I hope you know what you are doing, these are the rules, you send "HIT" to this number 7692***1 , dont worry about finding them,they will find you as soon when the right opportunity present itself."

Bontle: "Thats it."

Daniel: "Thats how powerful they are. And make sure you have all the information ready when theu come for you."

Bontle: "Okay, Inathi is staying with us. In my mother's house."

Daniel: "When are you going to tell her you work for Raphael?"

Bontle: "I work for Hudson Bank, not necessarily Raphael. Its too soon, when the right time comes."

Daniel: "And that you are a high profile prostitute?"

Bontle: "I told you I am not a prostitute, I am a professional escort. And no I am never going to let her know."

Daniel: "Why? Because of the sinful nature

of your job."

Bontle: "You seem to be under great illusion that somehow I am ashamed of my side job but I a nit because at the end of the day it pays the bills. I wont tell her because at the end we are binded by the secrets we keep."

(I hung up so tempted to light up my cigarette and just have a puff but I can't because its one of the things that will cause my mother's heart attack if she ever finds out.)

Inathi

With my glasses on leaning against Bontle's car I watch as the casket descends into the ground. In my left Bontle is holding my hand, on my right Thabisang has his hand over my shoulder squeezing lightly.

From where I am standing I can certainly see Pogiso crying and Mbali next to her wearing all black with a huge hat, and glasses. That place there was always hers, she earned it without even having to lift a finger. She earned it even if it was reserved for her, I was just the face behind of it while she was always the wife behind the scenes playing her role so nicely with the help of matswale.

I cant help but wonder, if Tumelo was still

alive would he have forgiven them, for all the secrets and lies. Would I have found the courage to walk away? Truth be told I fell in love with him, maybe it was because of the love that I stayed in the toxicity and was a prisoner for so long.

With the now newly found freedom I don't even know how to behave, how to start building myself up because it's just freedom but it has nothing to it but hunger and struggle. I now have to struggle my way up. But I believe I will make it. If I survived hell days with pregnant Tumi I can survive just fine without him. Rest in peace Tumelo Modise, may your next life bring you nothing but peace and fulfillment.

Inathi: "We can go I am done."

(We turn to get in the car when Ledimo the family attorney stops me.)

Ledimo: "I have been looking for you frantically for the past few days."

Inathi: "You found me now, what is it?"

Ledimo: "We are reading the will today, and would like you to be present."

Inathi: "Why?"

Ledimo: "You are one of the beneficiaries so you ought to be there."

(I stare at him puzzled.)

BINDED

Insert 14

"Not everyone gets the same version of me. One person might tell you I'm an amazing soul. Another person will tell say I'm a cold-hearted asshole. Believe them both, I act accordingly." - Unknown

Inheritance, the reason why people fight so hard. Reason why families divide even kill each other. Some believe its cursed because all the beneficiaries never use the money for something useful, they just blow it up either on drugs or alcohol, or with lavish lifestyles. Its also sad how the money is blew up fast when the late sacrificed and

struggled so much to make that money in the first place. Here I find myself in another battle, a battle for inheritance. Sometimes we don't even choose our battles they rather choose us.

Pogiso: "What the hell is she doing here? This is for family."

Ledimo: "With all due respect the will cannot be read in her absence. She has to be here."

Pogiso: "I will de damned if she gets nothing after killing my son."

Bontle: "Thats very strong allegations to be uttering without any evidence, unless you wish to stand in court of law."

Pogiso: "Shut up! You think you can come in my home and scare me? What are you even doing here? Are you Inathi? Is she you?"

Ledimo: "Enough, Inathi asked Bontle to be here for her best interest. Now can we get down to business and stop delaying with pettiness and unnecessary drama."

Pogiso: "Lets get this done with just being here, breathing same air as her makes me want to puke."

Ledimo: "This is the last testament for Mr Tumelo Modise. Dear family if you are reading this, it means I have passed on, this is my last wishes to you which I hope you will honor and respect. Mbali, you have been nothing but faithful and a great mother to our children, it is such a pity that I never made you a worthy woman as I should have, I leave you the current house you live in along with the car. To my mother, I thank you for your love and support over the years, you have made me the man I am today, which is why I have decided to leave the family lodge along with its small franchises all to you. To my estranged brother Raphael, we never had the opportunity to get to know each other but I thank God that we never let our parents mistakes separate us which is why I feel

honoured to finally return the 50% of the company that father left for you, back to you, hoping and trusting the company will never run to the ground with you spearheading it. To my two boys, I leave you a trust fund, worth 2 million to take care of your education and lives during my absence going forth. I leave you both in Inathi's care, she is a capable mother than Mbali, along with the trust fund, she is the only one I trust to execute it accordingly till you are old enough. Now to my wife, Inathi, I know never showed you appreciation and gratitude while I was alive and I was an asshole, but I would have been nothing without you Inathi. Your patience and love has carried me through the years. I am a man because of you. Which is only sensible that I leave the 50% of the company to you,

and all my remaining estate including the houses in Block 7 and Mmokolodi, the cars and the money in our accounts. I know it does not even begin to pay for the years of hardship you had to endure but I hope its a kick start for something. The end."

Pogiso: "Never, over my dead body, she is not getting anything."

Ledimo: "Please give me a chance to finish."

Pogiso: "That will is fake.I know my son, I know Tumelo he would never leave anything to her especially not the company that his father built."

Ledimo: "As we are aware of the predicaments surrounding Tumelo's death. Some of his estate has to be sold in order to pay off his debts this include the family lodge and its franchises, the house Mbali is occupying, the houses in Block 7 and Mmokolodi also we have to clear out his accounts. His brother Raphael has agreed to help the recover the company and keep it going."

Pogiso: "You must be crazy where does that leave me? "

Ledimo: "Basically with nothing, you don't have shares in the company so there is

nothing binding you to the company anymore."

Pogiso: "If you think I am going to sit by and watch these two take my company then you clearly dont know me."

Inathi: "Please put my shares up for sale and donate the money to an orphanage. As for the trust fund, I leave it to you Ledimo to excute it fairly and well for the benefit of those children even though they are not his. They are just innocent souls who should not be punished in all this. I believe karma does exist after all. Thank you."

(I stand to walk away but Pogiso is quick,

she grabs my wig and throws it at Bontle before launching herself towards me with fists.)

Pogiso: "I will kill you before you even get a cent if my son's money. Go itsholelwa bana you barren witch."

(She says as she punches me in the face. Bontle jumps in to help me, and Mbali joins the cat fight. By the time they pull us apart, my stockings and blouse are torn, my heels broken and I am holding my wig limping to the car with Bontle behind me. In a more bad state than me. We get in the car and Thabi drives off. As I look at Bontle, she also looks at me we burst out laughing.)

Bontle: "That was just crazy."

Inathi: "I still can't believe she attacked me. Is Pogiso really losing it?"

Bontle: "Well she is about to be a begger, poverty stricken what did you expect? I didn't think you will sell the shares though and donate the money."

Inathi: "You told me to fetch my life for as long as I have attachment to that family I will never have peace, Pogiso would have come for me with everything she had. Plus I dont want any handouts especially not from Tumelo."

Bontle: "Okay, so what now?"

Inathi: "Finish my violin classes. I am not perfect but I am sure I can teach a few children how to play violin. Apply for a grant and turn my idea into something bigger over the next coming years."

Bontle: "You have this figured out already."

Inathi: "I was just not sleeping last week but I was also thinking about how to get my life on track."

Bontle: "You are finally growing Nathi, I am

so proud of you."

Inathi: "Hold it first, lets wait until I get this running then you can go on and be proud."

Bontle: "Okay mma."

(I look at her and smile as I put my head on her shoulder. I find Thabi starring at me through the rear mirror. He winks and I give him a weak smile.)

Bontle

I pack the car at the usual spot and and

stand by it to lock it before going to check on the construction company. Before I can even move, someone covers me with cloth over my nose and mouth knocking me off.

When I open my eyes I am in a huge boardroom with powerful headlights that are straining my eye sight. I carefully look around the room wondering where I am and I remember Daniel's words, "you don't find them they find you."

I guess this is it. I am here to assign them to the job that I want to be done swiftly.

A coloured lady in a black tight leather jumpsuit and a man in a fitted black suit

walk in and sit right across me.

Vanessa: "(Stretching her hand) We are the Thompsons, you requested our services."

Bontle: "Yes I am B....."

Lefa: "Rule number 1, we do not need names of our clients. We already have enough information we need on you. Just shoot straight to what you need."

Bontle: "Order a hit, London to be precise, on Donovan Frankston. (I slide a photo towards them)."

Vanessa: "The prime minister's son?"

Bontle: "The one and only. Make it look like a political hit and find photos and videos of me and his father."

Vanessa: "Is he blackmailing you?"

Bontle: "Yes, I understand you guys only deal with bad guys. The guy is willing to destroy even his father's career just to get me."

Lefa: "He has certain cases that are swept under the rack for rape. Guess its our lucky day."

(She writes a figure on the paper and slides it to me.)

Vanessa: "that's the charge for our services."

(I almost pop my eyes out as I look at the figure. I close my eyes and nod my head.)

Bontle: "Okay, I will pay out."

Vanessa: "Deposit first and the rest after the job is done."

Bontle: "Okay."

Vanessa: "Sure, we will communicate the information for the drop off."

Bontle: "Cant I just deposit into an account?"

Vanessa: "Rule number 2, we only take hard cash."

Bontle: "Ohh okay."

Vanessa: "Failure to pay its regarded as war with us. We come for you with everything we got and looking at information gathered you just a small fish trying to swim with

sharks. That concludes our business."

(They stand up and leave me feeling like I just signed a deal with the devil himself.)'

BINDED

Insert 15

"I will never be that friend who rings you everyday but I will always be that friend you can rely on when your world collapses."

I stand in front of the mirror as I try on my top but its a little tight on me this time around. I have a class to attend in Gaborone for the evening so I will be spending the night at Bontle's house.

I glance at the mirror wondering if I have gained some weight or what? There is a light knock on the door and Bontle comes in.

Bontle: "Is it my eyes or you are gaining some fatsnyana ngwana wa ko gae?"

Inathi: "I was about to ask you the same question. The top is a little bit tight especially over the boobies "

Bontle: "Inathi Jessica Modise."

Inathi: "What is it now Bontlenyane Moloi?"

Bontle: "Please don't tell me it's not what I am thinking."

Inathi: "How am I supposed to know what

you are thinking?"

Bontle: "Well we figured that Tumelo was the sterile one, now tell me did you and Raph ever use protection?"

Inathi: "Not really, we did not. We only showed each other medical records then hammered it without cover."

Bontle: "So there is a possibility that you might be carrying a little Raphael or Inathi?"

(I look at her gobsmacked! She shrugs her shoulders and smiles at me.)

Bontle: "(excitedly) If you are, I am going to spoil that child rotten. Kana he or she will practically be mine."

Inathi: "B! Hold your horses please. I am sure I am not pregnant. I am gaining because I am happy."

Bontle: "Keep telling yourself, if it makes you sleep better at night."

Inathi: "(panicking) I cant be pregnant, a baby was never part of the plan. I dont even have Raphael's contacts and he will never accept this child especially not after he learnt I planned on using him to get out of my marriage."

Bontle: "Whoa! Babe relax, we are going to figure it out. We always do. But first we just need to confirm our suspicions."

Inathi: "I am not ready B! I am not ready to know, I am not ready to be a mother. I just got my life back."

Bontle: "What are you talking about, you always been a mother, to Tumisho and Katleho. I know without doubt that you will make a great mother. Even that pig knew that you are best when it comes to parenting. Stop worrying, I am here."

(I take a deep breath and look at my flat

tummy refusing to believe that I could be carrying another life inside me.)

Rose: "Looks like the gentlemen around got the message that you are single again. This just came for you Inathi."

(I raise my head and look at her. she is holding a bouquet of my favorite flowers Peonies, and a gift bag.)

Bontle: "they are so lovely. The person who sent them really knows you."

(I take the flowers and place them on the bed and open the gift bag. Pouring the

contents on the bed. There is a white A4 envelope and two boxes.

I take the envelop and open it. Inside there is a letter and other documents that I don't pay much attention to. I recognize the handwriting, and my heart beats so fast as I start reading it.

"Dear LOML (as today's youth calls it)

Hi! I hope and pray that you are okay sugar. Mostly I hope you have found happiness and joy.

I prepared this before I even started

screwing you. Before I even got intoxicated and addicted to your sweet cunt. Before I knew that this thing love is real and its something I can experience. Its so coward of me to even confess through a letter but maybe its for the best, I wanted you to know that I fell hard for you Inathi Modise. I love you! There are many things you can doubt when it comes to me but I hope my love for you is something you never ever have to doubt. But a wise woman taught me that if you love someone as much as I love you. You set them free, you protect them by all means from harm and darkness that rule in our world. Truth be told we come from different worlds. And I am afraid that my world is too dark for your light and innocence.

I learnt that Tumelo left something for you in his will and I was prepared to leave you with nothing but something told me that you will not want anything to do with him.

Therefore it would be cruel of me to just leave you with nothing yet claim to love and have your best interest at heart. I know you are not a charity case and I am not trying to make you one. This is just a gesture of a man ensuring that the woman he loves is well taken care of in his absence.

I have purchased a home for you in Block 10, a car for you to do all your errands and set up a bank account with money to help you as you find your feet. Please accept all this and start your life.

You can finally forget about me. I wish you all the best in your future.

P.S I had guys spying on you ever since I left. I have pulled them off now. You are a free woman now my Sugar.

Love

R. Hudson"

Bontle: "He did not."

(She opens the box and there are house keys, and car keys. In the envelope there is a title deed , blue book for the car and a black card with my names.)

Bontle: "He bought you the latest Range Rover Evoque. Ohhh! Inathi look at God, he is so faithful."

Inathi: "I cant accept this, it's too much."

Bontle: "You are accepting all this, for all we know you might not even be thinking for one person anymore but two people. You are going to need all this."

(I look at her.)

Bontle: "What! I cant wait to take the car for a little spin."

(I look at her and roll my eyes. She is so extra. Sometimes I wish I was as carefree as her and that my life did not have challenges like hers.)

Bontle

I walk away from my mother and Inathi so I can take the incoming call. A very irritating phone call from an annoying pest that I cannot wait to get rid off forever.

Donovan: "Finally you answer, I was starting

to think you wanted me to air to the world
your sex tapes with my father."

Bontle: "Hello to you too Donovan."

Donovan: "How is my favorite sweet hooker
doing?"

Bontle: "I am telling you for the last time. I
am not a hooker."

Donovan: "Ohh! How I like it when you lose
your little temper."

Bontle: "You are annoying, do you know
that?"

Donovan: "You didn't find me annoying, when I had you with my father."

Bontle: "Cut it off."

Donovan: "Ready to get down to business sweetheart"

Bontle: "I have given it a thought."

Donovan: "Go on, I am listening."

Bontle: "I will do as you want."

Donovan: "I knew you are a clever gir who listens and makes rational decisions."

Bontle: "I need money, to pay off the contracts I already made."

Donovan:"how much? I told you money is not an issue."

Bontle: "Half a mill, before the end of this week."

Donovan: "Sh!t! that much."

Bontle: "I m dont come cheap."

Donovan: "I will have it wired into your Swiss Account, tomorrow. Then I want you to get your pretty ass here."

Bontle: "Alright, give me a week to wrap things up this side."

Donovan: "A week and thats all I am giving. I will not take shit B, especially not when I am paying this much."

Bontle: "What about the sex tapes are you going to destroy them?"

Donovan: "Those tapes are the only leverage I have over you. So you can forget

about me ever destroying them. See you soon sweetheart."

(He hangs up. I pull a cigarette from my inner pocket and light it up. I take a puff and blow it out slowly.)

Bontle: "Meet you in hell mother**cker."

(I throw the cigarette on the ground, step on it and pop a gum in my mouth as I head back to the house.).

BINDED

Insert 16

"You wear a mask and your face grows to fit it." - George Orwell

3 Months later

Bontle: "Please Daniel, I promise to pay you back as soon as possible. Those people have given me just two days to have their money or they are coming for me."

Daniel: "I warned you Bontle, I told you these are not the type of people you want to mess with. You killed Donovan but now you

even have a deadly family breathing down your neck."

Bontle: "I paid them with the money I got from Donovan but I need to clear the remaining dept. Please help me out."

Daniel: "Is this how you want to live the rest of your life B, being blackmailed and threatened. I dont understand why you choosing this life, we both know you are getting enough money just from your career."

Bontle: "It was never about money, it has never been about the money. It just feels the void I feel inside. You know what Dan,

you will never understand. "

Daniel: "then make me understand, make me understand why a beautiful woman like you would choose this lifestyle."

Bontle: "One day, I will tell you Dan. Now is not the time."

Daniel: "Does it have to do with your father, the divorce and the upbringing?"

Bontle: "I said not today Dan, please let it go."

Daniel: "I want to help you. I wish you could

let me help you B. Not every man is your father or going to turn out like your father."

Bontle: "You know nothing about my family or my father just fu*k off. Its non of your concern."

Daniel: "But I do know enough, I know he was woman beater who landed your mother million times in a hospital. Who sold her to other men so he could get another fix of heroine. I know he later divorced her leaving you both with nothing. That broke her, drove her crazy to a point where she was admitted in a psychiatric hospital."

Bontle: "Just shut up Daniel, stop uttering

nonsense."

Daniel: "You will end up just like him if you continue this path. I know you think you have it under control but you dont. I wish you will face your demons and deal with them. I will wire you the money, dont pay me back not if it means you have to sell your body and soul just to pay me back."

(He hungs up and I take a deep breath and look around me. The house feels like its closing up on me. I walk to the garden with my bottle of whisky and sit down and light up my cigarette as I close my eyes trying to block out the memories. With shaking hands I take a puff and blow out slow, It feels like he just opened a can of worms. I

look at the whisky bottle and bring it to my mouth as I take a sip.

Day after day I feel like mask is falling off and soon people will release the real Bontle who hides behind the bubbly and talkative personality. Bontle who thinks she has it all figured out. Bontle who everyone relies on while she lays awake every night tormented by things she can never possibly change.

I stand up and walk inside the house change into a nice dress and grab my mask. I need to make a stop somewhere before I head The Dlamini Club, where I am meeting a client.

I park at the usual spot, I know his schedule, I know every Wednesday evening he brings his family to this park for a picnic. I watch as the little girl kisses his almost wrinkled face while the son who looks to be around 13 years, throws the ball and the dog runs to catch it. His wife, his younger wife has her head on his chest, reading a book for him while he feeds her sliced fruits. I wipe away the tears and call my mother.)

Rose: "Baby girl"

Bontle: "Ma!"

Rose: "Are you okay, have you been crying?"

Bontle: "I am okay, I think I am coming down with flu or something. Ma! I was wondering."

Rose: "Go on, I am listening."

Bontle: "Do you think he ever thinks about us, the daughter he left behind when she was only 9 years old. Do you think he ever thinks about me, how I am doing? How I turned out to be?"

Rose: "Oh Bontlenyane wame, I thought we are past this, if John ever wanted you he would have come back for you. That man has been absent from your life for 19 years now. And the 9 years that he was part of

your life its not like he ever played the role of father. Please my girl don't do this to yourself. I am begging you."

Bontle: "Do you think he turned his life around? even still alive? Do you think my life would have turned out different if he was part of it, played the role of the father?"

Rose: "What are you talking about? Your life turned out so well you are a successful young black woman who turned out well despite her upbringing. Don't let John steal your joy. It does not matter if he is still alive or not. He is part of our past and thats where he should remain."

Bontle: "Okay, I am sorry if I brought you any grievances I just found myself thinking about him today."

Rose: "Its okay B, dont worry yourself. I am proud of you and the woman you have become. I love you baby."

Bontle: "Thank you Ma! I love you too."

(I hung up and wipe my tears away. You are bigger than all these B, I give myself a pep talk as I start my car. Oh ma! If you only knew how he turned his life around after screwing us. I cast a look at the sperm donor again before driving away. If I had money I would hire The Thompsons again

to wipe out his whole family just for control.)

POGISO's HOME

Mbali looks at the children and their bags wondering what to do. Coming here was her last resort she never thought Pogiso of all people will bang the door on her face and tell her she should never ever again set foot in her yard. What surprised her most was how quick she changed.

Pogiso: "(opening the door) One last thing Mbali."

Mbali: "what is it?"

Pogiso: "I am contesting Tumelo's will in court, they are not his children therefore they should not inherit anything from him. If anything that trust fund should come to me his mother."

Mbali: "You can't be serious. Why are you doing this?"

Pogiso: "You were of use to me, when Tumelo was alive now that he is no more, you are off no use to me anymore."

(She bangs the door. Mbali looks at her

boys as she picks up, her phone and tries Martin's phone once more. She opens her purse and there is only P50 inside. The last money she had she used it to pay for their accommodation.)

Tumisho: "Mama, when are we going back Mommy Inathi?"

Mbali: "How many times should I tell you that, Inathi is not your mother and she does not want you anymore."

Katleho: "But we are hungry, Mommy always feed us when we are hungry."

Mbali: "Here drink some water. I cannot think straight with your whinning."

(She picks the phone and tried Martin's phone again. When the phones does not get through, she picks up the bags and pulls them to the main road.)

Mbali: "Tumisho hold Katli's hand and follow me. Be fast its getting late."

(The two boys hold each other's hand and follow their mother. By the road Mbali stops a taxi and loads the bags in the car boot. Giving the taxi man directions. She looks at her two innocent children and blinks back the tears. Not believing how fast life can

turn around from having everything to having nothing.

When they get to Martin's house, she is surprised to find a vacant house. Putting hands over her head she lets the tears fall.)

Mbali: "Heavenly father! I know I have done evil things in the past but please don't punish my children like this, they are just too innocent."

Tumisho: "Mama, I am scared."

Mbali: "Dont be scared Tumi, I am here. Come on, hold Katli's hand."

(She says as she pulls the bags once more to the main road. Katleho's stomach can't stomach growling. In the dark of the night a mother and her children are seen walking to the next stop. She keeps trying Ledimo and Martin's number but none of them are going through. Once she gets at the stop she puts her bags down and takes Katleho in her hands who is already feeling sleepy.)

Tumisho: "Mama, I miss daddy."

Mbali: "(kissing his head) I know baby, I miss him too. I miss him a lot especially now."

(She wipes away her tears , and look around the waiting room wondering if this is where they are going to spend the night. While still in her distress, three men walk towards them from the small bush behind them.

Man1: "What do we have here? Mama bear and the bears."

(she stands up and put Katleho down. Tumisho holds his litte brother's hand and slowly retieves behind his mother.)

Mbali: "Please dont hurt us, we have no more yo offer but here is a phone and our luggage. Take whatever you want and let us go."

(The tall one looks at her and smiles exposing his yellowish teeth.)

Man3: " how pretty MamaBear protecting her bears."

Mbali: "Please I am begging you."

(They slowly approach her but before they can reach her a merroon range rover pulls over and a muscular man with a bat and pepper spray gets out.)

BINDED

Insert 17

Happiness is the first pregnancy ultrasound

Dr Dlamini: "There is your Sparkles."

Inathi: "(emotional) Where?"

Dr Dlamini: "(pointing out) here, here is your baby."

(I let the tears fall as I stare at the screen. This is one of the moments I have long craved for, moments I never thought I could experience in this lifetime. Happiness feels

me up as I look at the little button, my sparkle. I have a life living inside me.)

Dr Dlamini: "All seems to be well with the baby. Would you like a print out?"

Inathi: "Yes, I would like a print out. Thank you Doctor."

Dr Dlamini: "Welcome. I will give you some privacy to dress up then we can do other routines tests."

Inathi: "Alright! Thank you."

Dr Dlamini: "You are welcome."

(She walks out.)

Later I am sitting by the benches outside waiting for Thabi to come and pick me up. I can't help but keep staring at the photo. I am super excited about this whole journey. I know I should have told Raphael but he is better of not knowing after all he said his world is too dark for me, if it is dark for me then its no place to raise a child. Another pregnant lady sits next to me, she takes off her glasses and stretch her legs. I reach for my handbag and put the photo inside.)

Her: "Hello!"

Inathi: "Hi!"

Her: "first pregnancy?"

Inathi: "Huh?"

Her: "You have all this books and magazines on pregnancy, so it reminded me of my first pregnancy."

(Pointing to my shopping bag.)

Inathi: "Ohh! Yeah! My first time. Its so nerve wrecking though."

Her: "Don't worry, you become a pro once you hold the baby."

Inathi: "I hope so. (Extending my hand) I am Inathi Modise."

Landa: "Yolanda Moalosi but you can call me Landa."

(She shakes my hand and smiles.)

Inathi: "Maybe you should share tips with me since its not your first time at this."

Landa: "This is my second time. My first born is 8 years. But I will be happy to share

even though I doubt it will be helpful, it is a different experience for every woman."

Inathi: "So I have heard."

Landa: "You should join the antenatal classes, they are fun and will help you and partner prepare you for labour, breastfeeding and caring for a new born."

Inathi: "Well, I am alone in this pregnancy. Probably reason why I am reluctant to join the classes, all the women there have their baby daddies and husband with them."

Landa: "Soka, thats a none factor, you are

going to join that class. I will bring you my crazy cousin to hold your hand. She enjoys coming to the classes. In fact come let us go register you now."

(Before I can even protest she grabs my shopping bag and leads me hand then start pulling me towards the hospital entrance again.)

Landa: "I will give you a call later this week so we go out on a picnic with my friends. I am pretty sure they will love you."

(She says as her husband opens the door for her so she can get inside. I smile and nod my head as I close the passenger door

to my car. I lean over and kiss his cheek.)

Thabi: "Made friends?"

Inathi: "A friend! She is lovely. How was your practice?"

Thabi: "Same usual. Can we pass by my house before I take you home? Need to get something."

Inathi: "Okay, no problem. Did you refuel the car?"

Thabi: "Well, I forget my wallet at the house. We will refuel on our way back."

Inathi: "Its okay, pass by the Engine I will pay. And the mechanic did you call him so you can check on the progress of your car?"

Thabi: "He said it should be ready this friday."
"

Inathi: "Okay, as much as I love having you drive me around but I have a hard time when you are held up, public transport is no fun for preggies."

Thabi: "I understand love, I will push the guy to finish the car fast."

Inathi: "Alright."

(We pass by the filling station where I refuel the car to full tank. But I am greatly shocked when we pull in front of a one roomed house. Come to think of it, this is my first time at his house. Ever since I moved in the house Raphael got me, he is always there. I step out of the car and follow him inside, the room is big but not something I expected from a guy who drives a GTI, with a stable job. I look around the room, the couch has a pile of clothes on top and some are fighting for their way out or is it inside the chest of drawers. There is a double bed which looks tired also. At the other corner , there is the supposed kitchen. The house is a pigsty. I look at him and this place. There is

definitely a mismatch somewhere.)

Inathi: "This is your place?"

Raphael: "Yep this is my house. Not cosy like the one you have but its something."

(I almost ask him where his salary goes if he is staying in this pigsty. Then I remember the conversation I had with Bontle recently, she is always good at reading people. She said Thabisang looked like one of those typical Gaborone guys who take huge loans to buy expensive cars in order to impress girls while at home they eat ntša/dog. And this level of untidiness, its just pure boata and it makes me sick to

the stomach. If there is anything I hate is untidiness and someone who can't clean after himself.)

Inathi: "I will wait in the car."

(I sit in the car, my thoughts automatically wonder off to Raphael, he is a genuinely clean guy and perfect in my eyes. Though it is wrong for me to compare them but I find myself doing it, Thabi is just the complete opposite. And the fact that I dont even know if I like him, makes it even worse. Deep down I know I only agreed to taking things slow with him because I felt bad and compelled to since he was there for me during my toughest moment. But honestly this supposed relationship is as cold as the

Atlantic.)

Thabi: "Alrighty, ready to go."

Inathi: "Yeah I am, take the route that passes by that place that sells mango. I want some."

Thabi: "Okay babe."

(I put my hand on my tummy and close my eyes as he drives. When I open my eyes again we are almost at the mango place though I doubt we will find them looking at the fact that its now a bit dark.)

Inathi: "I doubt we will find that place open, its late."

Thabi: "Should I make a u-turn to take the road that goes to your house?"

Inathi: "We are already here lets just check it out."

(I look upfront and from the car headlights I see two little heads that look so familiar by the stop. I lean forth to get a better look and I know without doubt that its Tumi and Katli.)

Thabi: "Looks like they want to rob her."

What is she doing in this kind of place so late with children?"

Inathi: "(grabbing the pepper spray) stop the car, those are my boys. Thats Katli and Tumi."

Thabi: "Babe lets be rational, those men could be armed for all we know. I ca....."

Inathi: "Thabisang! Stop the damn car before I cause an accident. If they are armed then I will die rather than leave my kids on the hands of thugs."

(He pulls over at the stop and grabs his

baseball bat and the pepperspray then walks out. I say a short prayer and follow. The men look at him and at each other probably intimidated by his muscles and retrieve slowly before turning and running for their lives. the boys spot me.)

Tumi: "Mommy!"

(They run towards me and I kneel down with arms open to receive them. I hug them as they cry and kiss there forehead.)

Inathi: "Shh! I am here now."

(I stand up picking Katleho and hold Tumi's

hand as I walk them to the car.)

Inathi: "Be good boys and Stay put! Mommy is coming."

Mbali: "Inathi, thank you so much. I don't know what would have happened if you did not show up."

(I walk back to Mbali and slap her hard right across the face.)

Inathi: "I knew it was a bad idea to leave those boys with you."

Thabi: "Jess, lets go before those guys

come back. You can finish this at home."

(I get in the car as Thabi helps Mbali with the bags. I sit in the back seat with the boys and Mbali takes the passenger seat.)

Tumi: "Mommy, Mama Mbali said you are not our mother anymore and no longer want us."

Inathi: "Oh! Baby you and Katli we always be my babies. And I love you both."

Tumi: "Why did you leave us? Is it because daddy is dead."

Inatho: "I am so sorry baby, I should have never left. Daddy is now an angel watching over you and Katli."

Katli: "Mommy I want food, meat, ice cream and yoghurt. At Mama Mbali's house we only eat porridge early in the morning."

Inathi: "Katheho shall now have whatever he wants, so he grows up and be strong like Hercules."

(Once we arrive at my house, I prepare them food, then a warm bath and put them in my bed. I stare at their innocent faces as they sleep wondering what could have happened, if we did not show up when we did. God

knows how wicked this world is.

I walk back to find Mbali outside by the pool staring into space.)

Inathi: "When I wake up in the morning I want you gone and you are leaving those innocent children here until you sure you can provide a stable safe home for them. You better not abandon them Mbali because I will make sure you spend the rest of your miserable life in Prison."

BINDED

Insert 18

"She's my person. If I murdered someone, she is the person I'd call to help drag the corpse across the living room floor. She's my person." - Greys Anatomy

Inathi

Ina: "I thought I made it clear that I should find you gone when I wake up."

(I say as I join them in the kitchen. She is sitting on the stool by the kitchen counter. The boys are sitting by the dining table

having breakfast.)

Mbali: "I couldn't leave without saying goodbye to them and thanking you. I know I have done so many evil things to you in the past but you always and I believe will always love my kids unconditionally. I wanted to apologise for all the misery we put you through, I am sorry. "

Inathi: "I am not ready to just forgive and forget everything but I can never wish you any harm. I do hope you find your feet again and rebuild your life. Also find Martin, he deserves to know the truth as much as the boys deserve to know their father."

Mbali: "thank you. I will definitely look for him."

Inathi: "Tumelo left them a trust fund. You should be using it now to provide a rood for them and everything they need. I dont get why you are homeless."

Mbali: "Ledimo contacted me this morning. Pogiso has contested the will on the basis that they are not Tumelo's offsprings so the account is hold."

Inathi: "That vile woman, she is now going after innocent children."

Mbali: "I can't believe I ever trusted her."

Inathi: "It's crystal clear that you were just used to make my life a living hell. Now that Tumelo is no more she has tossed you aside. You just reaping what you sow, akere you allowed yourself to be used."

(I go on to pour myself juice and a muffin then go seat go outside reading my book, Passport to a healthy pregnancy by Dr. Gita Arjun.

An hour later, Mbali comes out carrying a bag.)

Mbali: "I am leaving. I will come back for the boys. Thank you for taking care of them and congratulations on your pregnancy. "

Inathi: "Thank you."

(I once again continue reading my book.
Thabi joins me looking ready to go out.)

Thabi: "Morning babe"

Inathi: "Morning. Hope you had a lovely night?"

Thabi: "I did, I just wish I was lucky as the boys to sleep in the same bed with you."

Inathi: "Thabi, I thought we were past this, I am not ready to share my bed with another man. Its only been 3 months since Tumelo passed away. And I am pregnant. "

Thabi: "I know and I understand. That was just wishful thinking."

Inathi: "Now that Tumi and Katli are here I am going to need the car even more. I hope you dont mind using public transport."

Thabi: "No its okay. I will check with the mechanic if my car is not ready."

Inathi: "Alright."

Thabi: "(scratching his head) Babe."

Inathi: "Rra!"

Thabi: "You know i hate asking you for this but I am kind of in a fix. Could you borrow me a thousand, I will bring it back month end."

Inathi: "I have no cash on me at the moment."

Thabi: "Okay mme akere you can do this online transfer things."

Inathi: "Okay, let me go and get my cellphone. I will transfer you the money into your account."

(I walk to my room and transfer him a thousand, reluctantly though because this is th third time I am borrowing him money and he has not paid any back.)

I knock on the door this time around a bit powerful and heavy. And she opens the door still dressed in her pyjamas.

Bontle: "Geez! I gave you keys."

Inathi: "I forgot them in one of the handbags. You look miserable but not to worry I brought you company to cheer you on. (Stepping aside to let them in.) Go on boys give Aunty B warm hugs.'

Bontle: "Oh Lord! Rescue me already."

(I laugh as I pass to the kitchen where I grab ice cream and snacks. I put them on bowls and place them on the coffer table in the living room.)

Bontle: "Go on watch television and mess my beautiful couch."

(She says as she locks the door and walk back to the bedroom. Leaving my boys watching cartoons.)

Bontle: "What are you doing in my house?"

Inathi: "I missed you and your swimming pool."

Bontle: "What are you talking about? Your house has a swimming pool double my size, a bar, a play room, a tv room. Its just a state of art if you want me to say."

Inathi: "Exactly, its too big that I feel scared in it. You know big houses are believed to

be haunted."

Bontle: "You are crazy, not that I blame you, I blame Raphael for buying a village girl a house not fitting her status. Now care to explain what Mbali's kids are doing with you."

(I sit down and narrate her the whole story, how I came to get them.)

Bontle: "Wonders shall never end. Wow! You know side chicks all have the same mentality, stupidity! You mean to tell me, the 8 years no in fact its more than that, that Mbali was with Tumelo she failed to save money."

Inathi: "She was living in the moment."

Bontle: "Ba mo loile im telling you. Nyaa tlheng. As for Pogiso I cant say im suprised, but it serves Mbali well, go dumela go rumiwa boloi ke basadibagolo, maduo a teng ke one a."

Inathi: "Right, come lets go and swim. Thats not the only juicy news I have my friend."

Bontle: "You mean to tell me, there is more."

Inathi: "Yes! Yesterday was quite full of surprises."

(We change I to swim wear and go to the swimming pool.)

Inathi: "So yesterday after seeing my doctor, Thabi came to pick me up."

Bontle: "Dont tell me that guy is still driving your car."

Inathi: "He was until this morning. So he said we must go to his house, he has something to get there."

Bontle: "Finally we see the guy's house. Its my first time to meet a guy who can stay in

a house brought my another man without any shame."

Inathi: "So jiki-jiki we get to the supposed house. Friend its a one room, a messy one room that looks like a pigsty. Koore mole ke mokhukhu tsala."

(She looks at me and burst out laughing)'

Bontle: "What did I tell you mare, about guys who drives GTIs? Nna I can spot hunger walking from a mile. That guy is drowning in depts I tell you. A parasite that has found its next host body and guess what you are the host body. Koore o tsile go go nwa madi until you have nothing left."

Inathi: "Ao B mma!"

Bontle: "O to sala gone hoo ka aoo B mma! Send that parasite packing while you still can. Before you lose the little that Raphael has left you. Or you need me to come and send him packing."

Inathi: "I still dont believe he is a parasite."

Bontle: "That's the problem with you. Always blind to the red flags. And you sure know how to pick them koore from pregnant pig, now you have moved to a hungry and blood sucking pig. The pregnant pig was even better because it was loaded

this one its just high maintenance trash."

(I look at her and laugh. Whoever gave B a smart mouth and straight up attitude, did us no favor shame.)

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Not edited and short I know

Have to go to church

Sorry busy day yesterday couldn't post.

BINDED

Insert 19

"Run from it, dread it , Destiny still arrives ." -
Thanos, Avengers Infinity

Bontle

I look around the bar, and at my phone
feeling quite bored. Without clients my
evenings turn to be boring. So I turn to the
barman.

Bontle: "Keep them coming. I will tell you
when to stop."

(I gulp it down and lit up the cigarette. I turn to look at the guys playing casino. Its one of the bad habits I have managed avoid, afraid that I will gamble away all my fortunes.)

Him: "(whispering in my ear) Still as sexy as I remember you."

(Its one of those voices that I never forget, his cologne still the same. I close my eyes and inhale it. The scent that lingered over my bed sheets for a long time.)

Bontle: "Richard!"

Richard: "What happened to Richie?"

Bontle: "He left, chose United Nations over the woman claimed to love."

Richard: "Do you think he still stands a chance?"

(I swing my chair around and face the only man my heart ever let in. He is well kept like always, with smokey hazelnut eyes. He now has a scar across his nose. I reach up and touch it with my fingertips. As much as I hate to admit it but I am still affected by him as I was when he left sick years ago.)

Bontle: "What happened?"

Richard: "A fight broke out, I was negotiating peace I got caught in between."

(He takes my hand in his huge one and kisses my fingertips. His eyes never leaving mine. I get a shiver and pull my hand away from his. I reach for my cigarette, it always helped me calm my nerves where he was concerned. He takes it and dumps it into my untouched whisky.)

Richard: "We agreed that you will no longer smoke or drink. What happened to healthy coping mechanism?"

Bontle: "You dont get to walk away for 6 years then think you can come here and play the knight in a shinning armour and therapist. It does not work like that Richie."

(He looks at me and smiles. I look at him and growl.)

Richard: "It nice to know that you still have your fire burning. And this frown, we agreed it does not make you sexy."

Bontle: "Don't do this."

Richard: "(he leans forth until we are same eye length) Do what? Care about you and

your well being? Or confess that the only thing that kept me going over the years was the thought of coming back to you. To pick up where we left off my little fierce lionness."

(I close my eyes to collect myself but it is hard to do when we are in the same proximity, when his scent is the only thing I can breath and it does no help infact I just want to reach over him and strip him so I can have his musky scent all over me.)

Richard: "The attraction between us was always too hard to ignore lioness. And I am the only man that could ever handle your fire without wanting to blow it off. We are compatible."

Bontle: "Its too late for that."

(I grab my purse and run like a mad woman. I can hear him hot on my tail. As I open the car to slip away he closes it and bring his body to mine. The heat that radiates from both us is hot. He bends his head and his lips capture mine. Nothing about his sweet mouth has changed over the year in fact he has gotten skilful over the years.)

Bontle: "We can't do this Richie, I am not the innocent little Bontle you left behind. I have changed over the years. Let me go before I tarnish your reputation"

Richard: "Do I look like I give a shit about about reputation? And since when do you care about what people say?"

Bontle: "Since I become a branch manager to a powerful bank. And a highest paid escort."

(I expect to see shock across his face but it betrays nothing. In fact he just smicks.)

Richard: "Bontle, I am a spy for powerful nations that can afford me. So you think I wouldn't know what my fantasy girl has been upto in my absence. You are much smarter than that, dont insult my faith in you."

Bontle: "Then what could you possibly want from a woman who gets paid money for entertaining men?"

Richard: "What I always wanted, you lioness. We are destined together, you can get as cocky as you want but it does not change a thing."

(He opens the door for me)

Richard: "Get in and run to Inathi, go tell her I am back and drown your sorrows tonight because tomorrow I am coming for you. We are going to get your life in order, no more nonsense Bontle. No more feeling sorry for

yourself. And hell will break before I share with other ten thousands men. So you better be ready to get rid of those tired old fools."

(He shuts the door and fixes his suit as he walks away. I stare at his butt, it has gotten bigger. Cocky bastard just who do he thinks he is?)

I hate how predictable he thinks I am. I kill the engine as I park my car next to Inathi's car. She opens her main door, and stands in front watching me as I make my walk of shame with my bottle of whisky to her.

Inathi: "The last time I saw you this fucked up is when Richard decided his job was more important than a relationship. So what have you all shaken up?"

Bontle: "Can't I drink and be merry for no reason?"

Inathi: "No you, not with you there always has to be a reason."

(I walk to her couch and collapse on top of it.)

Inathi: "Well I am listening."

Bontle: "Well, he is back. That cocky bastard is back and he thinks he can just waltz into my life like he never left and tell me what I can do and not do."

Inathi: "(surprised) Richie is back?"

Bontle: "Why do you always have to be slow at everything. Who else will I be talking about? Who else gut the guts to tell no actually dictate to me how to leave my life."

Inathi: "Well this should be interesting. It is nice to have him back. I mean you almost married the guy, so you guys can always continue where you left off."

Bontle: "Is that what you will be doing with Sparkles's father when he returns?"

Inathi: "You are Sparkles's father. Stop trying to change the subject, how is Richie? Is he still sexy with his smokey hazelnut eyes and straight up non-nonsense attitude."

Bontle: "The man is just an oozing sexy thing, he has this deep voice now, and everytime he speaks, you can see his adam's apple moves in a sexy way. And he still wears the same cologne that made me go insane and his lips are still cold yet sweet to touch. He now has a scar on top of his nose that makes him have that dangerous look. I just had several orgasms

from just looking at him. It every ounce in me to walk away without committing a felony crime like raping him in a bar full of people."

(I look at her and smile)

Inathi: "He always did get under your skin."

Bontle: "And made me feel alive like no other man has. Am I even allowed to just have him one last time? I mean we both know that our bossy attitude always collided that's why he chose his job over me. But monna o le kana o monate, I just need one last screwnyana. Some closurenyana."

Inathi: "(laughing) Closure my foot after 6 years. You just want to get laid by our top secret spy.so go on B, go spread your legs and let him have the cookie after all it always belonged to him."

Bontle: " I am just going to do that, but make no mistake Inathi, Richard does not own my cookie, no man for that matter does. I own my pussy and whom I decide to give to whether for cash or mahala (free) it totally upto me?"

Inathi: "Roger that."

Bontle: "Good! Now where is that parasite that you are rearing in Raphael's house."

Inathi: "This is my house. Thabisang is not here, he is spending the night at his house tonight."

Bontle: "And you adopted sons?"

Inathi: "Sleeping!"

Bontle: "Great, now we can go to sleep."

Inathi: "I need your help with something in the morning."

Bontle: "What is it? You want me to help you pack Thabi's clothes when he gets here I

just show him the door."

Inathi: "Of course not. I have an early class can you watch over the boys. I will sort out the nanny issue when I come back."

Bontle: "Playing Aunty with Tumi and Katli has never been a problem."

Inathi: "Alright. Thank you."

Bontle: "I got you Jessica, always."

(I say as I make my way to my room. The special room I reserved for myself in her house. As I hot the pillows the only thing

occupying my mind are thoughts of Richard Moeti, and our time together in the past.)

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NB: (Advertising for a friend not mine)

BINDED

Insert 20

"I am more than what I survived. I hold the spirit that kept me alive" -Stacie

Inathi

I look at the lunch that I got for him. What the heck what do I have to lose? I grab the bag and walk inside. The men in their beautiful uniform stop and look at me. I approach one of them.

Inathi: "Afternoon. Can I please see Thabisang Isang."

Fire F: "Pardon?"

Inathi: "Thabi, he works here?"

Fire F: "No hun, we got no one by that name working here?"

Inathi: "Are you sure?"

Fire F: "I am sure sweets."

Inathi: "Okay, thank you."

(I walk back to the car perplexed. I am sure I

heard him say this is where he works. I find myself driving to Fire department at Sebele just to ease my curiosity. When I get there, I leave the lunch in the car and find one of the officers.)

Inathi: "Afternoon." .

Ff2: "Afternoon beautiful. How can I help you?"

Inathi: "I am looking for Thabisang Isang. He works here."

(He looks at me with concern. Alarmed.)

Ff2: "You are the third person to walk here within this month looking for that person. We do not have any employee by that name here."

Inathi: "Really!"

Ff2: "Yes, apparently they are a group of men in Gaborone who targets vulnerable but wealthy women, more especially widows and rob them off their inheritance leaving them with nothing. Looks like you are another victim."

Inathi: "Are you sure (I take out the picture and show him) that we are talking about the same guy?"

Ff2: "Thats him, a lot of women are crying because of this guy. He is a male version of a gold digger. Apparently he drives a silver GTI 5. He plays hero so women fall for him, once he gets them hooked he start to blow their money. Some have even bought him cars. I think the local authorities are even looking for him. If I were you, I would drive to the next police station and let them know that you know where that thief is."

Inathi: "Thank you. I appreciate everything."

(I walk to the car , shocked. I get inside and just sit in there trying to process everything I just heard. I put my head on the steering

wheel and take deep breath. Before I go home I call Kenny Locks. I need to change the locks in my house.

As soon as I get to the house I grab his clothes and put them in black refuse bag. I pull out the sheets and bed covers I walk to the back and throw them in a trash can and light them up.

I have this rage inside me that I cannot explain, its so dark and makes me want to do the unimaginable. I am so tired of being taken advantage by men. Thinking they can just waltz in my life and take, take. The guys work on the locks as I pull the bags outside where the dog will pick them up. As I go and sit on the couch, I dial him.)

Inathi: "Babe!"

Thabi: "Sthando, are you okay?"

Inathi: "Just missing you, I was wondering when you are coming home."

Thabi: "My shift ends in an hour. I will be there as soon as I knock off."

Inathi: "okay lover."

(I hung up and click my tongue. As I dial the Police Station for a tip off. He definitely messed with the wrong woman. Bontle and

the boys walk in my rage moment, as I walk back and forth in the living room.)

Bontle: "You are only 3 months 2 weeks pregnant so it can't be labor pains that have you walking back and forth. What is going on, why you changing locks?"

Inathi: "You can go ahead and say I told you so. He is a crook who targets vulnerable woman like myself to steal from them. It was no coincidence that he was there, everything was just orchestrated to his advantage. I am such a fool B I should have known better."

Bontle: "Oh! Baby, come here. You have a

big pure heart Inathi, always want to see the good in people. That does not make you a fool it just makes you even more special."

Inathi: "I am not going to cry especially for a crook like Thabi. I am bigger than this."

Bontle: "Its okay, to cry Jessy, it does not make you less of a human. Cry but make sure this is the last time you cry for a man."

(She walks to me and hugs me as the water works begin.)

Inathi: "I am done with men. Niggas aint shit! From now on its me and Sparkles."

Bontle: "We are happy to have you joining our Niggas ain't shit movement."

(I smile at her and put my head on her shoulder. The police arrive 30 minutes before Thabi and I instruct them to stay in the house as he might get alarmed. Like he promised a cab drops him in front of my yard in an hour, and he walks in wearing his fake fire fighter uniform. I am so disgusted by his sight that I feel like puking. Bontle pads my hand to keep me calm.)

Thabi: "(kissing my cheek) ao babe, you missed me so much that you were crying."

Bontle: "You got really nice dreams. How long did you think you can fool my friend you filthy, hungry broke parasite?"

(He looks perplexed and take a few steps back retrieving.)

Bontle: "What? The cat caught your tongue? You think you can come in here with your fake fire fighter and fool us. We know all about your ways of going after your vulnerable wealthy widows so you steal from them. You picked the wrong one today Thabisang."

Thabi: "Inathi, I can explain please let me explain."

Inathi: "You will explain at court not to me."

(The police officers walk from the passage towards him. You can see the poor guy is scared.)

Detective Morake: "Godiraone Busang, you are under arrest for obtaining with false pretenses. Everything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. "

(I watch as they put the handcuffs on him and walk him to their car. As they drive out, someone I never expected to see anytime soon walks in.)

Bontle: "You got to be kidding me, can't this day get any better."

(I watch her as she walks in, looking at my house and yard.)

Gloria: "I had to come and see this for myself. I did not want to believe the rumors that have been circulating at the village."

Inathi: "What do you want Gloria?"

Gloria: "I raised you better Inathi, that's no way to greet your mother."

(I roll my eyes at her before giving her my back as I walk into the house.)

Bontle: "Crawl back to whatever hellhole you crawled from. Or mmadisefo will come back to fetch you."

Gloria: "This is my daughter's house. Nothing or no one will make me go until I am ready to."

(I walk to the kitchen and boil water in a hot kettle.)

Gloria: "Wow! This is a beautiful house. I cant believe you have been living well off

while your mother was dying with hunger. "

(I join them in the living room holding my kettle with boiling water.)

Inathi: "Don't patronize me Gloria. I stopped being your daughter when Tumelo died, or did you forget what you said to me? I am dead to you and your family. Or the dead wakes up in your family to come take care of their loved ones?"

Gloria: "Inathi, I was angry I said things I shouldn't have said."

Inathi: "And I am angry now, go before I

make you a chicken with this water. And don't think I won't do it."

Gloria: "You don't mean that, I am your mother Inathi."

Inathi: " A mother only when it suits your selfish needs. Don't make me ask again, get the fuck out of my property. I don't have a mother, she is dead."

(She glares at me and the kettle I am holding and she stands up walks to the gate.)

Gloria: "I forgive for a this for you don't

know what you are doing. I will come back with your uncles when your emotions are calm."

Inathi: "Dont bother, you are not welcome here."

(I press the remote to close the gate after her and I throw the kettle against the wall. Before I go down crying. Bontle comes and hugs me.) .

Inathi: "What is it with this people and thinking they can do just what the hell they want in my life?"

Bontle: "Stop stressing yourself with people not worth your tears. Stress is not good for you and its not good for the Sparkles. Your mother wants you back because, you did not succumb

your misfortunes and their hatred. You are stronger than this Inathi, stronger than any storm this world will ever throw at you. Now rise like a queen and show them how to be a queen."

(She wipes my tears and give me an reassuring smile.)

Bontle: "You are my bestfriend, my partner, my wifey and no wife of mine lets the battle

get her down. We may be knocked down but we are never out because the fire we carry is greater than us, than anything we can ever imagine."

Inathi: "I love you Bontlenyane."

Bontle: "(frowns) You are, starting shit now. But I love you more Jessy."

(She helps me to my feet and helps me walk inside where she prepares me a warm bubble bath. When I come back to the living room. I surprised to find her and the boys in the living room with mattresses laid in front of the television and so much junk food.)

Katli: "Come mommy Aunty B said we are having a comfort food party for you."

Tumi: "She said we must tell you that you should live a little. A little bit of sugar one day cant kill you."

Inathi: "I bet she did."

(I say as I sit down next to Katli and tickle him.)

BINDED

Insert 21

"What doesnt kill you give you a lot of unhealthy coping mechanisms."- Unknown

Bontle

I look a myself in the mirror, I pull the garter back in place and fix my lipstick. I love how the lingerie hugs every curve in my body.

That old man will die of a heart attack. I pull my long black coat from the bed and put it in followed by my hat and my black leather gloves. The red lipstick gives some colour to my face. I grab my favourite toy bag and pull it as my heels click on the cold hard wood. I am quite excited about tonight

because he is not a regular. A new client that I get to blow away so he can come back for more.

As I open the front door I find him leaning against the door looking so dangerously at me.

Richard: "Took you long enough, going somewhere lioness?"

Bontle: "(shocked) What are you doing here Richard?"

Richard: "I told you I will be coming for you today. You of all people know that I never

bluff."

Bontle: "Well you chose a wrong time to visit. I am on my way out. Come back tomorrow."

Richard: "Something tells me I chose the perfect time."

Bontle: "I don't want to do this now, especially not with you. Get out of my way Richard Mtoeti. I have pressing business to take care of."

(He looks at me and gives me his famous smirk. Before pushing me inside using his

weight. Before I even know it. He is locking the door.)

Bontle: "What the hell do you think you are doing?"

Richard: "Knocking some sense into you. "

(He opens the window and throws out my keys.)

Bontle: "You stupid annoying man, those are the only keys I have the others are with Inathi."

Richard: "Good! We are both in here so will

deal with the key problem in the morning."

Bontle: "Did you not hear anything I said, I have to go, a client is waiting. They hate waiting."

Richard: "You will attend no client. Not while I am here."

Bontle: "You are costing me money Richard."
"

Richard: "Its not about the money, has never been about the money. We both know it."

Bontle: "Its not about the money. You damn

right. Why cant you just let me be?"

Richard: "Because you are destroying your life. And I cant just watch from the sidelines."

(I take off my hat and throw it on the couch.)

Bontle: "Its my life, I am destroying my life Richard. Let me be. Why cant you just let me be? This is the only way to cope with it"

Richard: "Your coping mechanisms are destroying you. You are bigger than this."

(I take off my coat and throw it on the

couch next to the hat. Before I walk to my whisky and pour myself a glass and gulp it all down. I feel so hot.)

Bontle: "Go ahead therapist, tell me how to live my life. Why are you even back Richard? I survived just fine in your absence."

Richard: "This is not surviving you are just digging your grave slowly. I am back because somehow we are kindred souls , I am back because I find myself attracted to your brokenness. I am back because I fucking love you with all your brokenness, flaws and imperfections."

(I look at him, his eyes blasing with fire. I

am on nothing but a skimpy lingerie and black stilettos. I want nothing but to reach for him and kiss him. Let his fire consume me.)

Bontle: "Then stop loving me Richard. I never asked for your love. I never needed your love."

(He smirks as he walks towards me. His eyes never leaving mine. He reaches me and pulls me towards him.)

Richard: "Look at me and tell me you feel nothing for me. And I will walk out of that door and never see me again."

(I look at him and bite my lower lip.)

Richard: "Just as I thought lioness."

(Our lips meet and I know without doubt that its going be a battle for power and control. I grab his shirt and pull it apart as the buttons scatter on the ground. Its always been like this hot, wild and ferocious. They say this is what happens when two people with same personalities meet, they collide because they both crave control and some sort of power over each other. I grrab his belt and pull him closer. Open his eyes so sexy, he gives me his charming side sexy smile #scissored<><><><><>)

Inathi

Katli: "Mommy there is someone buzzing at the gate"

(I hear him shout as I flush the toilet and wash my hands. When I walk into the living room, the gate is already open and a black corolla is driving in.)

Inathi: "Who opened the gate?"

Katli: "Its Tumisho."

Inathi: "Tumi, what did I say about opening

the gate to let people inside our home."

Tumi: "That its dangerous and should not do it when you are not around."

Inathi: "And you just did the opposite. What is the punishment for bad behaviour Katli?"

Katli: "Time out at the corner, no watching cartoons for an hour."

Inathi: "Great, Tumi you are on time out my baby. Go on."

Tumi: "But mommy, its not fair Katl....."

Inathi: "(intejecting) No! Baby its not up for discussion. Go on and serve your punishment without any queries."

(I smile as he sulks and walk to the corner to serve his punishment. I walk to the door where there is a knock. I open the door and find myself looking at Martin Modise. Mbali is behind him looking ashamed.)

Inathi: "Martin."

Martin: "Inathi, I am here for my children."

Inathi: "You can come in Martin."

(I open the door wider to let him inside.
They both walk inside.)

Inathi: "Boys come say hello to Mama Mbali
and Uncle Martin."

(They both come running and hug Mbali and
shyly greet Martin.)

Inathi: "We can talk in the living room. Tumi
take Katli to the game room. I will call you
once the, adults are done talking my boy."

(I watch as they run to the game room. My
heart already breaking into pieces.)

Martin: "I just recently learned that two children I thought were my cousin's kids are actually mine."

Inathi: "It came as a shock to all of us well except for Pogiso and Mbali."

Martin: "I already missed so much of their upbringing, I wish to be with them and play my role as their biological father."

Inathi: "I totally understand and can never deny you the right to your children. So what is going to happen?"

Martin: "I stay in Pretoria so I will be taking

them with me."

Inathi: "With Mbali?"

Martin: "No! Mbali and I are done. Its been a year now. She chose Tumelo or his money over what we had. She has agreed to give me full custody of the boys."

Inathi: "Pretoria, thats far. I know I have no biological ties to them but I raised them as my own, I was given Tumi when he was only 9 months and Katli when he was 2 weeks old. I have a motherly bond with them. Can you please allow them to visit me at least over holidays?"

Martin: "You are their mother Inathi and that will never change. I am thankful that at least they had a responsible mother like you looking after them. And I can never stop them from coming to see you. Pretoria is only a 5 hour drive to Gaborone. I will bring them as much as possible to see you."

Inathi: "Thank you I appreciate it. Can we not tell them the truth just yet, a lot has happened over the last 3 months and if we tell them it might just impact them badly and cause confusion."

Martin: "Understandable. I will tell them both when they are old enough to handle the news."

Inathi: "Thank you. Let me go and pack their bags. I will tell them."

(My heart breaks as I pack their clothes into their suitcases. It feels like I am letting go of a huge piece of my heart. But nothing prepares me for their cries as we part ways.)

Inathi: "Tumi listen to me, you are still my baby. I will always be your mommy and we are going to visit each other every chance we get. Come on baby be a big boy to mommy dont cry. You wil make Katli to cry even more."

Tumi: "I dont want to go mommy. I want to

stay here with you."

Inathi: "I know my boy. I know. Pretoria is nice they have a huge mall with all the toys you want. Uncle Martin can take you to Durban or Cape Town to the beach. You will take photos and send to mommy."

Martin: "Or even better mommy will come down there and take you there herself."

Tumi: "You promise."

Inathi: "I pinky promise."

(I hug them both as I wipe away their tears.)

Inathi: "Pinky promise mommy that you will be good boys and listen to uncle."

Katli: "we promise mommy."

(I kiss their forehead.)

Inathi: "I will call you everynight."

(I stand and open the door for them and they climb in. I hand Martin Katli's favourite teddy bear and their story book.)

Inathi: "Katileho cant sleep without it. Read them bedtime stories they always do the

trick."

Martin: "Thank you."

(I nod my head as I turn away to hide my tears as they fall. I wipe them away as I wave at them as the car drives out. I sit down once the car is out of sight and let my tears fall. I let the pain of losing them just after I got them out. I thought this time around I would keep them a little longer. The house already feels empty without them. But I promise myself that in 6 months time that baby London Nami Sparkles Modise will here to feel the void they left so raw.)

BINDED

Insert 22

"Company of good people is like having into a shop of perfumes. Whether you buy the perfumes or not you are bound to receive the fragrance." - Navdeep Beniwal

Inathi

Landa: "You look perfect. I have never seen such a cute preggy like yourself."

(I smile at her as I get in her.)

Inathi: "I still can't believe I let you talk me

into this."

Landa: "You will enjoy their company. They are crazy but they are the best right Onion?"

(She asks her husband who is behind the wheel.)

Gabriel: "Just avoid Lerato and you will survive."

Landa: "Thats my cousin you are talking about."

Gabriel: "She is nuts."

(We at the Miguel's the top notch restaurant on top of a hill with a club underneath. I am sitting next to Landa, looks we are the first here.)

Landa: "I made sure we arrive first so I can introduce you to the psychos before they even join us."

Inathi: "They sounds interesting."

Landa: "They are here. (Pointing to the door) thats The Mokoenas, Miguel and Nandipha you can call her Nana. They are the owners of this place. The guy is a Chief, Nana is the sweetest, she blends in with everyone, she is Gabriel's half sister.

Behind them its the golden couple The Brownleys, Ethan & Katherine, she is Gabriel's ex but you can call her smarty pants. A lawyer by profession but never have to lift a hand work because she married into riches, they stay in London come to Botswana whenever they feel like it because they can afford it.

Behind them its royalty, I mean royalty in actual sense, the Montenegros King Xavier Dmitri and her majesty Boitumelo Montenegro. They are king and queen of Schaefer. Boi is Miguel's half sister.

Behind them, thats the Mogaes, the prayer

warriors, the pastors of the crowd, Kevin and Thelma but you can call her Makgosi thats what her husband calls her and it has grown on her. The Mogaes own numerous hotels, the father is a Minister of finance.

Behind them thats the crazy couple, they have divorced twice, and are remarrying again Thats the Brownleys 2, Leo and Lerato. Leo is Ethan's cousin and Lerato is my cousin. They are a match for each other and Leo is the only 1 who can handle Lerato and her crazy big mouth. Thats basically it."

(I look at her and wondering if she thinks I will catch all those names. As they reach us they great one another hugging and all.)

Landa: "Guys meet my friend, Inathi Jessica Modise. I am adopting her into this group. Dont worry about introductions I already did them as you were walking inside."

Lerato: "I bet you did, sweetheart I hope she told you that she is the clean freak and psycho of the group with her OCD tendencies. She also told you she is married to a Doctor who owns the hospital for children. And thay she is also a Doctor herself well a by a stupid PHD, but a pyschologist specialising in chilhood traumas and mental health."

Landa: "You like to yap yap nonsense Lerato

just sits down."

Nana: "Welcome to the group Jessy with an I. You will get used to the wildness."

Miguel: "Bring Jessy a bloody Lerato , a proper welcome."

Landa: "No! Jessy will not be subjected to that torture."

Xavier: "Every member goes through that. Its initiation, Chubby Cheeks. Dont ruin the fun."

Gab: "Shut up dickhead, Inathi is expecting

so she will not be drinking a bloody Lerato."

Lerato: "Thats so sad, I was ready to whip her my speciality."

Leo: "You dodged a bullet my darling. That shit is strong enough to send you to the grave early."

Kevin: "Leo, koore ke eng o sa ikilele. You want to drink the Bloody Lerato in her place."

Xavier: "When do you all intend on growing? Come on lets stick to the agenda. Inathi , we welcome you. Now can we feast."

Lerato: "As long as Kevin and Thelma don't pray for our food, I am good. Last time we let them pray we open our eyes to find Monkeys helping themselves to our food."

(Everyone looks at Kevin and laughs.)

Ethan: "Bab'Nfundise is getting to his head. He was literally minute away from casting out demons."

Kevin: "Can't a nigga just breath for a minute."

Boitumelo: "Nigga cant breath after making

us starve."

Thelma: "Just give him a break."

Gab: "Makgosi has spoken guys. Its about to turn into a family affair if we dont stop now. Elijah and Elisha toga ba goroga le bo Abraham and Moses to bring us to order."

(They all laugh. I look at them and smile, wobdering why B and I never had this kind of friends. We take sit back and enjoy the lovely food.)

Xavier: "Okay now we are done eating next on the agenda, is the annual couples

retreat."

Lerato: "Can we do something exotic this year. Not Kasane, I am tired of that place and its bloody mosquitos last we went there they almost drowned Mmandunyane's blood."

Landa: "Lerato!"

Lerato: "What! Dont tell me you didnt tell Inathi your clans name. Grandma will be very disappointed."

Leo: "Focus ladies, this is about the annual couples retreat. Focus."

Lerato: "As if you know what the word means. I mean if you did you would know how to focus on just one woman and stop having bitchy eyes."

Leo: "Excuse me? Maybe if you did not have such a big unruly mouth, you will know how to keep a man down."

Ethan: "Here we go again. Xavier looks like we will have our little men's conference there while the ladies have their our ladies conference here."

Nana: "Great idea."

(The gentlemen stand and go occupy another table while we remain in the original table.)

Kath: "Do you and Leo have to ruin every social meeting. If it is toxic why dont you both let go?"

Lerato: "Did Ethan let you go when he caught you in bed with Gabriel."

Kathi: "Wow! Lerato thats a low blow."

Lerato: "If you want to play Miss Goody shoes with the fake advices make sure the

shoe is fitting Katherine."

Thelma: "Okay enough both of you. Rato sit down and tell us what Leo has done this time around?"

Lerato: "Baby number 2, this time its not charcoal like last time. I am fearing that this one might be his. I know we were kind of not together for almost a year but it still hurts."

Landa: "You and Leo love each other. If that baby is his, then raise the child together. You are months away from your third marriage now, make it work go see a therapist if you have to."

Lerato: "Im a tired. I am so tired that I dont see need to keep trying anymore. I mean who remarries the same guy for a third time in a row but still does not learn a thing from it."

Thelma: "It does not matter how many times what matters is your love for each other."

Lerato: "Enough of my misery. Lets move on, how us our calender this year."

Nana: "We need to plan for your bachelorette party and Landa's baby shower."

Boi: "Inathi also expecting, we must include her."

Inathi: "Oh no dont bother. I bare...."

Lerato: "Bullshit! We already welcomed you so you definitely getting in our yearly plans. Maybe we could do a double shower for both Landa and Inathi?"

Landa: "That would be supercool. I dont see any problem with it."

Thelma: "Sorted! Don't forget the kids birthdays?"

Boi: "We are throwing for Elish and Elijah this year. So you tell us what you have in mind Thelma."

Thelma: "I havent given it much thought I will brainstorm ideas in the whatsapp group."

Landa: "The annual couples retreat?"

Nana: "You know how the Montenegros and Brownleys alwas travel to us. I was thinking this year we fly out to them either Schaefer or London."

Kath: "I choose their sand dunes over London."

Lerato: "I agree with you. We can try camping this year at that exotic Island."

(Its funny how they were fighting one minute back and now busy planning ideas together.)

Inathi: "Thank you so much for the lift and today I had a wonderful time."

Landa: "Anytime. Dont forget class next week."

Inathi: "Send me the times and day. I will be there."

Landa: "Alright no problem. Goodbye. Boo"

Inathi: "have your self a lovely night."

(I walk into the house and change into my sleep wear. I take my journal and sit my by bedside and write like everynight.)

Dear R.H

Today was quite productive, started off on a bad note but got better. I made a whole lot

of friends. A crazy bunch of people but they so much love each other, their care and support for one another is so overwhelming.

Did I mention they are crazy. And rich but they are not snobs like other rich people I have met, so down to earth and welcoming. Somehow reminded me of you well they lack your arrogance.

Most, if not all of them are married couples. And you can just see without doubt that this people love one another. I can't help but wonder how would we have done if we decided to give our love a shot? I guess we will never find out because you already made that decision for us.

London and I will just have to fend for ourselves. I dont know how I feel about you, sometimes I hate you, sometimes I miss you especially in nights like this and sometimes I even convince myself that I dont need you. I can do this on my own without you. But its so hard to forget you when you gave me so much ro remember you with like Baby London.

I hate to love you R.H

(I close the book as I walk to my bed.)

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Last night's snacknyana

Not edited.

Girl is thared.

BINDED

Insert 23

"Insecurity is the side effect of loving too much but receiving too little in return."

5 YEARS LATER....

MELINDA

I wake up to empty bedside again. The sheets are straight indicating that no one has slept on. I put a hand over my face and sigh. This is the story of my life, for the past 3 years that I have been married to him but He is married to his job, bank and career

and ever since last month when we moved back to Botswana I barely ever see him. I wake up and grab my gown as I go downstairs.

Ivy: "Morning Madam! Breakfast is ready. Mr Hudson asked me to give you this when you wake up."

(She gives me, the envelope. Inside a find an invitation card to another charity event held tonight.)

Melinda: "Where is he? Did he come home?"

Ivy: "Mr Hudson came this morning and he

has been in his office ever since."

Melinda: "Thank you, have our breakfast brought to his study."

Ivy: "He already had his breakfast and he asked not to be disturbed."

Melinda: "Thank you Ivy. Tell Bonnie to be ready to drive me out to the mall at 1030."

Ivy: "Okay ma'am."

(I walk to his study and I open the door and stand by the door looking at him. He is sitting down with the phone to his ear and

papers sprawled all over his desk.)

Raphael: "No! Francisco I will not accept this kind of behaviour, I have been gone for only a month and this happens. I will hate to fire all of you for incompetence."

(I stand there just admiring him. My husband, my handsome king. I can't help but fall for him every day. Though he made it clear that I will never have his heart but I hope one day, he will give me his heart as I gave him mine. But for now we will use my love to keep this marriage going.)

Raphael: "I told Ivy that I did not want to be disturbed."

Melinda: "Good morning to you. You did not come to bed again last night."

Raphael: "Melinda please."

Melinda: "Why did we get married If you are never home? to talk to you I have to get through your secretary, I don't even remember the last time you made love to me. And you keep postponing having children."

Raphael: "Not this conversation again. If I remember very well you are the one who pushed for this marriage. And I specifically told you before we jumped into marriage

that I am already married to my business. I don't know why you're putting yourself through so much disappointment by expecting things from me."

Melinda: "Why did we even return to Botswana? At least I had my jewellery shop in London to me busy and a social life."

Raphael: "You are a socialite Melinda, you can still make friends here. If you still want London you can go, I am staying. Close the door on your way out."

(He brings his attention to the papers in front of me. This is his way of dismissing me. I look at him on the verge of tears and

walk out.)

Raphael: "Mel!"

Melinda: "What is it?"

(I ask as I wipe my tears away.)

Raphael: "I am sorry. Things are a bit hectic lately. But I will make it up for you tonight."

(He walks in front of me and wipes my tears away. Before kissing my forehead.)

Raphael: "Come on give me your beautiful

smile."

(I look at him and smile)

Raphael: "That's my girl. Go pamper yourself. I will see you later."

(He touches my cheek as he walks back to his study. I smile as I walk back to the dining room.)

5 YEARS LATER

Inathi

Inathi: "Nami , Thami promise mommy that you be a good girl and boy with Granny."

London: "I promise mommy, I will be a good girl."

Landon: "I promise to be a good boy."

Inathi: "Thats my babies. If you misbehave or fight I am going to leave you behind when I go see Katli and Tumi next week."

London: "I will be a good girl mommy, I promise."

Landon: "I wont beat Nami mommy."

Inathi: "Good, mommy will see on Friday."

London: "Friday?"

Landon: "Yes Sparkles, Today is saturday,
then sunday, monday, tuesday,
Wednesday."

London: "(interrupting him) ohh I know,
Thursday then Friday."

Inathi: "Yes thats it, give mommy a high five,
a kiss here (pointing to my cheeks) and
hug."

(They both kiss my cheeks and hug me. I
kiss their adorable foreheads.)

Inathi: "I love you both."

Unison: "We love you mommy."

Inathi: "Go on, go put your bags in the house."

(I watch as they both run to the house.)

Inathi: "Guys, Landon, London no running in the house (I shout before I turn to Rose)
Thank you for looking after them."

Rose: " I have been with these babies since the day they were born. They are the

grandchildren , Bontle refuse to give me. You need to stop thanking me to look after them everytime you drop them off. You are a busy woman, running your school,your shows and a flower shop must be a hustle. So I understand when you have to drop them off under short notices."

Inathi: "Thank you Ma! (Giving her money) This is for anything you might need. If anything arises before that you will give me a call."

Rose: "Okay love. Stop worrying and go."

Inathi: "Okay let me go."

(I go inside and bid my babies goodbye. It gets,hard everytime I have to part ways with them. Landon takes after his father so much, he has his amber eyes and arrogance. While London took his eyes and ears but my genes are more dominant on her. I get in the car as my phone rings, I look at the screen and smile.)

Inathi: "Missing us already?"

Derick: "You have no idea. I am not sure I can do this long distance anymore kana everytime you guys leave the house becomes lonely. I should marry you already."

Inathi: "So how is marriage is going to fix everything the distance between us kana Snuggles."

Derrick: "If you are are my wife Doodle Bug, I just move you and my babies here."

Inathi: "You have lovely dreams. I just dropped them at Ma's house."

Derrick: "I dont understand why you did not just leave them behind. I would have flown with them on Friday."

Inathi: "We both know how your schedule gets busy. Nami and Thami are demanding

and you know how I feel about leaving them with the maid."

Derrick: "Just say it, you cannot part with them for long. I cant believe I am going to miss your perfomance."

Inathi: "Its your punishment for being a workaholic."

Derrick: "I miss you Doodle Bug and I love you."

(I lean back on the chair waiting for the butterflies to settle down.)

Inathi: "And I you Mr Phemelo."

Derrick: "Give my love to Bontle and your other crazy friends. I will call you tonight."

Inathi: "Take care Snuggles."

(I hung up and put my phone down. We have been dating for 2 years now but I still get butterflies and all the jittering. I start the car and Yolanda's call comes through.)

Inathi: "Lands"

Landa: "Babe, please tell me you are back from your love potion."

(I laugh, Lerato and Landa believe that Derrick has bewitched me with some love potion.)

Inathi: "Yes I am back from Maun. Derrick sends his love."

Landa: "He better put a ring on that finger soon before others steal you. Anyway are you ready for tonight?"

Inathi: "Yes my violin and I ready to give you a sensational performance."

Landa: "You never disappoint."

Inathi: "Laurel misses Nami and Thami, you can drop them at my house."

Landa: "I just dropped them at their grandmother' house in Molepolole. I will bring them to see her before we leave for Capetown."

Landa: "Okay babe. See you later."

Landa: "Later Lands."

BINDED

Insert 24

There is a power between the two of us, an electricity, we could power a city with if we inly knew how. There is something between us, you and I some kind of magic." -

Unknown

Raphael

I glance at my phone, going over the report Daniel sent this morning. The move has really shaken soany things but we finally got the hang of it. The vision is to make the Hudson the biggest thing the whole of Africa.

Melinda: "Is this charity gala for your friends who we once did I retreat with in London?"

Raphael: "Yah its them."

Melinda: "I told you I dont like them. They are just too ghetto I dont get why you cant find friends in your league."

Raphael: "I never tell you who to befriend so please dont tell me who I can befriend. If they are too ghetto you can always return home with Bonnie."

(I slide my phone back in my pocket. I am

trying to remain calm and aware of her feelings but at times she just rubs me on the wrong way like right now when she acts like a righteous princess she was raised up like.)

Raphael: "We are here."

(I get out as Bonnie gets put to open the door for her. I come to her side and take her hand on mine as we walk inside the building. I hand our invitation to one of the ushers and he escorts us to the table where Ethan & Miguel are sitting with their friends from the crazy squad.)

Ethan: "The man of the moment."

Raphael: "Ladies! Gents."

Miguel: "I didnt think you will make it."

Raphael: "Wouldn't miss it for the world. Things been crazy hectic lately but they are settling down."

Lerato: "you forget to bring something though."

Raphael: "What would that be Mrs lovely Rato."

Lerato: "Cindrella shoes and tiara for the

princess."

Thelma: "Lerato! Melinda lovely to see you again. It must be nice to be home."

Melinda: "Not really, I have been trying to convince my husband that we must go back. The hot temperatures this side are not kind."

Lerato: "Bitch please, sit your fake ass down. 2 minutes in London has you thinking you are a British. A motswana like yourself should be ashamed to be even uttering such nonsense."

Kath: "Dont mind Lerato. She has already had too many cocktails, her mouth turns to run wild after drinks."

(I smile at Mel who I can see is boiling inside. She and Lerato never really gotten along since day one. Yolanda climbs on stage. She is the MC for tonight.)

Landa: "Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I am your host for tonight. We would like to welcome you to our annual 13th charity gala. Without any further delay let me welcome on stage a woman who started this beautiful Charity organisation. Give it to the beautiful Nandipha Mokoena."

(Miguel stands up and helps his wife to the stage.)

Nana: "Thank you. Ladies and Gentlemen let me, start by thanking you all for supporting this greater course, that is beyond me and you. This year's raised funds will do towards the areas in Botswana that were affected by floods. The aim is to help those that lost everything in the rains more especially property. So may tonight we give with a cheerful heart knowing it's going to restore dignity in someone's life. Thank you."

Landa: "Thank you Nana for starting this and making sure each year Sisonke Charitable Organizations has bigger and

better impact in Batswana's lives. Without any further delay, I am pleased to bring you a performance by a very talented, passionate and this country's best violinist. She will be playing you a beautiful piece called You are the reason. Give it up to the beautiful Jessy."

The curtains draw back revealing a woman who has haunted me for the last 5 years. I almost don't believe my eyes. Wearing a white evening gown, she stands in the middle of the stage. Eyes closed as she starts playing, the world around me stands still and my attention falls on Inathi. She has grown so gracefully. Even gotten a bit taller, with wide hips and the my favourite boobies, they are no longer so small. I feel

my flesh twitch as I take in the changes in the love of my life. Why did I ever let you go Inathi?' And the violin, she has gotten so perfect with it. She nurtured her talent so well.)'

Ethan: "(whispering) Dude you are starrng too much."

Raphael: "Ethan, thats her, thats the lady I told you about. The lady who has stolen my heart."

Ethan: "Shit! Fu**king shit. Inathi is the lady you told us about?"

(I nod my head not taking my eyes of the prize.)

Landa: "What did I say, she is phenomenal. Guess what she is not yet off the market so gentlemen you might want to get your games up and sweep Ms beautiful Inathi off her feet. But for tonight, she is auctioning her beautiful violin. So you might want to come and cast your bid on this sensational piece."

(I watch as she gets off stage with Landa and walks towards us like a goddess she is. Here I thought I was going have to bribe Bontle for another hook up but heaven is on my side. Hello

Sugar!

Inathi

Landa: "that was just beautiful. I feel like I need to take you to New York so I can make you a Hollywood star."

Inathi: "Take me please I dont mind at all."

(As I approach our table, I almost faint. Sitting amongst my friends is someone I never thought I would see again in this lifetime. I can hear my heart beating so fast, Yolanda is talking but I cant even hear what

she is saying due to the shock I am in. The amber eyes , the amber eyes that Landon and London inherited search mine. The whole room freeze as his mouth curve into a beautiful smile revealing his perfect set of teeth. He is still the most handsome man I ever laid eyes on. The only man who has ever given me orgasm just by starring at him.)

Landa: "Jessy are you there?"

Inathi: "Sorry what were you saying?"

Landa: "I was introducing you."

Raphael: "Introductions are not needed
Sug... I mean Inathi and I know each other
very well."

(He walks to me and takes my hand and
kisses it. The minute he touches my hand,
the fireworks crack as every vein in my body
comes alive. The electric spark that I longed
for returns instantly. I pull my hand quickly
to hide away how affected I am.)

Lerato: "(laughing) Ereng very well mo
baneng. Is there any Chemistry, biology and
physicz we should know about."

(A skinny yellow bone lady who was, sitting
next to him clears her throat as she stands

up and extends her hands.)

Melinda: "I dont believe we have met, I am Melinda Hudson, I am Raphael's wife."

(I cast him a look as I shake his wife's hand. He is married. I guess he did move on like he said.)

Inathi: " I am Inathi, Raphael's ex sister in law."

Xavier: "But Raphael looks so much like th...."

(Boitumelo hurries up and kisses Xavier

concealing what he was about to say)

Lerato: "Shit is about to hit the fan. Baby bring more wine."

Inathi: "I am not staying. I just wanted to say Hi."

(I turn and walk away. Running for my life. For the sake of my children, with Raphael back. I feel my world is about to be rattled in ways I never imagined. The peace I have known for the past years, is coming to an end.)

(I grab my cheque book and write a cheque to Nana.)

Raphael: "Which entrance is she using?"

Miguel: "Raofe come on don't do this, lets be rational."

Gab: "The south entrance. She is using that one to avoid fans."

(I grab my jacket and Mel hold my hand,her eyes begging me not to do this.)

Melinda: "Raphael you promised."

Raphael: "I am sorry Melinda. Ethan your car keys. Miguel please take Melind home when the event ends."

(I grab Ethan's car keys and run after Inathi. By the time i reach the parking lot she is already driving out in a hurry.I jump into Ethan's audi and follow her.)

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Im dosing like no nody's business.

Not edited

BINDED

INSERT 25

"A man who wants to make the relationship work will move mountains to keep the woman he loves." - Greg Behrendt

Melinda watches as he runs after her. And she cant help but wonder if this is her, the lady who owns his heart. The only lady he told her he will always love no matter what, even if he could never possibly have her.

Kath: "Mel, why dont you sit down sweetheart?"

Lerato: "Before you die on us. Mo sieleng metsi hleng or you need something strong like Vodka?"

Landa: "Oh that went very well."

(They all turn to look Landa and she pops an olive in her mouth and smile.)

Landa: "What!? Akere very well is the latest trending word."

Ethan: "Don't mind those two, they always upto no good."

Mel: "The lady that Raphael just went after

is she part of you guys?"

Lerato: "You mean the beautiful Inathi, yes she is part of the ghetto crew. Beautiful isnt she, not fake like some people I see. No wonder some husbands can leave their wives to go after her."

Leo: "Rato, thats a bit harsh."

Thelma: "Yes, it is."

Mel: "Ethan, Miguel I would like to go home."

Nana: "The event is still on. "

Lerato: "let her go hleng, tonight has been so much traumatic for princess Cindy. She needs to save face."

(When she raises her head she spots Bonnie striding in walking towards her.)

Bonnie: "Madam, I was instructed to come and take you home."

Mel: "Thank you Bonnie."

(She stands and grabs her purse as Ethan helps her into her coat. He can't help it but feel sorry for her. Once she is out of sight

the couples look at each other and shrug their shoulders.)

Thelma: "No man Lerato, that was unnecessary, the poor girl was already down."

Lerato: "After what she put me through in London if you think I would just let it go then you clearly dont know me very well. I was just getting started. I will very well deal with her."

(They look at her and laugh)

Landa: "Count me in plus Inathi is my friend.

I got her back."

Xavier: "Ethan and Miguel , how is that the ex-uncle looks exactly like the twins."

Kevin: "It needs no nerd hleng, obvious the uncle was hitting his brother's wife raw. My level of respect for the guy just hit the roof."

Gabriel: "Is it early or should I send a memo to pilot stoke wine maker guy and let him know he got stiff competition."

Miguel: "He is a non factor. If Inathi is the girl that Raphael told us about and he is the father to those twins then my boy already

won this without even a fight."

Lerato: "As long as I get to ship that skinny fake harlot in a box across the ocean I am good. Inathi can have both men for all I care."

Landa: "Derrick has been nothing but good to Jessy, I am rooting for him. "

Ethan: "Then they better make their own children because no one is going to play happy family with my boy's kids."

Kevin: "Can it be couples retreat already, we have the drama to keep it lit."

Xavier: "We are left with only two weeks then we are in."

Thelma: "Here I was thinking we will have a less dramatic retreat now that Leo and Rato are lovey dovey again."

Tumi: "There is never a retreat without drama. It wouldn't be a retreat."

Nana: "Oh well lets make a toast to the sucess of tonight. Thank you family for the support."

(They raises their glasses and make a

toast.)

Inathi

I look at the rear mirror and Ethan's car is still hot on my trail. I cant run to my house because I have pictures of the twins there. Bontle is out of town with Richard. I cant keep running I have to face him sooner or later.

I pull over by the side of the car and get out of the car. Its now or never. He parks behind my car and walks to me. As soon as he reaches me I raise my hand and strike him hard across the face.

(He touches his cheek and smirks)

Raphael: "Strike number 2. I am still counting."

Inathi: "What do you want Raphael? Why are you following me?"

Raphael: "You practically run away when you saw me."

Inathi: "Get over yourself. I was not running away."

Raphael: "Really! What were you doing

then?"

Inathi: "Leaving like I intended to do in the first place. Now what do you want?"

Raphael: "A hug for starters."

Inathi: "Please dont tell me you left your wife for dibaka tsone tse."

Raphael: "a wife who knows that you will always come first no matter what. Come rainstorms and sunshines."

(I look at him surprised by what he just did.)

Inathi: "I am no longer playing these games with you Raofe."

(Taking a step towards me)

Raphael: "If I remember very well you were the one who was playing games , 5 years ago."

(He moves until he stands in front of me. He has gotten a bit taller than I remember. I have to raise my head to look at him. Everytime I look at his eyes it feels like I am staring back at Landon and London.)

Raphael: "Hey!"

(He says softly as he touches my cheek. My breathing hitches and it takes everything in me not to lean into his touch get lost in the moment.)'

Inathi: "Hi."

Raphael: "I am not used to asking but I going to bend my own rules again for you. Can I please hug you?"

(I look at him and nod my head when in actually fact I just wanted to shake my head. Refuse his hug and all. His hands come around me as he moves a bit close. I put my hands on his broad shoulders as I stand

on my toes. I dont know how long I imagined this moment in the past. He still wears the same cologne. I fit so perfectly in his arms, I always did and I have a feeling that I will always do. I have a feeling that they were specific ally custom made for me. I dont even know how but I just feel the tears as they run down my face. Its feels like he is awakening every emotion and feelings that I thought I buried deep within me. He kisses my tears away. Before kissing my forehead. After I collect myself I take a step back to put some space between us.)

Raphael: "I promised myself that I wil do one thing if I ever met you again, something I was a coward to do."

Inathi: "What is that?"

Raphael: "I would tell you this, I love you
Inathi Jessica Modise, I loved you from the
first day I laid my eyes on you. I will love you
until the last moment when I take my final
breath. I love you."

(I look at him and burst out crying. I laugh
until my laughter turns into sorrowful tears)

Inathi: "F*ck you Raphael Hudson. I never
want to see you again. Not in this lifetime.
Do you think I am a fool, how can you stand
there and claim to love me when you went
and married another woman."

Raphael: "I can ex...."

Inathi: "(interrupting me" No I dont want to listen to any explanation you want to give because I am not the person you should be apologising to. Go apologise to that lady you left while chasing a wild goose."

Raphael: "Inathi,can you for once just fuc*ing listen."

Inathi: "I dont want to listen, why should I listen. So you continue further to lie to me? Love, what do you even know about love? If you loved me Raphael, you wouldnt have gone and married another woman, you

would have fought for me, you would have done everything you can to make sure we stay together because that's what a man in love does. He moves mountains just to be with the woman he claims to love. O santse o le moshianyana , le kgwa mashi, (you are still a boy) you know nothing about love. How dare you, nywee nywee I love you Inathi, if you think we still fall for that mumbo jumbo in this era then you are clearly a greater fool than your late brother. Leave me the fu*k alone before I get a restraining order against your stupid black ass"

(I turn and walk back to my car, that he stupid bought. As I get in he calls me.)

Raphael: "Inathi we are not done, we are far from being done in fact we just began. Go ahead and get a restraining order against my black ass and lets see if it will keep me away. Go ahead and waste money that tax payers work hard for."

(He winks as he walks back to his car. I stare at him feeling frustrated, he always been a cocky arrogant bastard.)

I look at the huge portrait in my living room of my twins, a present I got from Thelma and Kevin. A loathe him for giving me babies that look exactly like him because I cant hate him without hating my babies. I

loathe him for walking away 5 years and thinking everything will just fall into place like he never left.

I grab my phone and call my man as I walk to the wine rack to fix myself a glass.

Derrick: "Doodle Bug!"

Inathi: "Hey Snuggles. Sleeping?"

Derrick: "No, my bed suddenly feels big without you in it."

Inathi: "I know the feeling. He is back."

Derrick: "Who is back?"

Inathi: "Raphael! He was there at the charity gala. Turns out he is besties with Ethan and Miguel."

Derrick: "Wow! How are you? Are you okay?"

Inathi: "I dont know how I am supposed to even feel. It came as shock to see him there."

Derrick: "Do you want me to fly down there?"

Inathi: "Can you manage to?"

Derrick: "I don't have any planned flights at the moment, I am just helping out with the family business."

Inathi: "Please come, I need you here with me."

Derrick: "Okay I will be there when you wake up tomorrow."

Inathi: "Thank you Snuggles."

Derrick: "Anything for my Doodle Bug."

Inathi: "I love you."

Derrick: "Not as much as I love you. And go easy on the wine."

Inathi: "Tell my father in law that he makes the best in the industry. And please bring me 4 more."

Derrick: "I dont want to be fuelling your alcohol tendencies."

Inathi: "Please my love, you just said anything for me a minute back."

Derrick: "Woman thats blackmail."

Inathi: "I know and I love you Derrick Phemelo Fitzgerald."

Derrick: "I love you Mrs Phemelo Fitzgerald to be."

(I hung up and take our photo, looking at it I take a short prayer.

"Dear Lord, he is a good man, and I don't want to hurt me more importantly in this twisted life, I know my feelings for him are genuine, may no Raphael formed against us prosper. Amen"

I grab the bottle of wine, glass and my photo with Derrick to my bedroom.)

Binded

Insert 26

"Dysfunction isnt love , you're worthy of healthy and whole relationships that are not rooted in toxic and damaging behaviours." - Alex Elle

MELINDA

*****Flashback*****

Raphael: "Are you willing to get married to man who will never love you? A man who will never be truly yours?"

(I look at him in his suit. All my life I have been told this is my destined husband. I have never let any guy or man touch me because I was reserving myself for him. Now that the time is here for us to be together, nothing can deter me from destiny.
)

Melinda: "That's how arranged marriages are always like, the couple eventually fall in love. Look at my parents."

(He looks at me and laughs.)

Raphael: "Oh Princess you are truly missing the point, I cannot give you my heart or love because I am already in love with someone

else. A woman whom I believe will always own my heart no matter what, even though she might never be mine."

(His words sting but they also give me hope. I met him when I was 18 and then he did not even believe in love. So if he fell in love nothing is stopping him from falling for me.)

Inathi: "I understand, but I still want to get married to you. I want to have babies that have your cute amber eyes."

Raphael: "Melinda look I don't know what wild dream my father sold you but I don't want to get married in fact I am already married to my business."

Melinda: "I will become your second wife then after your job."

Raphael: "why are you settling for less, you can have any men you want. If you are afraid of being cut off, I can give you capital and relocate you to another city where our parents will never reach you."

Melinda: "I dont want any man. I want you Raphael Hudson and I will be your wife."

Raphael: "You will rather be stuck in a loveless miserable marriage than have your freedom, peace and a chance at love with a man who will cherish you and love you."

Melinda: "I am sure my love for you will be enough to cover for both of us."

Raphael: "See you tomorrow at the attorney office, from there we will move to the DC office. Get this marriage thing over and done with."

Melinda: "Your family is benefiting from this marriage more than my family. I have a condition."

Raphael: "You are in no position to be making conditions."

Melinda: "There is only 1 thing I want from you. Faithfulness. I understand that you said your heart is already taken but can you not chase. and, date other women while we are married not even her."

Raphael: "I just told that me and her we will never be together. A woman that you barely know is already making you insecure."

Melinda: "Just promise me."

Raphael: "Okay fine, I promise. But I also have one thing that needs to click in your head, I am married to my job that means it gets the first priority all the time. See you tomorrow wife."

(He stands up and walks out of the restaurant.)'

*****End of flashback*****

Three years after that promise was made, he broke that promise after one glance at her. The bloody violinist. He embarrassed and turned me into a field play for his friends.

I blow my nose as I wipe away the tears. So much for being man of his word. I don't even what hurts, the fact that even after 3 years of marriage he still loves her or the fact that he chased after her not caring a

minute about me. I stand by the window looking outside.

His mother was right, the big house and all the money in the bank cannot fill the void I feel, the void that he can only feel if only he could only give this marriage a try. If we were close I would write her a letter and let her know she was right.

The door to the bedroom opens and I just continue looking outside. I don't have it in me to look at him.

Raphael: "Mel"

Melinda: "Go away I have nothing to say to you."

Raphael: "look what happened....."

Melinda: "I dont want to hear anything you have to say. What don't you understand?"

(I feel him behind me as he reaches for me and turns me around to face him.)

Melinda: "You promised me, that they will be no woman for as long as I am still your wife."

Raphael: " I know I broke the promise. Babe

look I am sorry. I shouldn't have done that."

(He wipes my tears away and hugs me.)

Raphael: "I am sorry Mel. I acted like a total jerk. I should have had the decency to respect you especially in front of my friends."

Melinda: "kind of expected it from man who told his wife that he is in love with another woman. Was that her, the violinist is the woman who owns your heart?"

Raphael: "Her name is Su... I mean Inathi. Dont do this to yourself."

Melinda: "What am I supposed to do? We come back to Botswana and you get busy running after your ex lovers. What kind of woman dates brothers?"

Raphael: "You don't know her and her story so drop the judgement Judge Judy. You know what I came in here to apologize but its clear you don't need the apology so I will just leave."

(He turns to walk away but I grab his hand.)

Mel: "Dont go."

(He looks at me and brings his lips to mine.)

Raphael: "Let me make it upto you."

(I nod my head as I close my eyes and enjoy
hid skillfull mouth.

#Scissored<><><><><><><><>)

Bontle

I stir and smile as feel him behind me, his
hands in my jam-jam. This is what I wake
upto everyday.

Richard: "Morning Lioness."

Bontle: "Morning babe."

(I turn and kiss him lightly.)

Richard: "I cant believe we are going back tomorrow."

Bontle: "The holiday went so fast. I am not ready to go back."

Richard: "I can always knock you up that way you take a long maternity leave."

(I get up and put my gown on.)

Richard: "You cannot run away every time I talk about babies and pregnancy."

Bontle: "All we talk about these days is pregnancy and baby this and that. And its honestly getting boring."

Richard: "Why dont you want kids? You will make a great mother B. Look how good you are with your godchildren."

Bontle: "I am not ready to be a mother. I just got my life in order and my career is blooming. Babies are the last thing in my

mind."

Richard: "I am here, I will be there with you every step of the pregnancy."

Bontle: "No Richard! You will get another job or assignment and get sent to another war zone, I will be left alone with kids without even knowing if their father will come back alive or not."

Richard: "I will quit the job and we can settle down, get married and raise our babies. You are not getting any younger so am I, I want children of my own."

Bontle: "I am not ready for kids and thats final."

(I turn and walk into the bathroom banging the door behind me and making sure I lock it behind.

As I step into the shower I let the tears fall. I don't know how long I can keep lying to him, telling him I am not ready to have children, while the actual truth is that I can never give him the children he wants.

I stand in the shower until the water runs cold when I finally come out the bathroom Richard is no where in sight and my phone is ringing. I grab it and and smile as I pick

up)

Bontle: "Baby mama!"

Inathi: "Baby daddy."

Bontle: "I given you the dildo for a reason so you won't have to bother me during my holiday."

Inathi: "Just come back already. I miss you."

Bontle: "Sejeso sa gago se kae?"

Inathi: "He is around. But his love potion is

not stronger than yours."

Bontle: "Well, I am coming back tomorrow. Where are my babies?"

Inathi: "With their grandmother. Raphael is back B."

(I swallow a big lump of saliva because I know he is back. I knew it since last month when he arrived.)

Bontle: "Really?"

Inathi: "Yes but we will talk about him when you get here? Where is Richie?"

Bontle: "I dont know where he went."

Inathi: "Trouble in paradise."

Bontle: "He still wants babies. All we talk about these days is babies this and that."

Inathi: "Ahh! You still have not told him the truth?"

Bontle: "I can't what if I lose him?"

Inathi: "Richard loves you and you can get through this together."

Bontle: "I dont know Jessy. I dont know."

Inathi: "the truth shall set you free. This is not something you can hide from him forever."

Bontle: "I know babe. I know."

Inathi: "Maybe you guys should join us this year at the couple's retreat."

Bontle: "The reason why we decided to have our holiday early is because you know we are not groupie people. You long invited me and I told you to enjoy yourself but forget

about me joining in."

Inathi: "Its not the same. I can feel your absence. Mostly feel bad that you might somehow feel sidelined."

Bontle: "I have known you since we were babies playing with dolls. I am not going to be threatened by 2 minutes friends you met yesterday. So stop worrying and go have fun."

Inathi: "Okay babe. I love you and can't wait to see you tomorrow."

Bontle: "Tomorrow baby girl. Love you more."

BINDED

Insert 27

"There is telepathy between hearts." -

Unknown

Raphael

I stand in my office looking outside with my phone to the ear. I am getting reprimanded by Ethan and Miguel for my behaviour.

Ethan: "Still that was not fair on her."

Raphael: "I know and I spent the whole weekend apologising. I made it upto her."

Miguel: "Maybe its better if you dont bring her to the retreat, Landa is with Nathi and Lerato does not like Mel so they are going to make the trip miserable for her."

Raphael: "Is Inathi coming?"

Miguel: "are you even listening to us? You are married Raph, start acting like a married man."

Raphael: "Ahh! Am i wrong to ask if the yummy violinist is coming along? I could bring my piano and we make a collaboration."

Ethan: "A piano to the bush, are you even listening to yourself dude. Its like you lost your senses ever since you met her again."

Raphael: "The lady is mine and I want her back. I was a fool to ever let her go."

Miguel: "Well you might be late, she has moved on."

Raphael: "I am not scared of a little competition. The girl will be mine in the end."

Ethan: "Raphael, you are married are you

forgetting?"

Raphael: "That's why divorce exists. Given a chance I won't even think twice about leaving Mel for Inathi. You know why because unlike Mel, I am a selfish prick who put his own needs first. I will not sacrifice my own happiness for no one."

Ethan: "Why did you let her go in the first place?"

Raphael: "You know how my world is, I thought it would taint her image. When I met her, she was broken and had been through so much. My world would have broken her further. The wars and my ugly

past. But you know whats funny."

Miguel: "No, lets hear it."

Raphael: "I hit her raw, I was hoping I will knock her up and that would give me enough reason to hold on and keep me around."

Ethan: "You didn't knock her up?"

Raphael: "Unfortunately not, I left after getting my revenge and hired the Dlamini agents to spy on her for 2 months if I was not successful. When I realised that I didn't knock her up. I called them off and aborted

the mission. Set her free and went on to live my life. "

Miguel: "And Mel why did you marry her? Dont give me that shit that your father forced you. You hate the fuckhead and you are stubborn with a mind of your own. No one can force you into anything."

Raphael: "Remember how I started the bank, the start capital was from that fucker. So marrying Mel meant gaining hundred percent ownership of my company again."

Miguel: "And what did he gain from this marriage?"

Raphael: "Merging family businesses and becoming one powerful business. But its funny how I am the bad guy now when I have been upfront with my fellings from the start, I was blunt and told her that she can never have my heart because its already taken by someone else. I even tried to buy her out, give her money to start a new life somewhere but I guess her obsession with me was too much."

Ethan: "Wouldn't that have screwed your plans to get back your shares for the bank?"

Raphael: "No! We made a deal with father that if she backs out I still get the shares. But in the end I got the girl and the bank."

Miguel: "Go after your lady, but you are against a Fitzgerald, the family owns a wine company and have some shares in airlines, plus the dude is a pilot. You are against stiff competition."

Raphael: "I have the biggest weapon to diffuse him. She might deny it all the way she wants but I have her heart and thats all I need to get my girl back."

Ethan: "You be surprised by how many weapons you actually have."

Raphael: "Pardon."

Miguel: "Its a monday, so today you can catch her at her flower shop."

Raphael: "I heard she is a florist."

Ethan: "A musician, a florist and she also teaches violin classes. In fact I heard from Sunshine that she is opening a dance and music school soon. Just waiting to get accredited by BQA."

Miguel: "But a piece of advice, sort your business out with Melinda first. Set the poor girl free before it all turns nasty in you."

Raphael: "Yeah I will sort it out fast. Thank you fu*kheads. Miguel send the directions to her flower shop."

Miguel: "Okay buddy."

(I hang up and go to my gallery I open her folder and stare at her photos. I call Daniel.)

Dan: "Raph"

Raphael: "Can you come back already I need you here."

Daniel: "I told you that I am good in London."

Botswana is not my cup of cake."

Raphael: "Is it Botswana or the fact that Bontle seems to be serious with that muscle guy."

Daniel: "Do you have to drag B, into every conversation we have."

Raphael: "okay fine, then can you get your contacts to check out Derrick Phemelo Fitzgerald for me. I want everything you can find on him, all his dirty little secrets. Everything."

Daniel: "Who is he?"

Raphael: "A rat that has been entertaining my woman."

Daniel: "Melinda is faithful..... oh you mean Inathi. I thought you said you are done."

Raphael: "Well I lied."

Daniel: "I guess I should take the next flight out. You have finally won convincing me to come to Botswana."

Raphael: "Why you coming?"

Daniel: "When you lock heads with

Molemogi someone has to be there?"

Raphael: "I have damning evidence against him. I will just throw him in prison this time around should he try to get involved in my business again."

Daniel: "More reason why I should come. You dont think straight where Inathi is concerned."

Raphael: "Fine see you soon. Don't forget my assignment."

(I hang up. As I get my jacket and walk out of the office.)

Raphael: "Iris, hold my messages. I will be back in an hour or so."

Iris: "Okay sir."

Inathi

Derrick: "Come on , just one more dance doodle bug. You have been sulking the whole weekend. Dancing will cheer you up."

(I roll my eyes as I smile.)

Inathi: "I knew it was a bad idea, to bring you along."

Derrick: "Come on, just one dance."

Inathi: "Okay, fine."

(I put the flowers down and walk to the middle of the room. He changes the song and play Maroon 5 - If I aint got you.

I put my hand around his neck as he put his hands on my waist. I close my eyes as I let him guide my steps. We get lost in our own world as we dance slowly to the tune of the song. As it comes to an end I raise my

head and look at him.)

Inathi: "I just want you Mr Fitzgerald."

Derrick: "I love you Mrs Fitz!"

Inathi: "It has a nice ring to it."

Derrick: "it sure does."

(he smiles as he bends his head and kiss me.the door chime dingles indicating that someone just walked into the shop.

I turn around and catch him as he pull te

umbrella from his head closing it. My breath hitches as he dusts off the rain drops from his black coat. His amber eyes finds mine and there is that silent yet powerful moment I dont even know how to explain. Before he pulls his arrogance mask on.)

Raphael: "I can see its raining kisses and saliva in here."

Inathi: "What do you want?"

Raphael: "Oh! Sugar how did you keep this place running with such poor service delivery? Thats not how you greet valuable customers."

(I tense as he calls me sugar and move to go stand behind the teller counter.)

Derrick: "We have never met, you must be Raphael. I am Derrick."

(Derrick extends his hand for a handshake. But Raphael looks at him and put his hands in his pockets again.)

Raphael: "Does your shop assistant introduce himself to all the customers that walks in. Since you want to be helpful bring me a bouquet of pink roses."

(He walks past him. But Derrick hold him by

the hand)

Derrick: "I am not a shop assistant."

Raphael: "I never asked, remove your hands."

(I rush to Derrick.)

Inathi: "Snuggles, let him go. Raphael , Derrick is not a shop assistant he is actually my man."

Raphael: "Too much information. I never asked. I just came to get flowers for my lovely wife. This shop came highly

recommended but I think it was a mistake.
Service delivery is whack."

Inathi; "Pink roses, coming up."

Raphael: "And include also a card, write
"thank you for a lovely weekend. Yours
Hubby R.H"

Inathi: "Okay."

(I go on to prepare his order as he looks
around the shop. But cant help but feel
Melinda is living the life that was supposed
to be mine, receiving flowers that were
supposed to be mine.)

Inathi: "That will be p150 all together."

(He gives me P200)

Raphael: "Keep change and tell your boyfriend to get his insecurities in check. If he cant handle his jealousy he should remain home, or else you will lose all potential customers."

(He grabs the flowers and walks out whistling. I look at him as he walks out, feeling conflicted)

Derrick: "Now that I met him, I support your

decision not to tell him about the twins.
This guy is arrogant and he will make our
life living hell. Walking in here like he owns
the damn place."

Inathi: "Hey! Dont worry about Raphael. I will
handle him."

Derrick: "No leave him to me. He met his
match. We will see , who is the better man."

(And there goes my peace flying right out of
the window. Damn you R.H.)

BINDED

Insert 28

"Anything is possible if you've got enough nerve."- J.K Rowling

Two Weeks later

The camp site

The tents are pitched up surrounding the fire area, with the bathrooms not far behind them. In front of the tents, there is the cooking area.

And at a few distance there is a an open area, that has been cleared. The whole area

is fenced with a fence. Camp chairs have been put surrounding the camp fire area.

The couples drive through in a car convoy , they are all driving Jeep Wranglers. The Mogaes leading them since they are the owners of the place. They pack the car and get off, wearing tshirt printed "Ghetto Campers: The Kethans."

They next couple is Katherine and Ethan. They are also putting on The Ghetto Campers merchandise, printed "The Brownleys." , followed by "The Mokoenas" , "The Gablands" , "The Leolovers" , "The Montenegros". The last vehicle to drive in is Mel and Raph, there tshirt are printed "The Hudsons", Mel gets off wearing sunglasses.

Lerato: "Heelang! You did not tell Princess Cindy that we are coming to the bush, no cameras here, no need to come dolled up."

Nana: "Rato, you promised to behave."

Lerato: "Nyaa! Im trying by all means to behave but the devil keeps whispering into my ear. I dont know how long I can keep being a good girl."

Kevin: "Listen fellows, this area is high animal territory, more especially since we are not far from their drinking spot. So we need to stick together."

Lerato: "Vele you brought us here out there to feed us to your lions."

Xavier: "We will be fine don't worry. So here is how we are going to operate, The kethans are our navigators, if we want to go anywhere there are our go people. The Gablands are our medical team, for any injury we turn to them. The Mokoenas are our food supplies, they are the ones who are ensuring we are covered in the food department. The Hudson's are our water supplies, so basically they have to make sure there is always enough water supply for the campers to use. The Mokoenas are the camera guys, capturing every moment and Montenegros are responsible for the

group activities. Leolovers you are the gabage people, keeping the campsite clean at all costs is your responsibility. The other couple is not here so I dont know, but they were responsible for entertainment."

Landa: "They were leaving Cape Town last night so they will join us soon.

Lerato: "I didn't hear you mention alcohol department."

Xavier: "The food department got you covered Rato."

Thelma: "With that said welcome to Camp

Ghetto guys. Go on check your tents out. They are labeled with the names you provided."

(The couples grab their bags and make way to their tents.)

Gabriel: "Is there cellphone reception doen here?"

Kevin: "No there is no reception."

(Once they have checked out their tents, the gents sit on the camp chairs having beer while the ladies whoop them something to eat.)

Kath: "So lived in London all your life?"

Mel: "No I moved there when I was 16 years old."

Lerato: "Yaanong ke eng ne o bata go re claimela. I mean you are a pure motswana."

Tumi: "Never mind Rato, she has menopause hot flashes, they turn to make her nasty."

Landa: "So when are you and Raph planning on having babies."

Mel: "I am ready but Raphael keeps postponing. He says he is not ready."

(Lerato burst out laughing. Even claps her hand)

Lerato: "Aoo bathong! Princess and you believe that shit, I mean the guy has....."

(Thelma pushes a burger in lerato's mouth making her shut up.)

Thelma: "How do you want your steak to be like Landa."

Landa: "Very well done."

At the guy's side

Miguel: "How is operation get your girl back going?"

Raphael: "A little harder than I thought. She is always with that fu*khead"

Ethan: "I told you it wouldn't be a walk in the park."

Raphael: "I will get the girl."

Xavier: "You already got a girl akere, your wife."

Raphael: "She was just holding the fort in the mean time for the rightful owner."

Kevin: "I would also trade her in for someone with a bit of meat. Does she even eat, your wife?"

Miguel: "An african woman should have some meat to the bone, look at my Mashenge, look at Inathi. You can see they are real african woman."

Leo: "You all are talking bull , my Lerato is

slender but she is an african woman."

Ethan: "With a loud mouth. I bet all the food she eats goes straight to empower her mouth to speak even more."

Kevin: "No offense, but I don't know how you put up with her? Her mouth has no filter."

Gab: "Wena bab'nfundise just shut up, we don't know how you keep up with praying all the time. "

Xavier: "I bet he even prays before hitting the jar."

(They all crack up laughing. But their laughter dies quickly as they hear the sound of a helicopter flying over their head.)

Raph: "Is there animal control police around this area?"

Landa: "No hle sweetz, thats my girl and her man"

Ethan: "You got to be kidding me."

Kevin: "That's just being extra for nothing."

Thelma: "We know you never like it when

your egos gets bruised but can you not team up to get rid of Derrick. He is on the emergency panel with the chopper."

Xavier: "You should have told the guy we dont get along with drama kings, its obvious the guy has to go."

Gab: "Who does he think he is, bringing a chopper when we came driving cars. Soon he will be acting like King Moswati with our wives, taking them for an overview of this place."

Raphael: "I am glad you are with me, the drama king has to go."

Miguel: "Its obvious, its operation get rid of the chopper guy."

Lerato: "I will be damned if I let your bruised egos ruin my chance for a choppr ride. I am on Derrick's team."

Landa: "Welcome to the winning team Rato laka."

(They watch as the chopper lands it is written Fitz Airlines across. Derrick comes off with Inathi putting on riped faded blue jeans , black air force one sneakers, dusty pink caps, sun glasses and white tshirts, printed "The Ghetto Campers: The Fitz")

Raphael: "He has not put a ring on her finger.
The Fitz wa so ma mang?"

(Derricks holds Inathi's hand while on the other side holding s black file as he walks towards the others.)

Landa: "The Fitz welcome to camp Ghetto. I was starting to think you wont make it."

Inathi: "Will never miss it for the world."

(Derrick let go of my hand as he walks straight to Raphael. He beats him with the file on the face lightly.)

Derrick: "Next time dont bloody send Private Investigators to dig me up, simply ask and I will save you all the trouble and money by giving you the information yo

u need bloody moron. Afternoon fellas, ladies you are looking lovely in you merchandise."

BINDED

Insert 29

"I am jealous because I know how easily replaceable I am. I am nothing special."-

Unknown

Inathi

Raphael looks at him and licks his lips before giving him his arrogant side smile, as he relaxes back in the camp chair.

Raphael: "Wa nyela boy."

Derrick: "What did you just say?"

Kevin: "Wa re wa go nyesa now now."

Derrick: "I would like to see him try."

Raphael: "I dont like repeating myself but since you have a hearing impairment , I will repeat myself again so it gets through your thick skull. (He takes a sip of his heineken)
Ka re wa nyela! You are not going to borrow your father's chopper and think you can waltz here and try charming the ladies using me. Ke a go nyedisa now now. Now get remove your stupid file before I marinate you with it."

Derrick: "I made the job easy for you, you

wanted information on me there it is."

Raphael: "Did I ask for your help? Or did I tell you that i don't my guys to get the job done. Dont get cocky with me."

Derrick: "Do you know who I am?"

Raphael: "Do I look like a give a cent about who you are? Even if you were the mayor of this Town or the son of the president I still wouldn't give a damn about who you are. Nywee nywee do you know who I am? As if that's supposed to scare me? Wa nyela Morena. Tswa ha pele game before o sulahalelwa ke camp before it even begins."

(He takes another sip of his heineken and crosses his legs.)

Leo: "Ao! Thats it, I thought le ta nyesana kana. I wanted to see who will deliver."

Lerato: "Kana ke hoo babe. They should sort this out man to man or it is fist to fist."

Inathi: "Derrick come on lets go get our bags."

(I pull his hand as Raphael throws the file that Derrick smacked him with in the blazing fire without even bothering to open it. I look at Derrick as we walk back to the

chopper.)

Inathi: "That was totally unnecessary and uncalled for."

Derrick: "Uncalled for? I am not going to let Raphael embarrass."

Inathi: "He didnt have to, you embarrassed yourself. So what if he is investigating you? You are not the first person to be investigated and probably wont be the last."

Derrick: "Are you being serious right now? You are siding with your baby daddy right now."

Inathi: "It has nothing to do with him being my baby daddy, it has to do with one thing I told you I hate, drama. We dont even have 5 minutes here and you already picked a fight."

Derrick: "I don't believe you."

Inathi: "I don't believe you, maybe Raofe was right you should get your jealousy in check, I am not going to be with man who lets his emotions rule him and act like a hormonal 16 years high school boy. I already have a baby boy I nurse, I don't need to add a 35 years old man to the list."

(I grab my bag and walk to the tent written The Fitz. I put my bag down and go to the cooking area to join the ladies. Landa stands up and hugs me.)

Landa: "Hey lover"

Inathi: "Hey babe. Ladies how are you doing?"

Lerato: "It must be nice being you, having two men fight for you."

Inathi: "They are not fighting for me. Raphael is married and I would appreciate it if we will respect his wife."

(I look at Mel pitifully and smile. Somehow I feel like she is me, and suddenly I am Mbali. Raphael is Tumelo. History repeating itself. The only difference is that unlike the real Mbali I cannot hurt or make another woman go through what I went through despite the circumstances surrounding me and Raphael.)

Thelma: "Thank you Nathi exactly what I have been saying."

Inathi: "Exactly, plus I am happy with Derrick."

Lerato: "Is he satisfying you now, or still

need more dildos. I have a wide range of supply of different kinds."

Inathi: "(putting a hand on my face) Lerato!"

Lerato: "What I heard you talking to Bontle, you said he does not last, 2 minutes noodles."

(We all burst out laughing.)

Nana: "No it cant be 2 minutes noodles."

Inathi: "I am not doing this with you guys, discussing my man."

Kath: "Tell us hle, we can help out, ngwana o sa leleng o swela tharing."

Inathi: "He is a loving, caring guy. But he does not last shame! Thats the only problem."

Tumi: "Aii! Ke sono!"

Lerato: "I will send you the dildos or you can borrow Raphael. I am sure Mel does not mind, or you do?"

Landa: "Lerato!"

Lerato: "I told you guys the devil keeps

whispering things into my ear. Why cant you understand?"

Inathi: "Let me make myself helpful I will go set the wating area."

Mel: "I will help."

(I look at her shocked and look at Landa. She just shrugs her shoulders.)

Inathi: "okay no problem. Help me carry the plates."

(We both carry the plates and move to the benches reserved for eating.)

Mel: "How much?"

Inathi: "Huh?"

Mel: "I want to give you a fair chance to choose. Option 1, I pay you to disappear from our lives. I dont care where you go but somewhere far away from my husband and I. Or option 2, I take matters into my own hands and make you disappear from the face of Earth. I would take first option if I were you"

(I look at her and burst ou laughing.)

Inathi: "Is that supposed to scare me sweets?"

Mel: "No! Its supposed to alert you that I will kill for my husband."

Inathi: "Its a good thing then that I am not the one after your husband its the other way around. So keep your dog on a tight leash my dear and you have nothing to worry about."

(I laugh and shake my head as I walk back to the kitchen)

Landa: "What did princess say that had you

laughing so loud?"

Inathi: "Can you believe the nerve of that girl she just threatened me?"

Nana: "You lie."

Inathi: "I am telling you. She gave me two options; 1 to buy me off to run away from my own home country. Or 2 she makes me disappear from the face of earth."

Tumi: "Whoa!"

Inathi: "I told her she has nothing to worry about. I don't want Raphael. You see now

why I dont want to tell him about the twins. He is married to a psycho that will not think twice about hurting my babies once she knows about their existence."

Lerato: "Lets feed her skinny ass to the lions. It will save us so much trouble."

Thelma: "Nathi, I hope you took her threat seriously."

Nana: "I still say Raphael deserves to know the truth. It does not matter if he is married to a psycho or not. I know the pain of not growing up without knowing your real father. Your babies deserve better."

Landa: "I agree with Nana, let him know. He will protect you and the twins. Mel is a non factor."

Inathi: "Raphael's world is too dark for me and my babies. I have shown the twins his photos , they know he is their father but we are okay without him. Derrick is there to play the father role."

Tumi: "But Inathi thats not...."

Inathi: "(interjecting) No Tumi, I have made my decision. If any of you decide to tell Raphael about Thami and Nami, that will be the last straw to our friendship. I will never forgive that person."

In the evening we sit around the bonfire, sharing jokes and laughing. I am sitting next to Derrick who is holding my hand. Directly opposite is , its blazing amber eyes. I can feel his eyes on me. The hair at my back is standing still and it feels like my skin is set on fire.

Xavier: "Okay ready to hear our first activity for tomorrow."

Kevin: "lets hear it."

Xavier: "In the morning we have aerobics. Then we are going on a game drive. The reason why we opted to use jeep wrangles

is because it can handle the roads here."

Gab: "Nnyaa! You can go ahead and say it dickhead. We dont know about The Fitz and their chopper how they are going to do their game drive. We thank you for your grand entrance but the chopper is a liability"

(Everyone cracks up)

Kevin: "And using the chopper is not safe in this area. There are poachers so they might just shoot you guys down thinking you are the anti-poaching unit guys."

Landa: "its okay, we can give them lift guys

in our cars."

Lerato: "how ne sweetz? Most cars are meant for two people. Well except for Raphael's car."

Raphael: "Let them remain in the camp when we go. It will teach them to follow simple instructions. Bring a Jeep Wrangler, motho ene decides to play Mr Charming and brings his father's chopper."

Kevin: "Nyaa hle banna. Let us not be this savage."

Miguel: "Since you want to play hero. You

will give them your car and remain behind."

Kevin: "sorry I was just trying to help.

BINDED

Insert 30

"She is standing on a line between giving up and seeing how much more she can take." - Unknown

Inathi

I look at him irritated. Irritated by the whole behavior of these old men and women.

Inathi: "If I didn't know better I would say the Chopper has all your egos bruised."

Leo: "No hle love, it was a matter of just

following simple instructions."

Inathi: "We are not the first people to not follow simple instructions. Mostly if you all asked you would have gotten it by now that we did bring the chopper not to show off but rather it was a matter of getting here in time."

Miguel: "So it will totally be understandable if we leave you behind because it's a matter of space in the cars."

Inathi: "You know what maybe it was a mistake coming to this retreat if we are going to be behaving like a bunch of old school kids who just got permission to

spend the night out. So we dont cause any inconveniences to you all, my man and I will leave first thing tomorrow morning."

Lerato: "Ao babe o e tsere ka cleavage?"

Gab: "There is no need to leave, the pilot can go back to go and get the wrangler."

Derrick: "He is right I can go back but it will probably take me the whole day to drive back here."

Inathi: "The pilot has a name, its Derrick! And we are a team, if you are going back there is no need for me to remain. I will go

with you and drive the distance back here with you."

Landa: "Aww! Isn't that just too cute."

Kevin: "But guys if he takes back the chopper what happens in case of an emergency. The nearest hospital is about 50 km. And we all saw how bad the road is."

Raphael: "Okay fine I guess it won't hurt anyone to share the car with them just for this one activity."

Xavier: "Great, now there comes the spirit of team work that I know we are capable of."

Tumi: "we will conclude tomorrow's festivities with braai and drinking session."

Lerato: "I hope you bought enough liquor."

Ethan: "I hope Leo packed a masking tape. We all know you have mouth diarrhoea and good at spilling secrets once you drunk."

Lerato: "Me and you same whatsapp group. Poto ga e kake ta tshega chechisa tsotlhe di sha marago."

(We all look at Ethan and laugh)

Ethan: "Sunshine let us go and sleep before I lose my coolness."

Xavier: "Goodnight Ghetto Campers see you all tomorrow morning."

(They all stand up and start going into their tents. I stand up and take Derrick's hand as I lead him to our own tent. We silently prepare ourselves to get into bed.)

Derrick: "Thank you."

Inathi: "For what love."

Derrick: "Standing up for me out there."

(I pat next to me in bed and he sits down. Once he is seated I go down and kneel before him.)

Inathi: "I know I might come on a little strong at times but I will always have your back. You are my man, my protector and my shield. The role of the queen in chess is to protect her king at all times and costs and I love just doing that."

Derrick: "So you are no longer mad at me?"

Inathi: " Ohh! Phemelo, I can never stay mad at you for too long. You are one of the humble people I know and I am just lucky to

have you in my life. I love you baba."

Derrick: "I love you, Mrs Fitz."

(I stand up and climb on his lap kissing him passionately. Same time as Lerato decides to interrupt the night for us , she stands outside the tents by the fire place.)

Lerato: "Heeelang! I forgot a very important announcement. Bathong no sex, these tents are not sound proof and some of us are having a dry season, dry as the kalahari desert. Please have mercy on us."

Miguel: "Rato, go and sleep just because

you are not having some doesnt mean you should rain on our parade."

Lerato: "Nyaa hleng, it was a friendly warning, I heard Lions are attracted to tents with sexual festivities so go ahead and tlof tlof at your own risk."

Derrick: "(Whispering) Does she ever gets tired?"

Inathi: "No! She even talks in her sleep. You will get used to her."

Bontle

I try his phone for the tenth time now, but it still goes straight to voicemail. I leave another message.

"Richard Moeti, if you think I am going to beg you to come home you just in for another disappointment."

I hung up the phone throws it on the couch. I look at the whisky bar by the corner calling for me but I turn away. I promised Richard that I will not turn to alcohol when the going gets tough. I try watching the television but I cannot concentrate. So I reach for my phone once again and try his number, still voicemail so I leave another message.

"My love I am sorry about the past nine messages. Can you please come home? We can fix this. I believe in us, I know we can get through this. I love you Richard and I am not prepared to lose you."

I hung up and put the phone away. As my mind takes me to the conversation we had this morning.

*****Flashback*****

Bontle: "Its not like I dont want to give you children. I can't even if I did want."

Richard: "What do you mean?"

Bontle: "Becoming an escort was not the only bad decision I made during my dark moments. I also decided that I did not want children so I did a hysterectomy."

Richard: "No! Please tell me you are lying."

Bontle: "I wish I was but i am not lying."

Richard: "Its been a year, a whole year Bontle begging you for children. And it never clicked that maybe I should let this fool know that I can't give him children."

Bontle: "I was afraid, afraid about what your

reaction will be."

Richard: "Afraid, since when are you afraid? So you decided to keep me at bay with false hope. Do you even know that hope deferred makes the the heart sick?"

Bontle: "I am sorry okay. I should have told you sooner."

Richard: "No, your sorry doesn't cut it this time around. I can overlook your escort services and every other flaw you come with but this, this is not something i can overlook."

(He grabs his phone and car keys from the bed stand.)

Bontle: "Richard! Please don't go. Let us talk about this."

Richard: "Talking is the last thing I want to do right now. Let me go before we all say or do something we will regret the next day."

(He turns and walks out.)

*****End of Flashback*****

I dont even realise that I am crying until I see the tears dropping on my hand. I wipe

them away and try to calm myself down.

"COME on B! You are bigger than this.
Stronger than this."

The pep is supposed to help but it just makes everything worse. Its like ever since I met Richard I have lost my footing to become this emotional tearful woman I dont even like.

Admire of my pep talk I receive a call from a ghost I haven't heard from in 4 years.

Bontle: "I thought you deleted my number."

Daniel: "bring your ass outside."

(He hungs up and I look at the screen and smile before rushing to the bedroom to wath my face so I get rid of the evidence of crying. I pull a silk gown over my short nighties.

As I walk outside, he is standing leaning against the Q7. With his left hand in the pocket of the turquoise shorts he is wearing. He has this big frown on his face probably from whatever he is reading on his phone. He has gotten taller. And more light in complexion.)

Bontle: "Are you back after ghosting me for

almost 4 years now?"

Daniel: "(smiling) You have been counting?"

Bontle: "Dont get cocky with me?"

Daniel: "I tend to forget that you have a short fuse."

(I walk to him and hug him. He picks me up and swings me around.)

Daniel: "Hey short stuff."

Bontle: "Don't..."

(He walks to the car door and opens it.)

Daniel: "Lets go."

Bontle: "Go where? Are you insane? I am only putting on pyjamas."

Daniel: "my eyesight is still in tact. Stop blabbering and let us go."

Bontle: "Dan....."

(He raises his eyebrows challenging me. And I roll my eyes as I press the remote control to close the gate and get into the

car. I smile to myself as I recall 5 years back when I jumped into another Q7 he was driving while Raphael mishandled Inathi. Time really flies.)

Daniel: "I am surprised that he has not put a ring on the finger."

Bontle: "We are in no rush. Where are you taking me?"

Daniel: "KFC, I heard they now have dunked wings. I needed someone to accompany me."

Bontle: "FYI, the girl is trying to stay in

shape. So you better find a new partner to go midnight snacking with."

Daniel: "I am good with the partner I have."

Bontle: "I hope she won't be subjected to your ghosting tendencies."

Daniel: "It really affected you hey."

Bontle: "Keep lying to yourself."

(We stop by the traffic robots and I look on the left side only to find Richard's legend 45, with Mbali inside sitting on seat laughing with my man.)

Bontle: "You got to be kidding me."

(I say as I open the car and get out. I open the passenger door to Richard's car and he looks surprised to see me.)

Richard: "Bontle."

(I dont waste time talking, I unbuckle her seat belt and drag her by her weave from my seat into the hard tarred road.)

BINDED

Insert 31

"Our lives intersect in mysterious ways.
Binded by the secrets we keep. Open to the
harm it brings." - Author S Mods

Narrated

Richard glances at my his friend Bame who
is busy talking non stop. His body is there
but his mind is really not there.

Bame: "I told you that you should have let
that girl go the minute you found out that
she is a hooker."

Richard: "I love her."

Bame: "But she got so much baggage, she has daddy issues, she is bossy and controlling not forgetting she is a prostitute. For heaven's sake, now she is barren. love is not enough."

Richard: "What do you suggest I do then? I love her and I wanted to marry her?"

Bame: "Naare wa gafa wa re marry? Marry the harlot nyaa hle mona. Find a wife somewhere else and keep her as a mistress."

Richard: "Thats insanity."

Bame: "Insanity is what you are thinking of doing. Imagine if your mother and brothers find out. The embarrassment you will put them through if it ever gets out that she is a prostitute."

Richard: "Was a prostitute. She no longer do that nonsense."

Bame: "Same thing. A leopard never changes its spot."

Richard: "You are just judgemental. I dont

even know why I am taking advice from you with your failed marriages and relationships."

Bame: "Its because of them, tjnat I have experience in this things. Look I had to pick my girl up but I am going for a night job can you get her and drop her home on your way home."

Richard: "Which 1?"

Bame: "there is only one hle o ma***e. She is knocking off soon."

Richard: "I will get her. Let me go home. I

am sure Bontle is blowing up my phone. I forgot to bring my charger along."

Bame: "Serves her right for lying to you."

(Richard grabs his back and walks to his car. He passes by railpark picking up Mbali to go and drop her off.)'

Mbali: "Did he tell you what time he will be knocking off?"

Richard:"No but dont wait up it might take him a while."

Mbali: "what do you guys do kante?"

Richard: "Its confidential information baby girl, I will have to kill you first before telling you."

Mbali: "(laughing) Is that a line that you guys are taught at your training because Bame like to say the same thing."

(He looks at her and laughs as he stops by the traffic robots. But before he can reply her. The passenger door opens and he looks stunned to see Bontle looking ready to murder someone.)

Richard: "Bontle!"

(She does not waste any time but unbuckles Mbali's seat belt and drag her down. Before kicking her hard on the stomach. As Richard and Daniek come out of the cars to stop her, she is already on top of the defenseless Mbali beating her.)

Bontle: "O a twaela akere Mbali. You think I am just going to let you walk over me like you did to Inathi. Dont make that mistake, I am not Inathi I dont watch from the sidelines and cry.

(Daniel arrives to her first and pulls her away as she screams and kicks in the air. While Ricahrd helps Mbali up totally

stunned by Bontle's behaviour. Mostly her dress code.)

Richard: "Bontle what the hell?"

Bontle: "Dont what the hell me? How can you do this to me? I trusted you, with her of all people?"

Richard: "Stop all this, you are embarrassing yourself, you are embarrassing me. Mbali are you okay?"

Bontle: "I see what thhis is. I tell you I csnt give you children and you run to the baby making machine."

Richard: "I don't have time for this. (Opening the door) Mbali come I will take you to go see the doctor."

Bontle: "Richard Moeti, if you get in that car with that that just know that you and me we are done. there is e no turning back after this."

(He looks at her as he shakes his head and gets in the car. Leaving an emotional Bontle there with Daniel.)

Inathi

Back from the game drive, evening we sit around fire place, the music is playing from the car, and drinks and meat.

Lorato: "Remember the rules of the game you tell a secret that you have not yet told your partner. Can be because you have been afraid or the timing was not right?"

Nana: "Our retreats are always purposeful mostly made to help partners be closer than ever before after them. Hence the activities, so we will start with Xavier and end at Derrick."

(I take a sip of my wine.)

Xavier: "Hmm! tough one let me see. (He looks at his wife and smiles) My secret, is that i know your secret. I saw the test in the dust bin."

Tumi: "You are so sneaky. I don't even know if I have any secrets from you this days. Well my secret is, I am carrying yet another precious cargo. A royal baby."

Gab: "I thought we agreed no more babies. Congratulations boy, your sperms are still effective."

Xavier: "Thank you dickhead. I love you baby and thank you for making me a proud father

and husband once again."

(He kisses her still invisible tummy.)

Kevin: "Is it my turn. Well lets see, I jave decided to accept my fate I started taking the Pastoral course last month. I didn't want to get your hopes up in case I drop off again."

Thelma: "Oh baby, just the fact that you started makes me proud. I got a job offer, to be a lead a restoration of some paintings that have been found recently curator in Florida. The offer came last week, I have been waiting for the right time to tell you."

Kevin: "What? Florida? "

Thelma: "Its something we will have to discuss well without our friends. But yeah in Florida."

Nana: "(she looks at Miguel tearfully) I am not coping, ever since the miscarriage. I put on a fake smile for your sake and the kids but I am not okay."

(Miguel kisses away her tears and hugs her.)

Miguel: "We will deal with it together my love. I have decided to step down from the chieftancy and let Ferguson take over so I

can focus on you and the kids. I know I have not been the best lately but I want to start being the best once again."

Nana: "Thank you and I love you."

Miguel: "(kissing her) and I you Mashenge."

Ethan: "(he holds Kath's hand) The big secret is that I want to movd back to Botswana."

Kath: "I know you do. The big secret is that we have already relocated, Lethabo and Gabrielle are responsible for the move while I am here."

Ethan: "You see why married you. You always know what I want."

Gab: "Honestly there is no secret that she does not know."

Landa: "Well I have finally decided to throw in the towel and become the house wife he always wanted me to be more especially now that we are trying for baby number 3."

Leo: " The big secret is I love my wife even when she drives me insane at times but there is no one else I would rather be with."

Lerato: "Aren't you just too sweet. (She takes Leo's hand and looks at all of us) This is a not a big secret to him but to you guys. And I am hoping its not something that will dump the mood. Because I want this camp to be happy and loud camp for me. (She removes her wig showing us the bald head) As you all know that I battled with cancer, cervix cancer a couple of years ago. Well its back again nd I have decided that I will not be taking chemotherapy again. Its makes me sick and all its other side effects. I dont see it worthy anymore to fight, I fought my battle and its good for now . Leo and I have decided to let the disease take its course while I enjoy the last remaining months or year of my life with the people I love and enjoy them as much as possible."

Landa: "(devastated) Lerato"

Lerato: "I know you are going to try and change my mind but this is my decision and I would like for it to be respected."

(She wipes away her tears and we the ladies gather around her for a hug. And we wipe each other's tears away.)

Lerato: "Come on, stop it. I am not dead yet. So stop with the tears and lets enjoy today like there is no tomorrow."

(She says as she raises her glass and drinks her alcohol.)

Lerato: "At my funeralake sure there is after tears, with lots of bloody Leratos or else I will come back as a ghost and toment all of you. Fairytale couple you are next."

Mel: "The big secret is that I set us an appointment with the family doctor, so we can go discuss family planning. I want to have your children."

Raphael: "Oh! Mel I am so sorry. The big secret is that I called my attorney before coming here to draw our divorce settlement. I want out of our marriage."

Lerato: "At least someone is being true."

Sorry hle Princess Cindy looks like cuffed the wrong Prince."

(I look at Raphael but he is not looking at me. Derrick stands up and removes a box from his pocket. Then goes to kneel before me.)

Derrick: "The big secret is that I have been carrying this box with me for a while now but never finding a perfect opportunity to do it. Inatho I have nevet met a woman so loving and caring like you. All my life I searched for a woman like you and I am glad I finally found you. Please make me an honourable man , will you please marry me?"

Inathi: "(stunned) Derrick!"

Lerato: "Hold up! Hold up! Please dont make me carry this secret to my grave its already a heavy burden on earth I dont want to carry it on my after life."

Ethan: "I agree, before you two start a new life, my boy needs to know that he has two little amber eyed creatures with you that looks exactly like him."

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Not edited bathong so it will contain so many typing and grammatical errors.

BINDED

Insert 32

"Its all fun and games until someone gets hurts."

Inathi

There is a moment of silence and all eyes turn to look at Raphael who is frozen on spot. Totally puzzled and surprised.

Raphael: "Come again. What did you just say."

(I stand up and touch Derrick's shoulder.)

Inathi: "Snuggles can we do this some other time. I am sorry."

(I turn and look at Lerato.)

Lerato: "I did not say anything, in fact I was just going to tell you, to tell them that Princess Cindy threatened you."

Raph: "Just stop, stop with irrelevant issues. Ethan I asked a question."

Miguel: "Look Raph, Ethan shouldn't have said anything. It was not his secret to tell."

Ethan: "Like damn it was not, we all know

here that she had no intention of telling him. I am down for my brotherhood. So screw everything that stands in the way of that. Raph you knocked her up 5 years ago. You have two beautiful twins with her. And this fu*ker (pointing to Derrick) here has been playing father to them as if you are dead."

(He turns and looks at me. I think this is the first time I have seen his face give away so many emotions.)

Raphael: "Is this true?"

(I nod my head not trusting my voice to say anything.)

Raphael: "Where are they? I don't understand, how? (He looks around) Can we talk in private please?"

Derrick: "No, you have something to say to her, you can say it here, Inathi is with me now. You can say whatever you want to say here."

Ethan: "Nigga just shut up, who are you? This is not about you and your ICU relationship. Where you even there when this babies were made?'did your help him as he thrust to knock her up. Just shut up already, you are a non factor here."

Inathi: "Its okay Derrick. Let me and Raphael

resolve this once and for all. Yeah we can talk. Lead the way."

(I follow him as walks to the car. We stand by the cars a far distance away from them.)

Inathi: "I realised I was pregnant the day I got your gifts."

Raphael: "Let me understand one thing Inathi, we you ever going to tell me that I have children with you."

Inathi: "You were gone, I didn't even know how to contact you."

Raphael: "I take blame for missing out five years of their lives. But I am talking about now Inathi. You knew I have been back for 3 weeks now. Were you ever on planning telling me that I am a father?"

Inathi: "Then Mel said you are not ready for children. "

Raphael: "(angrily) Damnit! Inathi I am not talking about Mel or anyone who is a non factor. I am talking about you, were you ever going to tell me that I have children with you?"

Inathi: "No! I was going to keep them my secret love children for as long as I could."

Raphael: "Why?"

Inathi: "Because we survived 5 years without you and we are better off without you and your dark world. You are married now, you should start your own family with Melinda."

Raphael: "Are you even listening to yourself? Are you even mentally stable wena? You are speaking like a fool with no sensible head. I am beginning to wonder if you really did not even know how to reach me five years back or it was your way of keeping me out of my children's life. I mean Bontle is there she is your best friend and she knew all along

where I was, she works for me."

Inathi: "(puzzled) What?"

Raphael: "What kind of a mother are you Inathi? What kind of mother fights battles using innocent children? What kind of mother lets another man raise children that are not his while their father is alive and very capable of doing it himself?"

Imathi: "a mother who will do anything to protect her children from a dark."

Raphael: "Dude are you even listening to yourself? deep down you know in fact we

both know that I would have done anything to protect my children from whatever darkness my world has. In fact the only reason I left you 5 years ago was to protect you and your innocence. But I can see there was no innocence just a vile, evil woman hiding behind a pretense of innocence."

(His word stings. They hit right to the heart.)

Inathi: "So your world was dark for me but not dark for Melinda. You went right ahead and married her."

Raphael: "Is this what it is about, marrying Mel. Did for a second in that damp head of yours think that maybe she is part of the

darkness I was talking about. In fact you know what , my marriage is irrelevant here. Same goes with your relationship with Darium you can go ahead and marry him for all I care but you are not going to play happy families with my children not while Raphael Hudson is alive. I want to meet my children Inathi."

Inathi: "You will go and meet them after the camp."

Raphael: "No! I am not spending one more night without knowing them."

Inathi: "We can leave in the morning then. You spent 5 years without them i am sure

one more night without them will just be fine."

Raphael: "No! I dont care if I have to drive through the night, I am not spending one more night without them. You can take me to them and come back to continue the camp with your boy."

Inathi: "You are being imp...."

Raphael: "Are we going or should I use my strength to get you into the car?"

Inathi: "Let me make say goodbye to Derrick eya."

Raphael: "Make it snappy, after all you have a lifetime to spend with him."

(I roll my eyes as I walk back to the group. I reach Derrick and hold his hand.)

Derrick: "Sorted?"

Inathi: "Raofe wants to meet his children. He is driving us back." .

Derrick: "Like hell he is."

(I watch Raphael as he talks to Mel)

Derrick: "Let me fly us back then?"

Inathi: "Derrick, dont do this please not now. I told you to trust me. Let me go and introduce the man to his children."

Derrick: "And I can fly us there, its much faster."

Inathi: "We both know that Raphael will never agree to ride in your Chopper."

Derrick: "And I am supposed to be okay, with you travelling a long distance with him."

Inathi: "Dont you trust me?"

Derrick: "Its him I don't trust."

Inathi: "Can we not make this difficult than it is already ? I am traveling with Raphael to go and introduce him to his children. I dont know if you will be staying or following us in the morning. Its all upto you."

(I kiss his cheek as I go into the tent and get my bags.)

Raphael: "Mel look I am sorry for this but I have to go back."

Mel: "To meet your children?"

Raphael: "Yes. I already found myself an apartment. I told Daniel to move my things."

Mel: "Can't you get the children then we raise them together as a family."

Raphael: "Mel please its time to let go of your obsession. You deserve better ,you deserve a man who will love you as much as you love me. But unfortunately I am not that man. I can't keep doing this anymore."

Mel: "You are my husband Raphael. And I

am not signing any divorce papers. We will raise those babies together. Inathi does not even want you. She is getting married."

Raphael: "I know and honestly I dont care. But I still want out of this marriage. My attorney will contact you. Ethan will give you a ride back to the city once the camp is over."

(He turns and goes to start the car. We say goodbye to our friends and begin the long journey back to Gaborone.)'

Back at the camp site

Once Inathi and Raphael leave. Mel and Derrick call it a night. While the other couples remain outside drinking and chatting.

Kevin: "Ao banna! See what you have done?"

Lerato: "Nyaa Ethan is too forward guys.
Kana I was not going to tell the secret. I was going to ask if she is really settling for a noo.....

Nana: "Lerato! No, you are breaking the girl code now."

Gab: "I always thought you will be the one to break the news never once had I thought it will be Ethan."

Xavier: "Nigga is officially a woman just bring him a shawl and a doek."

Ethan: "Shut up dickheads. All of you wanted to tell but did not have guts to do it."

Landa: "You ruined Inathi's engagement. What you all did was childish and petty."

Leo: "No what's childish is what Inathi wanted to do, you cannot keep children away from their father no matter what

battles you two are fighting."

Lerato: "Bonang, destiny is playing with their fates. I don't you how you guys are missing the whole point?"

Thelma: "What fate?"

Lerato: "Raph and Inathi together. Princess Cindy and Noodie together once and for all."

Landa: "Just because you have babies together does not mean you have together."

Tumi: "And we can bet, Inathi and Derrick are going to get married."

Lerato: "We can bet on my grave, these two will not marry. That girl is going to marry that arrogant handsome man. Not this hormonal Boer."

Landa: "I honestly don't care who she ends up, I am just rooting for her happiness. If she is happy I am also happy."

BINDED

Insert 33

You are my reason living, and breathing.
You are my reason for being." - Raphael
Hudson, Binded

*****`

Raphael

I grab the can and finish the energy drink. I
look at the passenger seat and Inathi is fast
asleep. She looks peaceful sleeping. Her
tiny mouth pouted. I wonder if my daughter
looks like her.

It will be sad if she does because she will

be a constant reminder of the woman whom should have been mine. I don't think I can ever forgive her, for trying to keep my children a secret. Mostly because I know what is it like to grow up without a father or thinking that your own father rejected you. Its something I would never put my children through. But yet History almost repeated itself again.

I reach for my phone and call the only person I trust in this world.

Daniel: "I thought you said you are going to a place with cellphone reception."

Raphael: "Plans changed. Look book me

into Room 52 then look for a 4 bedroomed apartment, children friendly. Have two bedroom decorated specifically for a boy and girl child. Get an interior designer to do all that."

Daniel: "What about the house you wanted me to buy before you left?"

Raphael: "It was suitable for a bachelor not a father."

Daniel: "I don't understand."

Raphael: "I will tell you everything when I get there. Also contact the Dlamini I am going

to need their agents for security. 3 of them."

Daniel: "What is going on?"

(Inathi stirs indicating that she is waking up.)

Raphael: "That will be all for now."

(I hung up.)

Inathi: "Where are we?"

Raphael: " We are 2 hours away from Gaborone. I drove the whole night , its just

25 minutes after 7."

Inathi: "Let me call ma and tell her to prepare the kids."

Raphael: "okay".

(I concentrate on the road ahead.)

Back at the camp. Derrick talks to Mel who is drinking coffee staring into space.

Derrick: "I am flying to Gaborone, are you tagging along or remaining behind."

Mel: "I am definitely going with you. I cant stand these people. Ther are just too raw and uncivilized. Its like they are not educated worse rich."

Derrick: "Its what happens when peasants taste the good life. You can take them out of the ghetto but never take the ghetto put of them."

Mel: "Are you going to fight for her?"

Derrick: "I dont need to fight the girl is already mine."

Mel: "Good! Then keep her occupied and I will put a leash on my dog so it stays on line."

Derrick: "Great. Come on let go say our goodbyes."

(They walk to the others who are having breakfast.)

Derrick: "Guys thank you for inviting us. But we are going to get going now "

Xavier: "Ao so soon.""

Mel: "Our partners are no longer here ao

nothing is keeping is here."

Lerato: "Well you guys can be a couple and stay here."

Derrick: "No thank you but my girl needs me."

Ethan: "Have a safe journey."

Lerato: "Fiona, I guess this is the last time we are seeing you akere wena you expired. "

Mel: "If there is anything I have been prayin for since I found out that you are dying. Is that your death comes fast but painful. May

the cancer spread to your other organs and probably your mouth. We are better off without the toxicity it spews every time open it."

(The group exclaim shocked by Mel's words.)

Lerato: "(laughing) If my living irritates you that much then I just found my reason to start chemo. I am still going to live just to irritate you. You just signed my recovery card."

Melinda: "What ever."

Lerato: "I guess I better go start my treatment now, just so I can live longer just to keep irritating you."

(Mel clicks her tongue as she goes to get her bags.)

Leo: "Are you serious? You are going to try and fight the cancer?"

Lerato: "Yes beginning of January we are starting. How dare she wishes me to die her sticky legs?"

Landa: "I guess we are forever indepted sticky legs."

Lerato: "Hey Noodle, you better hurry kana you have an engagement to finish. "

Inathi: "We are here. Just a warning the twins know you. They have seen your pictures so dont be surprised if they call you daddy."

Raphael: "Oh wow. Okay."

(I look at him and he looks so nervous. I give him an assurance smile and lead the way into my house. The house he brought for me.,)'

Raphael: "You did not sell it off."

Inathi: "Its everything I ever wanted in a house. Thank you so much."

(We walk in the loving room and I watch him get teary as he sees the big portrait of the twins.)

Raphael: "It needs no DNA. They are really mine."

Inathi: "Wait till you see them face to face. The potrait is not doing you any justice."

(The passage door and two chipmunkies run into the room.)

Landon: "Mommy!"

London: "Mama"

(I crouch down as I hug both of the and kiss their foreheads.)

Inathi: "My babies."

(I turn and look at Raphael. Tears are falling from his eyes. He turns away wiping his tears)

Inathi: "Thami, Nami you remember when I told you Daddy will come to see you one day."

Landon: "Yes you said he will bring me a lion that looks like Simba."

Inathi: "Well I have a surprise for you guys."

London: "Should we close our eyes? So you do tadaa?"

Inathi: "No baby, someone wants to meet you two. Someone you know very much."

(I move, unblocking their view, as a tearful

Raphael turns and faces his babies.)

Unison: "Daddy."

(He nods his head. As he crouches down ,kneeling and open as his arms wide. Nodding his head. The twins run into his arms and he hugs them. As tears fall uncontrollably from his eyes. I wipe my own tears from my eyes. The scene is so emotional.)

London: "(wiping his tears) daddy why are you crying?"

Landon: "Where does it hurt? I can rub and

make it feel better like mama always do "

Raphael: "(pointing to his heart) here, it hurts here my boy."

(He put his tiny hand over the area where the heart is located and rubs.)

London: "Does it feel better daddy."

Raphael: "Yes my queen it feel a whole lot better."

Landon: "Am I your king?"

Raphael: "Yes my king, you guys are my world. I just found my reason for living, and breathing. You are my reason for being."

(He picks them up and walks to the couch.he settles down with them on his lap.)

Raphael: "So how about we do proper introductions. (Extending both his hands) I am Raphael Hudson."

Landon: "Daddy you stole my name , I am Landon Thami Raphael Junior Modise."

Raphael: "I did, didn't I."

London: " I am London Nami Sparkles Modise."

Raphael: "Hi,Ms Sparkles."

(I walk from the scene giving them space to bond as I take my bags to the room. His tears still play over and over my head. I think its an image that going to haunt me for the rest of my life. What did I almost do?)

*****'

I close the door to their room where they are peaceful sleeping after Raphael read them a bedtime story. I find him in the living room looking at their portrait. I stand by the door watching him from the back. He

is still the handsome man I have ever laid my eyes on. Everything about him is beautiful, his height, his dark olive skin. His amber eyes.

Raphael: "Thank you for giving me the most beautiful babies ever."

Inathi: " I think your genes are more dominant than mine."

Raphael: "Still and for letting them know I am their father. I should get going. I will be back in the morning. I would like to take them with me if that's okay with you. I will bring them back in the evening."

Inathi: "Okay no problem."

Raphael: "Once I have settled down into my own house, I will contact my lawyer so he can help us draw a co-parenting agreement . And congratulations on your engagement, I apologise our unruly friends ruined it. I hope he makes you happy. Goodnight."

(I watch him as he takes his car keys and walks out. It feels like he just opened a can of old wounds that were supposed to have healed by now.)

Outside as Raph drives out, he meets Derrick driving in. They look at each

other,Derrick rolls down the window.

Derrick: "Just because you are their father does not mean you are going to bully her. This,was the last time I let you get away with this."

Raph: "Sure morena."

Derrick: "And one last thing, you do not just pitch unannounced to our home. You let us know in advance before rocking up."

(Raphael looks at him and smirks)

Raphael: "Darium, wa nyela jaanong. Our

home boy you are losing your marbles. I bought that car you are driving and the house you are calling your home, I also bought it. So when you decide to get cocky with me just remember you are sleeping in the house I bought driving a car I bought and probably eating food that are probably paid with my money. Your stupid white ass."

BINDED

Insert 34

"Stick to the guy than loves you not the guy you love because that loves you will go to the end of earth for you but the guy you love will love you on his terms."

Bontle

Richard: "No! What you did put there was totally unnecessary. What if she decided to press charges?"

Bontle: "I am not going to apologize for beating her if that what are asking. She

deserved it."

Richard: "Bontle are you even listening to yourself right now?"

Bontle: "Mbali is not a saint in all of this. After the hell she put my friend through she deserved it. "

Richard: "You beat the poor girl for thing that happened years back. And to make matters worse you were in sleeping wear with another man."

Bontle: "I told you Daniel is a friend nothing more nothing less."

Richard: "Is that supposed to justify it?"

Bontle: "It needs no justification it straight as that. I did not sleep with Daniel. He came to take me out for ice cream to cheer me up after you run away."

Richard: "I did not run away. I told you I needed time to process everything. You know what I don't even need to explain everything because you already concluded everything for yourself."

Bontle: "how can I not conclude when every time we hit a problem or obstacle in the way you run away."

Richard: ",Here we go again, everything always has to be about me. I honestly did not sign up for this."

Bontle: "What did you sign up for Richard Moeng? Lets hear it."

Richard: "I am not doing this especially not with you. I think its better if I go stay at my house for a few days."

Bontle: "Yes run akere thats what you are good at. Running away every time we have problems."

(He looks at me shaking his head then grabs his keys and walks out. I take a sip from my wine glass before throwing it hard against the door . I feel frustrated with myself. Why did I have to let myself be vulnerable to love again. I knew the decision will only come back to bite me in the back.)

Melinda

I hold the phone to my ear as I go through his wardrobe looking for a tshirt of his that I always sleep wearing.

Melinda: "He has moved his clothes and everything. I guess he was serious."

Molemogi: "Don't worry about Raphael for as long as I am alive he will never divorce you."

Melinda: "I hope so because ever since we got back. His head has not been acting well. I mean this woman could be lying for all we know and for him to just buy everything without even at least doing a DNA. Its so unlike him. She is trying to use those bastards to get his money."

Molemigi: "I know my son. Don't worry I will bring order to this if he does not listen to reason I will simply get rid of the problem the best way I know."

Melinda: "Thank you father. Its nice to know I can count on you."

Molemogi: "You are welcome. Let me leave you to sleep I will be in touch."

Melinda: "Goodnight."

(I hung up and pull over his tshirt before getting in bed. I smile to myself because I know very soon my husband will be home to share this bed with me. In the mean time let me call my sister.)

Kaone: "Please tell me you are calling so I

book you a flight back to London."

Melinda: "No I am actually calling to let you know I will be staying a bit longer than planned."

Kaone: "Why I thought you said Raphael wants a divorce."

Melinda: "That does not mean I am going to give him one."

Kaone: "Mel you cant force him to be with yiu a sa bate. Please let this marriage go and start focusing on important things like yourself."

Melinda: "Raphael is far more important. He is my reason for living."

Kaone: "Mel this one sided love just has to stop please. You are only going to hurt yourself more."

Melinda: "Kaone,Raphael is mine and mine alone. If I cant have him then no one will."

Kaone: "What is that even supposed to mean"

Melinda: "It means I will do whatever necessary to make sure he stays my

husband even eliminate threat if I have to."

Kaone: "Mel sweety have you been taking your medication?"

Melinda: "Dont start. I am not crazy Kaone."

Kaone: "I know, but you know the pills help you stabilize your emotions."

Melinda: "stop talking to me like I am one of your patients. I know the importance of my pills and yes I have been taking them."

Kaone: "Please come home Mel. The family is here to support you." .

Melinda: I have spent 18 years waiting for Raphael. Now that I have him you think I will just hand him over without a fight. I have my in laws with me here and I don't need your support but thanks for the offer that was very thoughtful."

(I hung up and open the drawer to throw my phone inside. I look at my pills and shut the drawer .)

Inathi

Inathi: "Hey!"

(I say as I walk to him and kiss him on the cheek.)

Inathi: "Do you want me to run you a warm bath?"

Derrick: "I need to understand something. Your car was it bought by Raphael?"

Inathi: "Yes, why you asking?"

Derrick: "What about this house?"

Inathi: "The house, the car and my fat account. It was all a gift from Raphael."

Derrick: "Wow, so I am really enjoying someone who has been using this man's things since year. "

Inathi: "Does it matter?"

Derrick; "Are you honestly asking me that? It makes me less of a man, what kind of a man lets another man take care of his family. I can afford totale care of you. We do not need handouts especially not from Raphael."

Inathi: "Not this testosterone thing again. You know Raphael is the twins father. He is going to be buying things around here."

Derrick: "Father of the twins not my

woman's father. I can take care of you
Inathi. I don't need Raphael's help. In fact I
think you should sell this house and the car.
Have the money sent to him. I will buy you a
house and a car."

(I look at him like he has just lost his
marbles.)

Inathi: "I am going to pretend I just did not
hear you sir.

BINDED

Insert 35

"You dont strike me as a woman who doesn't just give up. You are the kind of woman who will fight to death, not take this an easy way out as a weak victim." - Daniel, Binded (Author S Mods)

(I look at him like he has just lost his marbles.)

Inathi: "I am going to pretend I just did not hear you Sir."

Derrick: "Inathi!"

Inathi: "I haven't even agreed to marry you yet but you already trying to control me. I am not going to sell my home, my car so I can ease your bruised ego."

Derrick: "Are you really going there?"

Inathi: "What do you think this is about? You just found out that a man you consider your rival has bought your lover a house you sleep in and a car you sometimes drive. So if its nit bruised ego what is it?"

Derrick: "Its respect Inathi respect. Do you think Raphael will continue to respect me knowing I am sleeping in a house that he

bought? You should have told me that car was bought by him I would have hired myself a car since I couldn't drive all the way from Maun."

Inathi: "Respect is earned not demanded. And I honestly dont see any reason why this is a big deal."

Derrick: "Dont you get it? You are binded to this guy, by children now there has to be flicking material involved. A bloody house, a car and a fat account."

Inathi: "I don't know how many times I have to assure you that Raphael is a past. This is materialistic things, they dont mean

anything."

Derrick: "If they mean nothing, prove it to me then lets sell them. Lets sell his house and car."

Inathi:" The house is in my name even the car."

Derrick: "It does not matter if they in your name. Fact is that arrogant jerk bought them."

Inathi: "I already told you I am neither a fool or a push over I am not selling this house or the car. And if you want this, whatever this

is between us to work, you will get your insecurities in check. Its not sexy anymore."

(I turn and walk to the bedroom leaving him in the living room.)

After Raphael gets the twins in the morning , I drive to Bontle's house. Its time to get some answers. I park the car in front of the house and let myself inside. She is sitting in the living room stuffing her face with ice cream.

Bontle: "What happened? why are you back so early? I wasn't expecting you so soon."

Inathi: "This is not a social visit B, I need answers."

Bontle: "(puzzled) Uhuu! Okay."

Inathi: "Raphael knows about the twins. He found out during the camp."

Bontle: "I did say the man deserves to know his children."

Inathi: "During a hit moment he revealed something. B, what have you been keeping away from me?"

Bontle: "Nathi, I can explain."

Inathi: "I would like to hear that explanation, because right now I don't even know what to believe."

Bontle: "I did not get my job on merit."

Inathi: "I am not following."

Bontle: "Raphael saw you once and wanted you high and low. He did not know that you are married. So he promised me to give me a job for as long I could you to spend the night with him."

Inathi: "(devastated) Bontle what are you saying?"

Bontle: "That night at Avani it was not a coincidence. Everything was orchestrated. I sold you to Raphael to get the job I wanted."

Inathi: "You are lying."

Bontle: "When I left to London it was to go work for him. I came back to spearhead the start of his bank this side. I work for Hudson Bank."

Inathi: "So all this time I have been wondering where he is , you knew very well

where he is."

Bontle: "Yes I knew he was in London. I knew about his marriage to Melinda."

(Tears fall from my eyes as I look at her.)

Bontle: "It was never my place to tell you about his whereabouts and marriage. If he wanted you to know he would have told you himself. And you said you did not want him to know about the twins. Sp I decided to keep quite and let things play themselves out."

Inathi: "How could you keep this away from

me? Since when do we keep secrets from each other?"

Bontle: "Jessy look I am sorry."

Inathi: "It makes me wonder if I am in this friendship not its actually sisterhood with you at all B. I wonder what other secrets you have been keeping from me."

Bontle: "Ina....."

Inathi: "(crying) You know they say betrayal never comes from an enemy it comes from someone we are close to. From all the people in my life I never expected this from

you, that my own sister would use me to ahead in her career."

(I turn away to walk away but she grabs my hand.)

Inathi: "Please let me go, let me go so I can and digest all of this. Please B. I am begging you. Let me go before we say things that we might regret tomorrow. Today's damage is enough."

BONTLE

Its official I am my own enemy. I dont need

anyone to come outside and ruin things for me. I am more than capable of doing that myself.

For the first time in 4 years since I quit my toxic lifestyle I find myself missing the power and strength it gave me. It may have been an unhealthy, toxic coping mechanism but it kept me sane. Right now I don't have control at all, the walls are closing in on me and I don't even know how to keep at bay.

I find myself digging through my wardrobe for the book with my contacts. When I come empty handed. I succumb to the ground and let the tears fall.

That cocky bastard made sure he destroyed everything that will link me back to my past life. He destroyed everything except one.

I immediately stand up and jump in the shower. I pull out my lingerie and favourite jacket, hat and boots. I secure the mask and apply lipstick as I pull outside The Dlamini Club house. Before I can get out, my phone rings. I glance at the screen and its Richard.

Bontle: "What do you want?"

Richard: "If you walk inside that Club Bontle, consider me and you done forever."

Bontle: "Is that all?"

Richard: "Bontle please dont do this to us I am begging you."

Bontle: "The biggest mistake I ever did was trusting a man. And remove the stupid tracker you put on my car."

(I hung up. As I get out Daniel pulls over just in front of me blocking me.)

Bontle: "You gotta be kidding me."

(He gets off and walks to me.)

Daniel: "This is not a path you want to go through again. Don't let your current circumstances take you back to the clutches of the past."

Bontle: "I am so tired of men telling me how I should live my life. Move before it gets ugly."

Daniel: "B, I know that you are hurting but this will not take the pain away."

Bontle: "You have no idea what I am going through. So dont stand there and tell me crap."

Daniel: "You are right I don't understand what you are going through. But I know one thing, there is one thing I can attest to, Bontle Moloji is bigger than all of this."

Bontle: "No I am not Daniel. I am just a baby girl who cant over her daddy issues, cant keep a stable relationship because of her daddy issues. I am not strong, I am a broken little girl with no chance of redemption. A broken young girl hiding behind a face of strong woman."

(Tears manage to escape my eyes and he walks to me and hugs me. I let the tears fall.)

Bontle: "My secrets have hurt the one person I never wanted to hurt and I am not even sure if she will ever forgive me."

Daniel: "I know Sugarplum, I know. Give her time to absorb everything. Inathi loves you and you two will get over this."

Bontle: "You think so?"

Daniel: "I don't think so, I know so. Come on B, you are strong. You dont strike me as a woman who doesn't just give up. You are the kind of woman who will fight to death, not take this an easy way out as a weak victim."

Bontle: "I don't even know how to even begin or where to even begin."

Daniel: "Therapy, letting go of things you can't change."

Bontle: "Trial and error. I have been there. It did not work."

Daniel: "You don't give up after first trial. So we go and try again. This time around with your mind on it."

Bontle: "I don't know how sitting down and talking to a stranger can possibly help me."

Daniel: "You will be surprised. If you put your heart on it."

Bontle: "Okay, I am not promising anything but i will try."

Daniel: "Thats all I wanted to hear. I will hook you with someone, she is the best."

Bontle: "I don't want ro rely on you only to be disappointed when you realise that I am only human and have so many flaws."

Daniel: "Bontle I did not ask you to marry me, ebile a ke a go kopa dikobo. Ebile don't put mw in the same category as the other

men in your life that have disappointed you. I take serious offense. I just want to help, not play knight in a shining armour, be the friend you can count on at all times."

Bontle: "Okay. Do you want to go and grab that KFC we did not have last time?"

Daniel: "We are not really dressed for KFC. How about we do a drive through then take a little road trip, to clear the head."

Bontle: "And my car?"

Daniel: "I will have it delivered to your house. Let us go."

(He opens the door for me and I smile as I get inside.)

BINDED

Insert 36

"Having bond with your children is something money can't buy." - Unknown

Raphael

Raphael: "Okay Nami, wins. So we are watching Princess Sofia."

I look at them and smile as I change the channel. I actually thought spending the day with them in the absence of their mother wikk turn into absolute disaster. However I think I should give myself some credit. I am

actually better at this daddy thing, given that I never received any teaching on being a father. And I never really had an exemplary father figure in my life. There is no manual at this parenting thing.

Even though I am super mad at Inathi for wanting to keep their existence a secret from me but I guess I have to be grateful that at least she let them know about me. It broke many barriers that would have forced me to face in order to get right here.

Landon: "Daddy boys cant watch Princess Sofia it will make us weak."

(I look at Thami and smile. He is just too

clever for his age.)

Raphael: "Its far that we watch with Sparkles akere she won this round fair and square." .

(My phone rings and I look at the screen irritated. I walk to the balcony and slide the door behind me so I can take the call.)

Raphael: "I should have known you will be the first person she runs to."

Molemogi: "I am not going to have you embarrass us like this Raphael. I want to see before the end of the day."

Raphael: "It looks like you are forgetting something, I dont take instructions from anyone especially not from you Molemogi."

Molemogi: "You are not going to divorce Melinda for some low life woman who wants to trap you with bastards. Where is your head?"

Raphael: "I don't get why you are so obsessed with Melinda. If you love her that much maybe you should just take her as a second wife."

Molemogi: "Raphael!"

Raphael: "You two will make a great couple, I mean you both are psychos, she is schizophrenic and you have a fetish for children, a pedophile."

Molemogi: "Raphael I will watch my tongue if i were you."

Raphael: "What are you going to do? You are just a dog that keeps on barking but has no teeth to bite."

Molemogi: "I made you the man you are today, I can easily break you."

Raphael: "You see why I say you and Mel will make a great couple. Just listen to the nonsense you are spewing ."

Molemogi: "I will hurt you where it hurts most. Now listen because I am telling you how all this is going to go, Cancel that divorce and go back home before I make that bitch and her bastard kiss the face of earth."

Raphael: "(smirking) Is that supposed to scare me? Father I am going to only say this once and I hope it sticks. If you hurt even one strand of hair in Inathi's head and my children's heads, you will regret the day you adopted me. This is not a threat its a warning. Know when to choose your battles

and who you choose them with."

(I hung up and walk back into the living room. Nami is crying. I walk to her and pick her up, wiping away her tears.)

Raphael: "Shh! Why is daddy's favourite girl crying?"

London: "Landon beat me."

Raphael: "Landon why did you beat your sister?"

Landon: "She is lying Daddy, she,started it."

Raphael: "Nami stop crying baby. I am sorry okay."

(She nods her head.)

Raphael: "Sit here and watch Princess Sofia while daddy and Thami have a boys talk."

(I place her on the couch as I pick up Thami. I walk over to the balcony with him and sit down on the chair there with him on my lap.)

Raphael: "Landon."

Landon: "Are you going to spank me daddy because I beat Nami."

Raphael: "No, my boy I won't spank you.
Who spanked you?"

Landon: "Uncle Derrick said he will spank
me if I beat Nami."

Raphael: "No one will spank you my boy.
But I want to teach you something boy."

Landon: "Okay."

Raphael: "Nami is your sister, and boys do
not beat their sisters in fact boys do not
beat any girls."

Landon: "Really, even when she is the one that starts it."

Raphael: "Yes my boy, you don't beat her. Akere you are a her brother, you are supposed to protect Nami not beat her. When other boys try to beat her at school you are supposed to stand up and protect her not bear her. A brother is a shield and a protector to her sister. Now can you promise me that from now on you will not beat Nami rather you will protect her."

Landon: "I promise daddy."

Raphael: "That's my boy, now do you want us to shake on it like true gentlemen."

(I extend my hand and do a hand shake with his tiny hand.)

Raphael: "Now go and apologize to Nami and hug her."

(I put him down and watch as he runs to his sister.)

Landon: "London I am sorry I beat you. I promise to never beat you again. Can you please forgive me Nami."

(I stand by the door smiling to myself, as Nami smiles and nods her head. Thami sit

down on the couch and hug her before kissing her forehead. He is going to be a charmer boy this one.)

Raphael: "Okay folks, who wants some ice cream."

Inathi

The house is quite with the twins over at their father's place. Derrick left this morning to Maun. After our fight last night, we just slept and never made peace. I pour myself another glass of the wine and try by all means to keep my wondering off to Bontle and her betrayal.

It does not even help that she is the only person I could be talking to right now about Derrick and his insecurities along with engagement.

The intercom buzzes and I drag my feet to go and take the open the gate. I am surprised to see Daniel emerging from the car. I thought it would be Raphael bringing back the twins.

Daniel: "You look miserable."

Inathi: "I feel miserable. What brings you here?, Raphael took the kids. He is not here."

Daniel: "I know, I actually came to talk to you."

Inathi: "Okay, come in then."

(I lead him back into the house but immediately regret because there are empty two empty bottles of wine and a half bottle on my coffee table. He will start thinking I am a drunkard.)

Inathi: "Can I get you anything to drink?"

Daniel: "No I am good."

Inathi: "Alright!"

Daniel: "I know this is probably not any of my business. But can you please forgive Bontle she is miserable without you."

Inathi: "Did she send you?"

Daniel: "No she does not know I am here and will probably kilk me if she knows I interferred but I watched her suffer enough to stand on the sidelines and not just do anything."

Inathi: "I am nit following."

Daniel: "She hasn't told you this but she and Richard are going through a rough patch because she finally told him about her inability to conceive."

Inathi: "She did?"

Daniel: "Yes, and she has never told you this but Bontle is depressed, she has been depressed for a long time just putting a fake smile for your sake and her mother's sake. She is not the perfect strong woman you all think she is, she is a young lady going through most, she has never dealt with her daddy issues. In fact most of her decisions in life have been influenced by her daddy issues."

Inathi: "Daniel, what are you saying?"

Daniel: "I am asking you to stop playing victim for once and know that Bontle needs you more than ever. She always been there for you it now your turn to be there for her."

Inathi: "I am not playing victim, she did betray me."

Daniel: "No she didn't, the only thing B, is guilt of is wanting the best for her friend. Yes she also benefited from it. But all in all, she had your interests at heart, she knew you were in a miserable marriage and wanted you to have a moment to enjoy

yourself out of marriage. And lets just be frank, yes she might orchestrated you and Raphael meeting, but she never held a gun to your head and forced you to sleep with him or feel attracted to him. That just happened on its own. In fact you should be grateful, it was from her involvement that you escaped a miserable marriage and now a mother to two beautiful babies with a loving man who will lay his own life on the line to protect you and the twins. "

(He stands up)

Daniel: "Think hard about what I said and act accordingly."

Inathi: "Wait! How do you know all about Bontle and her businesses."

Daniel: "Because I make it my business to know everything where Bontle is involved."

(He walks out and his words sink deep.)

At the Modise

Pogiso picks up her clothes from the ground as the Snake's goons throw them out.

Pogiso: "Snake please I beg you don't do this I promise I will pay you back all your money."

Snake: "And you will get your house back when you bring back the money with all the interests. Not a penny less, not a penny more."

Pogiso: "I am begging you dont take my house. I cant go back to the village. There is no life left gir me there."

Snake: "You should have thought twice before taking Snake's money. No one messes with me and gets to walk free. Magogo bring my money and get your

house back."

Pogiso: "I will pay you back i promise. My daughter is a successful businesses woman, a successful violinist you probably have seen her on TV Inathi Modise. She will pay you back."

Snake: "Good, while you go get money from her I will have tenants occupying this house so I get money. And Magogo if you think about going to report me, I will break every bone in your body."

Pogiso: "Please don't do this, this house is the only think I am left with from my dead husband and son."

Snake: "Boys make it snappy I have tenants who want to move in asap."

(Pogiso cries as she picks up her clothes from the ground and puts them in a mozimbabwe bag.)

BINDED

Insert 37

"As she lay her head upon his chest. His heart beat to a tune that soothed her soul"-
Louise Alexandra Erskine

RAPHAEL

I look at the twins , fast asleep on their car seats. The gate opens and I park the car in front of the house. I get out and get London first. As I walk in the house, I am met by empty bottles of wine. A drunk Inathi stands up.

Inathi: "I didn't think you will bring them back."

Raphael: "I promised to bring them back."

Inathi: "Nami's room is the second door on the left and Landon's room is the third door on the left."

Raphael: "Thank you."

(I put them to bed and close the door back as I walk back to their drunk mother.)

Raphael: "Come lets get you in bed."

Inathi: "I am capable of getting myself in bed."

Raphael: "I never asked."

(She raises her hand to strike me but I catch her hand and pull her close to me. I put my hand around her waist and another on her cheek.) .

Raphael: "What has you drinking so much?"

Inathi: "You!"

Raphael: "Elaborate."

Inathi: "You ruined everything in my life. You ruined me for other men."

(I smile looking at her)

Inathi: "Dont do that you will have me stripping and asking you to take me here. You totally ruined me Raphael Hudson, sex is not the same, you set the bar too high. They cant even live upto the expectation, its wack."

Raphael: "i am a man who keeps his word so Its good to know that I left an impression."

Inathi: "I hate you, I hate that everytime I am next to you all I want is to strip you and have you all to myself. (Beating me with her fist) I hate Raphael."

(I hug her and kiss her forehead)

Raphael: "I know Sugar, I know. What else did I ruin?"

Inathi: "My relationship, all we do is fight since you got back."

Raphael: "Its good to know that I have your relationship in ICU."

Inathi: "I hate you."

Raphael: "Believe me, I know."

(I lean forth and steal a kiss. She pulls me closer and put her hands around me.)

Raphael: "(picking her up) Come lets get you in bed. You are drunk."

Inathi: "Will you stay?"

Raphael: "Do you want me to stay?"

Inathi: "Yes, I do."

Raphael: "Then I will stay."

(I carry her to her bedroom. And I put her by the bed as I help her change into her sleeping clothes. My eyes cant help but look at her full breasts. They used to be so tiny. And her ass and hips gotten wide. She is a full beautiful woman. I get an instant boner just by looking at her. Once she is in bed she parts next to her on her bed.)

Inathi: "Come to bed Lala."

(I walk to her bed but she hold her hand up.)

.

Inathi: "Since when do you sleep wearing clothes."

Raphael: " I am in the presence of a horny drunk woman, I cant take chances. Men get raped too."

(She looks at me and smiles.)

Inathi: "You are giving me ideas."

Raphael: "It sad because tomorrow you won't even remember any of this."

(I strip all my clothes as I get in bed with her.)

She is all over me the minute I get in bed.
She puts her head and hand on my chest.)

Inathi: "I missed this, I missed you."

(She raises her head and kisses me lightly)

Inathi: "Promise me , promise me that you
won't leave again. You won't disappear
again."

Raphael: "I promise."

Inathi: "Good."

(She closes her eyes catching some sleep. I put my hands around her and kiss her head.)

Raphael: "Goodnight Sugar."

(I close my eyes so I can also catch some sleep but its difficult with blue balls and a woman with a body of a goddess on top of me. I have jerked so many time in the shower thinking about her and she is finally in my arms even if its temporary and I can't do anything about it because she is wau too drunk. I would never take advantage of a drunk woman.)

Inathi: "I love you Raphael Hudson."

(She murmurs in her sleep. That on its own gives hope. I will get my woman and my family back even if I have to kill to remove the threats to it. Sooner or later I will have all of us under one roof. No actually sooner I will have all of us brinded by blood and marriage. I close my eyes as sleep finally comes)

INATHI

I woke up with a banging head. As I lean on the pillow I can smell his scent all over my pillow and bed sheets. All it takes is the scent to trigger all the memories from last night.

Inathi: "Shit!"

(I walk to the bathroom and have a shower hoping it will wash my shame. Derrick will never forgive me for any of this if he finds out.

I walk to the kitchen where the commotion in the house is coming from. As I walk in, I am surprised to find my whole kitchen a mess, there is floor everywhere, but what melts my heart is the sight of Raphael and the twins busy making breakfast. My whole life this is something I dreamt of, the family I visioned. My heart aches as I look at how he is perfect with our babies.

London: "Daddy are you sure mommy won't be mad that we messed her kitchen."

Raphael: "I am sure, we made her breakfast. She is going to be charmed."

(I clear my throat as I put a scowl on my face.)

Inathi: "Guys what is happening here?"

Landon: "Mommy its daddy's fault. He is the one who messed up the kitchen."

Raphael: "Ao! Guys we thought we agreed

to do this together."

London: "No, daddy I told you we must wait for mommy."

Raphael: "A ko le utweng, boJudas."

(I look at him and laugh.)

Inathi: "You should never trust this ones to have your back. You will be the scapegoat always."

Raphael: "Thanks for the head ups mommy. I learnt a lesson."

(I turn to look at them)

Inathi: "Morning babies."

(They walk to me and hug me before kissing my cheeks.)

Landon: "Morning mama"

London: "Morning mommy."

Raphael: "Sit, breakfast is about to be served."

(I go sit by the table and wait to be served.)

Once we are sitting down, we hold hand as we say grace.)

Inathi: "Heavenly father we thank you for the gift of life and provision this morning. We ask you to bless the hands that prepared this food and protect the stomachs that going to eat this food. In the mighty name of Lord Jesus Christ Amen."

(There is silence as we enjoy the delicious food. Once we are done the twins settle in the living room while we clear the kitchen and clean up the mess they made.)

Inathi: "Raphael."

Raphael: "Yes."

Inathi: "I think it better if Daniel picks the kids and drops them whenever they visit you."

Raphael: "Why?"

Inathi: "For the children, so that we don't confuse them. They might start thinking that we are together."

Raphael: "Bullshit! Stop using my babies as scapegoat. This has nothing to do with them, this has to do with our undying attraction between us."

Inathi: "I am now with Derrick."

(He walks towards me and has me pushed against the kitchen unit.)

Raphael: "But does he make you the way I make you feel? (He touches my hand and sparks fly) do you feel the electric current whenever he touches you? (He kisses my weakness point on my neck making me get chills) does he know your body like I do? Does he make every part in your body come alive just by looking at you? (Smiling) does his smile makes you want to drop your panties and beg him to have you right there? Can he satisfy your every sexual need and

expectation? (He moves closer making me feel his erection, I almost moan) Does he ever tell you that the lump in his trousers means he loves you? Does he makes loving him come alive like I do Inathi!"

(I open my mouth to give him a response. But I just bite my lower lip, so I don't end up begging him to have me over and over again till I remember what it feels like to be ravished.)

Raphael: "Just what I thought. I know I have wronged you in the past but I am asking you to forgive me and give me another chance to make it up for all the heartache I have put you through. Give me another chance to give you the right kind of love you need."

(I open my eyes to say something but he put his finger across my lips shutting me up.)

Raphael: "I know you are so used to sacrificing your own happiness for other people but right now I am asking you to be selfish and put your own happiness first. One last thing I told you the first night we met that I am not a very patient man, I won't keep playing mouse and cat with you and Derrick. I am pursuing you now, but if you push me away again just know that will be it. I will move on with my life because no matter how much I love you Inathi but I know better than to chase after a woman my whole life. So think hard about what I

said baby mama."

(He kisses my forehead)

Raphael: "Let me go home. I need to be at the office at 10 am."

Inathi: "You work even on festive."

Raphael: "I now have a family to feed, there is no rest time."

(I watch as he says his goodbye to his kids. Together we walk him out open the gate for him and wave as he drives out.)

Melinda

I take a sip of my coffee to keep awake. I have been parked outside her house since last night. I need to see if he really spent the night here.

I feel like agitated, it took all my courage not to drive my car right through her wall last night. How dare she lets my man spend the night in her house knowing very well his home is with me.

The gate opens and his car drives out. He park outside as he rolls down the window. On his face there is a big smile that I have

never seen before. Two kids that look exactly like him wave at him. Inathi is behind him smiling at my man.

Rage feels me up, she has stolen my man and children. Those babies are supposed to be mine. This is supposed to be my family. If she thinks I am going to let her get away with stealing my man and children then she has no idea who she is messing with.

I wait until his car is out of sight before I get off my car and cross the road. I buzz the intercom and the gate opens. I walk inside her beautiful yard. She has even stolen my home. She emerges from the house all smiles.

Inathi: "Missing us..... Melinda."

(She looks surprised to see me.)

Melinda: "I warned you regarding my man."

BINDED

Insert 38

"Sisters are like fat thighs they stick together." - Unknown

Inathi

Melinda: "I warned you regarding my man."

I look at her, she looks so disoriented. She has dark circles around her eyes and her clothes are wrinkled like she slept on them.

Inathi: "You warned me but looks like you also forgot something. You forgot to put on

a tight leash on your dog."

Melinda: "I am not in the mood for your jokes today. You stole so much from me and I intend to take it all back starting with my man."

Inathi: "I have never heard of a man being stolen. Especially an alpha macho man like Raphael."

Melinda: "Well you stole him and guess what, he is not the only thing you stole from me. You also stole my children."

(I look at her totally lost. I got no idea what

she is talking about.)

Inathi: "What children?"

Melinda: "The twins, they should be mine."

Inathi: "You have lost your marbles. Well go on and make your own because the twins are mine."

(She charges towards me)

Melinda: "I am going to kill you today."

Inathi: "Landon take London and go to my

room lock yourself inside. Mommy has to take care of a minor problem."

(I make sure my children are out of the room before I face the bull that's heading towards me in high speed.)

Inathi: "Beating me, or killing me won't make Raphael stay. If he does not want you can't force him to stay and love you."

Melinda: "Shut up, you know nothing. He loved me until you came back you witch."

(She throws her first blow knocking me off my feet. As I try to raise from the ground,

she is already on top on me. Sitting on my stomach, she strangles me, blocking my air passage.)

Melinda: "Die bitch, die you ugly witch. You think I will let you steal my man. Die witch."

(I kick my legs and scratch her with my nails but she is not moving at all. I see my life flash before my eyes as she put more pressure. My bladder gives in and I pee on myself.)

Melinda: "Die witch. Die."

(I didnt hear them as they walk in but I have

never been so grateful in my life. Daniel pulls the fighting Mel from me while Raphael helps me sit up.)

Mel: "Let me kill the bitch."

Raphael: "I told you Dan. I told you it was her car. Jessica are you okay?"

(I look at him and let the tears fall. Im so embarrassed and ashamed. But mostly I am so scared, what if they did not get here on time.)

Raphael: "Shh! Its okay, I am here now and will be the last time something like this ever

happen. Where are our babies?"

Inathi: "(in a hoarse voice) In my room. I told them to lock themselves in there."

(I wipe the blood that falls from my nose)

Raphael: "Daniel, get her out of here. I will deal with her once I am certain my family is okay. While on it call Dr G, let him know he has to do house visit."

Inathi: "I dont need a doctor. I am okay."

(Daniel carries the hysterical Melinda outside)

Raphael: "Come lets get you cleaned up."

(I drop my head in shame. However Raphael uses his finger to pick up my chin and makes me look at him)

Raphael: "I am so sorry I dragged you into all of this. Mel is a psych patient, she was diagnosed with schizophrenia about 2 years ago. And I am sorry but Mel is not the only person you have to be worried about. My father also might be a target against your back."

Inathi: "Please leave."

Raphael: "No! Inathi this is not the time for you to push me. I need to be here to protect you, my father is dangerous."

Inathi: "This is the whole reason why I didn't want you back in our lives. Just take your drama and leave me alone Raphael."

Raphael: "Don't let them win, we can win this. I know I have the support of my mother and sister. Mel and father can never win."

Inathi: "Just go please. Go before your wife comes back to finish me off."

Raphael: "she is not my wife."

(I raise my hand and strike him across the face.)

Inathi: "Don't insult me. Just go, I will not be the other woman, I am worthy of so much. Go to your psycho crazy wife."

(I stand up and walk towards my room)

Raphael: "At least let me hire you security. Please let me make sure you and the twins are okay at least."

(I ignore him as I continue walking to my

room. I try to open but I find it locked. I smile to myself despite the pain im feeling.)

Inathi: "Landon open for me?"

Landon: "Password?"

(His statement makes to shed more tears. When I taught them this I never thought they will hold it.)

Inathi: "Prinkles."

(I hear the key turn inside and the door opens. I take a minute to compose myself. I look at the and smile.)

Inathi: "(kissing his fore head) You did good my boy. I am proud."

London: "Mommy are you okay?"

Inathi: "Yes baby, mommy is fine."

Raphael: "Come on guys, lets go get some ice cream while mommy rests."

(I turn to find him standing behind me. The twins walk to him while I walk to the bathroom. I prepare myself a warm bubble bath.)

Inathi: "Thank you Doctor. I will take all the medication."

Dr G: "No need to thank me. Was just doing my job."

(I walk him out to find Bontle and Daniel with three other people I dont know. Bontle strides to me and hugs me.)

Bontle: "Dan told me what happened. I know you are mad at me but I could stay away."

(I hug her)

Inathi: "Thank you for coming. (I turn to Daniel) and?"

Dan: "Your security detail. They are the best in the industry. (Pointing fto the lady) Agent 55, and thats Agent 95 & 45. Agent 55 will be responsible for you and 95 & 45 for the twins."

Inathi: "Is this all neccesary?"

Daniel: "Today Mel almost killed you. Which showed me you have no surviving chance against Molemogi."

Inathi: "Molemogi?"

Daniel: "Raph's adoptive father."

Inathi: "Okay. And twins?"

Daniel: "Raph is with them he said he will keep them for tonight so he gives you time to recover."

Inathi: "Alright. If you don't mind I would like to talk to B, alone."

Daniel: "Alright. Bontle we will talk."

Bontle: "Okay."

(I lead her to the living room.)

Bontle: "Are you okay? What happened?"

Inathi: "I am okay. A lot has happened but tonight we are not talking about me. Firstly I am not happy that you kept secrets from me, we made a pact that we will not keep secrets from one another and I expect you to uphold that pact. Secondly you need to acting al macho strong when you are suffering. I am your friend no screw that I am your sister, if you don't tell me your troubles and problems I honestly don't know who you are telling. Thirdly where is Richard? What is going on? Lastly what

other secrets are you keeping from me?"

Bontle: "I dont know how to express my feelings. Maybe I am so used to hiding them and acting strong that it has grown on me. But truth is, I never got over the childhood trauma. When I was at UB I buried myself in my studies to supress it, and when I started working, I overworked myself to hide all."

Inathi: "B, all these years you have been suffering in silence when we thought you were really over it."

Bontle: "I never got over it, it got so bad that I found him and started stalking him. But

thats not half of it."

Inathi: "There is more. Why didn't you say anything?"

Bontle: "Because I thought I had it under control. And I did not want to come out and tell you guys that I am sinking in depression. Those things are for white people not Black people like us."

(I move to sit next to her)

Inathi: "Babe, depression does not discriminate according to skin color its for everyone, black, white, yellow, pink.

Everyone. You said there is more?"

Bontle: "I found a way to deal with the pain. By inflicting into someone else, into other men."

Inathi: "I dont understand."

Bontle: "I am or was a paid escort."

Inathi: "Escort?"

Bontle: "A fancy name for prostitute. A commercial sex worker."

(I look at her and laugh)

Inathi: "If you are a prostitute then I am a killer."

(She gives a death stare)

Inathi: "You are not lying?"

Bontle: "Why would I lie after you just scolded me about secrets?"

Inathi: "I don't understand, why? Its not like you need the money."

Bontle: "It was never about the money, it was a coping mechanism."

Inathi: "Help me understand, how does having sex with strangers help you cope?"

Bontle: "Sometimes I admire your innocence. Its not the regular sex you are thinking."

Inathi: "(puzzled) Its not?"

Bontle: "No, they are rich men, who have dark fetish. Who enjoy it when they get tied down and whipped by women. Who would kill for anything to have a woman torture

them. They want pain I bring it. I want to punish them so its a win win for all of us."

Inathi: "Balance me here, so this men pay you so you whip them and punish them."

Bontle: "Correct it brings them pleasure."

Inathi: "You said you were? You no longer do it?"

Bontle: "Richard made me quit it. And Daniel has now pursued me to try counselling."

Inathi: "Thank God, that was no way to live. And I am so devastated. You went through

all this and I never noticed a thing."

Bontle: "I don't blame you, I told you I am good at hiding my emotions."

Inathi: "Promise me B, that you will never keep anything from me."

Bontle: "I promise from now on I will be honest with my feelings and emotions."

Inathi: "Thank you."

(I hug her.)

Inathi: "What about Richard?"

Bontle: "I messed that up. I told him the truth but things went south. I don't even know how to fix things up because I love him Jessy and I don't want to lose him."

Inathi: "Mess things how?"

Bontle: "I think we will need wine, since you are in pills I will drink for the two of us."

Inathi: "The doctor never said anything about not drinking."

Bontle: "You can't take painkillers with

alcohol. So I will drink for the two of us. You can have honey with warm water, God knows you need it after you were strangled. And we are taking defense classes asap, you cannot get your ass whipped by Pogiso then by Melinda again. I will not support a defenseless fighter."

(I look at her and smile as she pours herself a glass of wine.)

BINDED

INSERT 39

"I don't think anyone is ever ready but when someone makes you feel alive again. It's worth taking the risk.- Nikki Rowe

Raphael

I look at them in the back busy chatting to each other. I feel agitated because I don't even know what would have happened to the if I did not come when I did.

Raphael: "Look Kaone I know you are a busy woman but you honestly need to come to

get your sister or I will ship her off to some mental hospital and you will never see her again."

Kaone: "You don't mean that, she is your wife." .

Raphael: "Not anymore, I told you I am getting a divorce."

Kaone: "Can't you get her admitted at Sabrana."

Raphael: "No! I dont want her near my family. Come take her, London has the best medical facilities for her."

Kaone: "But Raphael...."

Raphael: "No Kaone, I have babysitted Melinda, its okay now. I would like to move on with my life. I have a meeting with my parents and your parents. I would like to make my intentions clear."

Kaone: "And Mel where is she?"

Raphael: "I have her on house arrest until you come here."

Raphael: "Can't you let my dad handle it?"

Raphael: "Another mental case to handle a mental case. I dont think so. Get on the first plane out."

(I hang up as I drive through the gates of my parents's home. As I pull the car in front the house butler comes to help me out. I hand him the keys.)

Landon: "Daddy who lives here?"

Raphael: "Your grandparents and aunty. Come lets go babies."

(I lift London and hold Landon's hand as we walk get inside. Lorraine is the first to stand

up when she sees me.)

Lorraine: "Aww! Look at this. They are so adorable and cute."

Raphael: "They are my kids, so dont talk like cute and adorable is not something you did not expect."

(I do not miss her eyes rolling. And I just smirk.)

Raphael: "Meet my photocopies. Munchies say hi to Aunty Lorraine."

Landon: "I am Landon Thami Raphael

Modise and this is my sister London Nami Sparkles Modise."

Lorraine: "Well, its nice to meet you Thami and Nami."

Molemogi: "So you brought your bastards with you."

Gosego: "(warningly) Molemogi"

Raphael: "and thats your grandfather Molemogi. Dont be scared of him he does not have teeth to bite. And thats grandmother Gosego."

Gosego: "They look exactly like you. Come here babies."

(I put my London down and they walk towards Gosego. She hugs them and interacts with them while I exchange death stares with Molemogi.)

Molemogi: "Boora-Mmusi are waiting in the lounge. Let us not keep them waiting any longer."

Raphael: "Lorraine watch over them, guard them with your life, this house has children molesters."

(I say as I follow Molemogi to the lounge.
Where I meet Mel's parents.)

Raphael: "Firstly let me just start by
thanking you for making it here on such
short notice."

Gosiame: "It sounded serious."

Raphael: "It is, I have asked Melinda for a
divorce."

Leeto: "Why? I thought she said you guys
were trying for baby now."

Raphael: "I recently learnt that i have two

children with the love of my life. So I would like to unite with her and raise our children together."

Gosiame: "What about Melinda?"

Raphael: "Let us not forget my marriage to Mel was an arranged one and I told you and her that she would never have my heart or love. I no longer want this and Mel also deserves some shot at happiness and love with someone who will reciprocate those feelings."

Gosego: "And let us not forget your daughter is a mental case, so our son can't risk having children who will inherit her

mental condition."

Molemogi: "(warningly) Gosego! Our son is not in a right state of mind. He is not divorcing."

Raphael: "I am divorcing, Kaone is coming to get Mel and sign the papers on her behalf. And I want to point out that I am not going to take it lying down if any of you come after my children or the mother if my children. I will come after anyone anyone who dares with everything I have."

Molemogi: "You are still a boy, stop with the threats. You will stop this nonsense of divorce right this instant."

Raphael: "It seems like we are not understanding each other. Molemogi I dare you to touch even a single strand of their hair and I will have your career, reputation and your chance at being a politician flashed down the drain mostly I will make sure you spend the rest of your miserable life behind bars where you actually belong. Just dare try."

(I stand up and look at them)

Raphael: "Kaone will be in touch once she gets here. Thank you."

(I walk out as father throws insults at me.)

Inathi

Bontle: "Nyaa Inathi ke a gana. You cant settle for mediocre sex all your life."

Inathi: "Come on B, its not that bad plus he said he is going to see a urologist."

Bontle: "Nyaa! Hlema, you cant possibly tell me you are actually considering 10 seconds sex for life."

Inathi: "Derrick is the best for me."

Bontle: "Nyaa eseng Derry, kana even Tumelo is better than him. Yes he was stingy but at least he did not last for only 10 seconds. You cant jump from a traditional hut to another lejomboro. You need to elevate Inathi. Elevate, get someone who will challenge your sexual needs like never before."

Inathi: "Raofe comes with a whole drama and you know I loathe it."

Bontle: "But he is a man that has your heart."

Inathi: "He does not."

(She raises her eyebrows.)

Bontle: "You can lie to bo Lorato but you can never lie to me."

Inathi: "Okay fine, he does has it."

Bontle: "Not only your heart. You and Raphael are just magical no offense to Derrick he has been good. But he does not measure upto standard. Raphael comes with drama but also he can protect his family. He is everything you ever wanted in a man."

Inathi: "I dont know B, what about Derrick? He was there when I needed him, its not fair on him."

Bontle: "Love is not a fair game babe. You cant please everyone. You are always sacrificing yourself and your happiness for other people. Can for just once, just this once put Inathi first, forget about everyone and everything else involved and just out that poor woman first. She needs it, she deserves it."

(I open my mouth to reply her but the intercom buzzes and I look at her she raises her glass of juice and shrugs. I go and attend to it.)

Inathi: "Who is there?"

Landa: "Mel, I am back for round 2."

(I smile)

Lerato: "Tell her not to worry Mel was generous this time to bring help for her."

Inathi: "Go back."

Gab: "Even the good doctor is here. Open up."

(I open the gate.)

Bontle: "Thats my cue to leave."

Inathi: "You don't have to go."

Bontle: "Yes I do. I dont do crews darling. I will see you later ."

(She kisses my cheek as she dashes into the garage before they can spot her. The combi parks in front of the house. And they all get out.)

Inathi: "What are you guys doing here?"

Lerato: "Did you honestly think we would stay after hearing that Mel had you for breakfast?"

(They all look at me and burst out laughing.)

Landa: "Are you okay?"

Inathi: "Perfect as you can see."

Ethan: "So it's true then, Melinda o go dubile se borotho."

Inathi: "Are you guys really here to check on me or to confirm if indeed Mel whooped my ass."

Xavier: "Did she really? "

Inathi: "Yes she almost killed me. Now you guys can go back."

Lerato: "I am greatly disappointed in you Inathi. I trusted you to put that girl in her place. How can you let her win?"

Kath: "No offence but you are twice Mel's body size I just don't get how she can possibly beat you up."

Inathi: "Some of us , we are not violent."

Nana: "Nyaa hle sweetz you dont need to be violent to wallop a slender like Mel."

Inathi: "Mel ke thanyane and we all know bothanyane have enormous strength."

Lerato: "We need a rematch, dont worry I will go represent you."

Ethan: "That will be much appreciated I mean look at those marks on her neck. Motho o Mel wa nyedisa I never expredid it."

(We all look at him and laugh.)

Thelma: "What these guys are trying to say is that we are glad that you are okay. We were worried sick."

Inathi: " Thank you Thelma. Dont tell me you left camp ghettos to just come see if I am okay."

Kevin: "To tell the truth camp was boring after you guys left. The drama was now gone. Plus Lerato has to set appointment with the doctor soon."

Leo: "She decided to give the cancer a run for its money."

Inathi: "Really?"

Lerato: "Yes I mean its obvious I am still much needed if you are going to let type tsa bo Mel go ta go go trapela mo lwapeng la gago."

Inathi: "I am never going to hear the end of it akere?"

Xavier: "No! Not until you get a rematch and represent us well."

Inathi: "Well do you guys want to come in and see where it all took place?"

Lerato: "Please kana gongwe the tile was slippery you fell and thats how Mel got the upper hand."

Kevin: "Nyaa o mo trapile, fair and square. Stop trying to find foul play where there is none. "

BINDED

Insert 40

Some days she has no idea how she'll do it
but every single day, it still gets done.

Inathi

I hold the phone using my shoulder as I
arrange the flowers.

Derrick: "And the twins how are they?"

Inathi: "They are well. I took them to school
this morning. They have been asking a lot
about you. I think they miss you."

Derrick: "Well I miss them also."

Inathi: "What about me? Do you miss me?"

Derrick: "I miss you too."

Inathi: "Please come to Gaborone. I miss you."

Derrick: "I wish I could, but I have a flight to Dubai on Wednesday."

Inathi: "After that?"

Derrick: "I am booked the whole of this month Doodle bug. You guys are just going to have to do without me for a while."

Inathi: "Okay, since you cant come to us, we will try to come to you."

Derrick: "That will be much better and appreciated."

(The door opens and Raphael walks inside holding a gift back. He looks at me and smiles.)

Inathi: "I have to go. I will call you later."

Derrick: "Alright, I love you."

Inathi: "Me too Snuggles."

(I hung up and put my phone away as I look at him. It been a week without seeing him, he has really given me the space I asked for.)

Inathi: "Hi"

Raphael: "Hey! I come in peace."

Inathi: "I see."

Raphael: "I am finalizing my divorce tomorrow, Mel's sister is in town to come and get her."

Inathi: "That's good. I hope she will get her the help she needs."

Raphael: "Yeah! Anyway some peace offering, I did not know what to get a woman who owns a flower shop."

(He hands me the gift back and I take it.)

Inathi: "Thank you, but you didn't have to, I overreacted."

Raphael: "No you had any right to be angry at me. But you had no right to slap me. And that was the last time you will ever put your hands on me. I will not take your abuse lying down anymore."

(I look down embarrassed by what he just said because he is absolutely right I turn to be a little handy where he is concerned.)

Inathi: "I will make sure I keep my hands to myself from now on."

Raphael: "Good. And after I finalise my divorce I am coming for you full force so you better sure which side of bread you want buttered?"

Inathi: "Raphael..."

(He put his finger over my lips. And kisses my cheek. The spot where he kisses me feels like it has been set ablaze.)

Raphael: "Relax, think hard about this. No pressure."

(Before he can straighten I pull him and smash my lips on his. I put my hands around his neck and move closer wanting to feel his body warmth. I kiss him like my life depend on it. As I pull away I bite my lower lip and look at him.)

Inathi: "See you around baby daddy."

(He gives me a dangerous, possessive look as he licks his lower lip and smirks.)

Raphael: "Take care baby mama."

(He straightens up and shash away with his cocky pretty ass. Once he is out of the shop I reach for the gift back inside I find Kalahari chocolates and a watch. He is a man after my own heart. The door chime dingles and I turn around with smiles thinking he forgot something.

But that immediately dies when I find an older man with other 3 men I don't know behind him. They look to be his bodyguard. Something about his cold eyes makes me shiver. The door opens again and Tasha or should I say Agent 55 comes in and stands behind me.)

Inathi: "Welcome to Jessy Flower Shop, how can I help you Sir."

Molemogi: "Simple stay away from my son he has a wife already."

(Ohh damn! This is the scary Molemogi Hudson. He does look dangerous and has this cold eyes that shows they are capable

of anything.)

Inathi: "I am not sure I am following."

Molemogi: "Don't play dump with me young lady. You dont want me as your enemy, Raphael can do much better, he does not need to date a peasant like you. And dont think just because you gave him those bastards I will let you trick him."

Inathi: "If you think I am going to be scared by a bully in a suit then you are mistaken."

Molemogi: "You should be, I don't go around threatning women. Back off before I bring

the worst in me."

Inathi: "Bring your worst, I am not scared.
So go on bring your worst."

Molemogi: "Nxe,nxe! You should have never
said that. I will bury you alive along with
your bastards."

Inathi: "Like I said go on and bring your
worst. Dont be all talk, bring some action to
the table. Now get out of my shop so I can
attend to some real customers."

(I say as I grab the flowers I was arranging.)

Inathi: "Dont make me throw you out."

Molemogi: "Boys rough her a little. She needs a lesson."

(He says as he turns to walk out and his goons cones towards me. Tasha rounds the counter towards them. I grab the flowers ready to use them if any of them should try coming towards me.)

Molemogi: "On second thoughts leave her. She will gets what is due to her."

(They turn and walk out. With trembling hands I hold the counter. I dont even know

how I got the confidence to stand up to a beast like him.)

Tasha: "Are you okay?"

Inathi: "I am not sure."

Tasha: "You did well. Never show your enemy that you fear them."

Inathi: "Thank you. I think the defense classes are also helping me out."

Tasha: "Okay I am sure your friend will be pleased to know."

Inathi: "I better call Raphael."

Tasha: "I will be right outside."

(She walks outside while I pick up my phone and call Raphael)

Raphael: "Sugar."

Inathi: "Hey"

Raphael: "Are you okay?"

Inathi: "Your father was just here."

Raphael: "Shit! I am coming."

Inathi: "No its okay, no need to come here. I am okay, I just wanted to let you know that your bully father was just here."

Raphael: "What did he want?"

Inathi: "he came to deliver threats to stay away from you."

Raphael: "Don't let him scare you. I will handle Molemogi. He has a big mouth but does not have the guns to deliver."

Inathi: "I trust in you to keep your family

safe."

Raphael: "Thank you for the vote of confidence."

Inathi: "You are welcome baby daddy."

(I can tell he is smiling.)

Inathi: "Raphael."

Raphael: "Yes my girl."

Inathi: "I am glad I had my children with you. Thank you for making me a mom and

making this parenting thing such a bless. I appreciate you a lot."

Raphael: "I would do it again in a heartbeat. I just dont appreciate you Inathi, I love you woman."

(I hung up and smile to myself as I put the phone away.)

Raphael

I go over the report on my desk. Molemogi does not even I have been building a case

against him for years. He just think I am just bluffing. Releasing this will not only put him away for a long time but it ruins even his business. The only reason why I have been reluctant to release them is because mother and Lorraine will be caught between the blazing fires.

But now he is putting in me a tight corner. I have to act before he hurts my family.

I reach for my phone and call Alejandro.

Alejandro: "Raphael Hudson."

(His Russian accent is still dormant even

after years away from that country.)

Raphael: "Its time Alejandro."

Alejandro: "Ahh! B**ch I am still enjoying some Spanish ass*s."

(I smile)

Raphael: "Well too bad. Round the survivors and let them to get ready. We are going to need them to testify against him."

Alejandro: "Okay., Raph are you sure this is what you want? I mean he might be a fuc**d up but somehow he made us who

we are today."

Raphael: "Just because he sent us to school does not mean he gets to walk scot free of his crimes. Even a loyal dog sometimes turn and bite its owner. Molemogi brought this on himself."

Alejandro: "Okay, I will contact them and let them know to gear up for war."

Raphael: "Thank you. I will be in touch. For now you can enjoy your spanish ass*s."

(I hung up and immediately a call from Lorraine comes through. She asked to get

the twins from school. I guess they are giving her a hard time. They can get a little handy.)

Raphael: "Are they giving you a hassle already?"

Lorraine: "Well if you mean them refusing to get into my car because I wont give them the password then yes."

Raphael: "(lost) Password?"

Lorraine: "Yes dummy head, apparently there is a password I have to say before I can get them. I think a precaution thing

their mother taught them so they dont get kidnapped by strangers in pretense."

Raphael: "Well I don't know the password."

Lorraine: "bring your useless here."

Raphael: "I am coming."

Bontle

I pack my car outside his house and take a deep breath to calm myself down. I am nervous. I look at the peace offering gift I got him hoping it will work.

As I knock on the door as I rub my hand off my skirt, they feel sweaty all of the sudden. A woman in a towel open the door.

Her: "Hello can I help you."

I do a double intake, looking at the door and her checking if indeed I am at the right door. Or I mixed up the house addresses.

Her: "Heloo! "

(Snapping out of my reverie I look at her, trying by all means not to let the violent ghetto woman in me out before I hear who

she is and what she is doing in my mans house. But the fact that she has her white assless body draped in a towel I bought makes me want to mop the floor with her face.)

Bontle: "Sorry sweety, who are you again?"

(She raises her hand showing the big diamond in her finger.)

Her: "The woman of the house. I am Hannah Richard Moeti, Richard's wife."

(I almost faint right there on the spot. Did she just say wife. Or I did not hear her

correctly. Maybe its her British accent that made me miss what she was saying."

Richard: "Babe I thought you said you are getting rid of thw person at the door. The water is getting coooooo....."

(His sentence gets cut off as he notices me standing by the door. You can tell I am the last person he expected to see at the door.)

Hannah: "And I did not catch your name."

Bontle: "I seem to have to get lost again. This always happen to me. I am always banging on this door. I am sorry for

disturbing your night."

(I turn and walk away with my head held high even though inside I am literally breaking down. As I walk away, I catch their conversation)

Hannah: "That was awkward."

Richard: "She always gets lost here, I think she is dating the guy next door. Anyway enough now, come on Mrs Moeti your water is getting cold."

Hannah: "Lead the way Mr Moeti."

(I get into my car and start the car but the way I am trembling I don't trust myself to drive so I make a call to the only person who I know can come get me. But her phone rings without her answering. So I end up with only 1 option, calling the guy who I can trust with my life. He answers on the first ring.)

Daniel: "B!"

Bontle: "Please come and get me. I am at Richard's place."

Daniel: "I will be there in five."

BINDED

Insert 41

"The biggest coward is a man who awakens a woman's love with no intention of loving her." - Marley

Bontle

Daniel: "Are you okay?"

Bontle: "Stop asking if I am okay and let's get out of here."

(He glances at me once more before driving away before we can leave the compound,

Richard's car blocks the car with his.)

Danaiel: "You gotta be kidding me?"

Bontle: "Run his car over."

(Richard steps out of the car and comes to my side as Daniel gets out.)

Daniel: "What do you want ? You already done enough damage."

Richard: "This is none of your business Legodimo butt out?"

Daniel: "Or what? You should know by now that everything that got to do with Bontle is my business. Now move your stupid car before I run it down."

Richard: "You wouldnt dare."

Daniel: "Try me?"

Richard: "Bontle, please let us talk let me explain."

Daniel: "And what explanation could it possible be there, you are married dude there is no spinning this around. In fact just go back to your house your wife is waiting."

Richard: "Can you just shut up already?"

Bontle: "Dan, its okay. Let me hear him out."

Daniel: "Are you sure? B you don't owe this bastard anything especially not after what he did."

Bontle: "Its okay."

Richard: "Can we talk in private?"

Bontle: "You can say whatever you have to say in front of him. How long?"

Richard: "Its 9 years now."

Bontle: "Wow! So for the past 5 years I have bern the other woman."

Richard: "Its not like that. Hannah and I we are in an open marriage."

Bontle: "Is that supposed to make me feel better or make it all better. Why did you come back Richard?"

Richard: "Because I love you."

Bontle: "Don't insult me with that life. You

wouldn't be able to identify love even if it stood in front of you."

Richard: "You don't mean that. I love you and I wanted to marry you. I still want to marry you."

Bontle: "Daniel lets go I don't have time to listen to this nonsense."

Richard: "(holding my hand) I want you to be my second wife. Give me a chance to make all this right."

Bontle: "Tell me, in your head did you see me agreeing to all this nonsense you are

uttering right now. Just go back to your wife and pray from now our paths don't cross because I can't promise what might happen if they ever did."

(I get back in the car and roll the windows up so I don't have to listen to any of his nonsense anymore. Daniel gets inside and je reverses as he takes another route. Once we are out of the compound. I let the tears fall, it feels like my heart has been plucked out. It hurts so pretty bad. Daniel pulls by the side of the road and hugs me as I cry my eyes out to a man who I am not sure is even worthy of the tears.)

Inathi

I park the car in front of the headmaster's office. I totally forgot to teach Raphael about the password thingy. He must be going out of his mind. As I walk inside the twins come rushing towards me. I hug them and kiss their foreheads.

I stand up and greet Mrs Moalosi.

Moalosi: "Thank you for coming under such ahort notice."

Inathi: "No problem. I should have come to introduce their father sooner. And taught

him the password too."

Moalosi: "Its no problem, you taught your babies well. Because sometimes even relatives are the ones that conspire and get our children kidnapped."

Inathi: "I know right. Anyway this is Raphael Hudson, he is their father. "

Moalosi: "It is nice to meet you sir. Hope we will be seeing more of you from now on."

Raphael: "Thank you definitely."

Inathi: "Well let us go."

(Raphael holds the door for us as we walk out.)

Raphael: "can someone update me on the password thingy."

Lorraine: "You are clueless. Hi!"

Inathi: "You must be the cool aunty they have been raving about."

Lorraine: "The one and only. I can see where thry got there beauty. I am Lorraine."

(I extend my hand and shake hers)

Inathi: "Thank you. I am Inathi. Its a pleasure to finally meet you."

Lorraine: "The pleasure is all mine."

Raphael: "Hello, password."

(I look at Lorraine and we both roll our eyes.)

Inathi: "So in order to protect the twins from cases like kidnapping and having wrong people pick them up pretending I sent them or even danger from within the house. We created a password, anyone who comes to pick them up whether family or friend they

have to tell the twins the password so they can go with them.

Lorraine: "You taught them so well."

Raphael: "So what's the password?"

Inathi: "Prinkles."

Raphael: "Mme o bothalenyana. I always thought you are dump."

Inathi: "Just shut up."

Landon: "Mommy, daddy."

Inathi: "Yes baby."

Landon: "Are we going to be a family like Mpho's family. Legae said the reason why daddy does not stay with is because mommy hates daddy."

Raphael: "And who is this Mpho that's filling your head with nonsense?"

Landon: "My friend."

Raphael: "Next time you tell Mpho that, we,are going to be one big happy family in fact Daddy is going to marry mommy."

Inathi: "Raphael."

Lorraine: "Okay, lets leave mommy and daddy go get ice cream like we planned."

(I watch as they excitedly walk with Lorraine to her car. Once they are out of side I turn to look at Raphael who has his eyes on me.)

Inathi: "You can't lie to them like that. They,are going to be,sad when we do not marry."

Raphael: "Who said I am lying? Because I am going to marry you with a huge diamond

that other men will notice from afar then give you a brand kn the forehead indicating you are mine so they know you are sorely mine."

(I get stomach butterflies as his takes a step towards me and stops in front of me.)

Raphael: "You go tell Darium that he is just wasting his time. You are mine Inathi, its written in heaven's will."

(I raise my head to reply him but he pulls me close to him and kisses me. The words I wanted to say to him die away replaced by nothing but euphoria. The firework starts and I put my hand on his chest as I get lost

in the feeling. I honestly think I have been betwixed and the sad part is that I think I love it. As he pulls away we stare at one another, where words fail us, I trust our connection and hearts to do the talking.)

Raphael: "I pledged that I will not touch you until you have made your decision but everyday it seems to be a challenge especially when you give that "fuck me right here look."

Inathi: "Then what are you still waiting for? Why don't you give me what I am asking for?"

(He put his hand on my cheek and I lean

into it closing my eyes as I enjoy this moment)

Raphael: "What am I going to do with you?"

Inathi: "Anything you absolutely want."

Raphael: "I told you I am a selfish prick, I can't do anything I want until I know I am the only man in your life. I can't do anything I want because anything I want involves stuffing your sweet cunt with my come , morning, afternoon and evening."

(I open my eyes and look at him. In him there is everything and more. Not forgetting

the connection, chemistry and all emotions I feel when I am within his radius. There is power between the two of us, an electricity we could power a city with if we knew how. There is something between us, you and I. Some kind of magic.)

Vanessa kisses Lefa passionately at they look at there guest looking nervously around the room.

Nessa: " We have a guest waiting."

Lefa: "I know, he needs us not the other way

around. He can wait."

An hour later, the door opens and Molemogi watches as the young couple dressed in matching black outfit walks in the room. When he learnt about this company he never thought the owners will be young like this. Once they are have sat down he takes his time looking at them.

Nessa: "Welcome to the Thompsons how can we help you Hudson."

Molemogi: "You know my name?"

Lefa: "You reached out to us of course we

know everything there is to know about our clientele."

Molemogi: "I would like to order a hit."

(He slide them pictures of Inathi and the twins.)

Molemogi: "Leave none breathing. Execute to kill leave nothing else. Money is not a problem."

(Nessa looks,at the pictures and him then smiles coldly.)

BINDED

Insert 42

"The worst feeling is when you know you don't want to give up on someone but you know you have to." - Unknown

Molemogi: "Leave none breathing. Execute to kill leave nothing else. Money is not a problem."

(Nessa looks,at the pictures and him then smiles coldly.)

Nessa: "Old man it looks like you were fed wrong information."

Molemogi: "What do you mean?"

Nessa: "We are not monsters who go around killing innocent mothers and children."

Molemogi: "Who do you assassinate then?"

Lefa: "Monsters like yourself. Monsters who terrorise innocent people like yourself."

Nessa: "We know all about you Molemogi, we know you are a monster beneath that suit, who sexually abuses children koore you are the R.Kelly of Botswana. And I want

you to know that your days are numbered
continue thinking you are untouchable."

Molemogi: "I am not scared of you."

Nessa: "Oh no its not us you should ne
scared of, its your adopted son, Raphael
you should be scared of and all the other
innocent children you have been taking
advantage of."

Molemogi: "I don't have time to listen to this
nonsense. I will find someone to do the job
since you don't want it."

Nessa: "Should anything happen to that

woman and her children. It will not only be war against Raphael but the Dlaminis and The Thompson families."

Molemogi: "You stay out of my business or I will expose you for the monsters you are. I will bury all of you."

Lefa: "(smiling) Do you many people have sat in that very same chair threatening us same way you are right now? You are just a fly compared to them. Stand up and leave before you embarrass yourself further."

Nessa: "you heard the man, run and dont look back."

(He stands , flicking his tongue as he walks out. Nessa spins and look at Lefa who shrugs before they burst out laughing.)

Nessa: "Do you think its time for that social visit?"

Lefa: "Definitely, but first lets keep Brian and Naledi in the loop, Raphael is their client after all."

Nessa: "Okay we will go home tonight to let him know."

BONTLE

Bontle: "How does one lie to someone for five years Inathi? A full five years and it never occurred to him to say hey Bontle I am married."

(I put the phone on loud speaker so I can open another bottle of wine.)

Inathi: "He is a jerk. And he does not deserve your tears B. You are worthy of much more."

Bontle: "Don't you think we are cursed? Especially me? I mean all the men in my life

turn out to be jerkasses. Look at my father and now when I thought Richard was different he turns out to be two times worse than my sperm donor."

Inathi: "You are not cursed and not all the men in your life are jerkasses. Daniel is not."

Bontle: "we don't know him for all we know him he might be triple worse."

Inathi: "No! We are not going to paint all men with the same brush just because two men wronged you."

(I stand by the window looking outside.)

Bontle: "How could I have been so foolish Inathi?' I mean with all the international trips every year I should have known."

Inathi: "You are not going to blame yourself for his wrongs. Richard is a pathological liar. He fooled all of us. Its obvious the guy has been living a double life."

Bontle: "I don't know how I am supposed to pick up the pieces and go on. He helped me up only to kick me down again when I least expected it."

Inathi: "No! He gave you crutches to stand on. Now the crutches are gone and you need to learn to stand on your own. You are one strong lady I know, you dont need Richard or anyone else to survive. You can do all that on your own. Are you sure you don't want me to come down there?"

Bontle: "No the twins need you. I don't know I...."

(I trail off as I hear the key to the main door turn. There are only 2 other people who have keys. And one is on the phone right now with me which means Richard is the one opening the door. I turn to look at the door and he walks in with flowers. That sets my mood in a whole different tune. Anger

fills me up.)

Bontle: "Babe i will call you back.

(I hung up and stare at him.)

Richard: "Bontle can we please talk? I come in peace?"

Bontle: "Peace?"

(He nods his head as he walks towards me. He hands me the flowers and I take them so I can only use them as my weapon. I don't waste time as I use them to hit him with them.)

Bontle: "Not today devil. Phuma satane. Phuma. Peace do you even know spelling of thst words."

(I use the flowers to whip his sorry ass as he runs to his car.)

Bontle: "If you dare set your foot in my yard again Richard Moeti. I will put a bullet through your thich skull. Mark my words."

(I watch as he drives out before I walk back in the house. Leaning against the door I cry my eyes out. I wish matters of the heart were not always this complex. And its just bad that everything about this house just

reminds me about him.

Inathi is wrong I am the the strongest woman she thinks I am. I am a fragile little thing. His fragile little thing he used to say. I close my eyes as I have a flashback.)

*****Flashback*****

I watch him as he keeps punching her on the stomach countless times. In the corner of the house is the only place I can hide.

John: "You know why I am doing this Rose?"

Rose: "Yes, I know."

John: "Why Rose? Why?"

Rose: "Because I refused to sleep with him."

John: "Since you refused can I give him our little fragile thing."

(I tremble in the corner because I know he is referring to me. He turns and looks at me smiling wickedly.)

John: "Look at you shaking on your boots. Come here babt girl. Come to papa."

(With unsteady legs I walk to him.)

John: "You won't disappoint your father like your mother right my little fragile girl?"

(I nod my head.)

John: "Thats my girl."

Rose: "No! I will do it. Don't touch her. I will do it."

John: "What did you say? I did not hear you."

Rose: "I will do it. Leave Bontlenyane out of it."

John: "Good. Clean yourself up. I will set up another appointment."

(I look at my mother as she raises from the cold room. And takes my hand walking me to my room.)

Rose: "Get inside lock yourself inside and don't come out until I return."

Bontle: "I love you mama."

Rose: "I love you Bontlenyana jwame."

*****End of flashback*****

I walk to my room with a glass of water inside I find the anti-depressant I got from my psychologist. I open to take the two I always get but as I pour them I take a handful and swallow them. I clean out the whole bottle. I drink water and lie back on the bed. I take my phone and text my mother and Inathi same message.

"Bontlenyane loves you never forget."

I close my eyes. Dear God if you are there, please end my miserable life. I am ready for my after life.

(Kaone look at her sister as she paces around the house like a madwoman she really is.)

Mel: "Please Kaone I am begging you. Don't take me away. This is exactly where I have to be. Right here next to Raphael."

Kaone: "Mel for pit sake the guy has signed the divirced papers and has done everything in his power to make sure he gets it finalised."

Mel: "He is mine. Let me stay so I can show him that we belong together."

Kaone: "No! Its time you realise that Raphael does not not love and he will never be yours."

Mel: "He is mine, all mine. If he cannot be with then I am afraid he will never be with someone else. Not for as long as I am breathing."

Kaone: "Dont say that, you will be the first suspect if anything happens to Inathi and her babies."

Mel: "I dont care, she is better off dead. The rwins are mine, you should see the twins they look exactly like me. Replicas of me

and Raphael."

(She smiles looking to be in her own world)

Kaone: "(sadly) You were fine in London, where did it all go wrong?"

Mel: "I am still fine. Please Kaone let us stay longer until I get my family back. I cannot go back without them, I already asked Alyssa to prepare the rooms for the twins. The house will be empty without them."

Kaone: "Okay, we will stay longer, we will stay until you get them to agree to come with us. "

Mel: "Thank you. I knew I could count on you."

Kaone: "So how do I help in getting them back?"

Mel: "You are going to help me. Ohh! Kaone."

(She walks and hugs Kaone. Who pulls a syringe from her back pocket and inject Mel with it.)

Mel: "(in agony) Noo! What did you do?"

Kaone: "What I always do. Making the best decision for you."

Mel: "I will never forg....."

(She does not finish her statement at she faint. Kaone moves in time to catch her and gently places her on the ground. She looks at her sister her heart filled with sorrow. She picks up her phone and makes a call.)

Kaone: "She is down,let us move fast before her drug wears off. I neee her checked in when she wakes up."

(She hungs up and wait for help to come.)

BINDED

Insert 43

"Did you really want to die? No one wants to commit suicide because they want to die. Then why do they do it? Because they want to stop the pain." - Tiffanie DeBartolo

I stare at the text once more. I don't know why or how but I have this gut feeling that something is terribly wrong.

Raphael: "Are you okay?"

Inathi: "I don't know but I have a terrible feeling that something bad is about to

happen."

Raphael: "The twins are okay."

Inathi: "Not with the twins. I think its B."

(My phone rings and I look at it. A call from Rose comes through.)

Inathi: "Ma!"

Rose: "hey Nathi, have you talked to Bontle today?"

Inathi: "Yes why?"

Rose: "She sent me a message letting me know that she loves me I tried calling her but her phone just rings unanswered. I dont want to blow things out of proportion but I have this feeling that something is not right."

Inathi: "She sent me the same message. And she was not in the right mind earlier. I will drive to her house and check on her."

Rose: "Thank you ngwanaka (my child)!"

(I hung up and swirl around to Raphael.)

Inathi: "Can you drive me to Bontle's house?"

Raphael: "You think something is not right?"

Inathi: "I don't think so, I know so. I can't let anything happen to her. I have to make sure she is okay."

Raphael: "Okay, if it puts you at ease then lets go."

(I grab my keys to her house and we rush to the car. I sit uncomfortable in the car as I pray in my head that she be okay.)

Inathi: "If anything happens to her I will never forgive myself."

Raphael: "Hey, don't do this to yourself?"

Inathi: "You don't understand, Bontle has always been there for me. She has helped me through everything I am supposed to be there for her. She is strong but she has been through the most. Even strong people have a breaking point."

(He takes my hand and kiss it.)

Raphael: "Let us not jump to conclusions before we know exactly how she is. She

might be okay for all we know."

Inathi: "Okay."

(I jump out of the car the minute its parks and sprint towards the house to my surprise its locked. The keys are left on the door from inside so I cannot use my keys to unlock.)

Inathi: "Bontle, open up. I know you are in there."

(I keep banging on the door calling out her name.)

Inathi: "B! Please let me inside. B! We can get through this together like we always do. Open the door please I am begging you."

Raphael: "Move away."

(I turn to look at Raphael who is holding an axe.)

Raphael: "Breaking the door is the only choice we have to get inside. I will have it replaced. So now move away."

(I step aside as Raphael destroys the door with the axe he is holding. Once it is destroyed I rush inside. There are flowers

petals on the floor and by the table there is about 5 empty wine bottles. I dont waste time I rush towards the bedroom. Where I find her sleeping peaceful on the bed. Probably knocked off by the alcohol she consumed.

I smile as I walk towards the bed with intention to scold her for scarring us like this but the smile is fast gone when I notice the two empty pill containers in the mat next to her ringing phone.)

Inathi: "Noo! B, what did you do?"

(I rush to the bed and try waking her up but I dont get any response.)

Inathi: (calling) Raphael! Raphael please help me. Raofe."

(He comes running in the room.)

Inathi: "Call an ambulance, Bontle has overdosed."

(He checks her pulse and looks at me.)

Raphael: "There is a pulse but it's weak. We cannot wait for the ambulance it might take ages just to get here. Let us take her."

Inathi: "(crying) I dont know what do? What

do I do?"

Raphael: "(holding my shoulders) Inathi listen to me, this is not the time to have a panic attack. Your friend needs you. Pull yourself together and let get her to the hospital."

Inathi: "(wiping my tears away) let us go."

Raphael: "Thats my girl, grab the empty bottles they will need to know what she drank. Let us go."

(He says as he picks her up. I grab the containers and run after him. I take the seat

with Bontle. He head is on my lap while Raphael drives.)

Inathi: "Please be okay B. Hold on we are almost there. I love you B. You have to pull through for me. I need you Bontlenyana. Raphael please drive fast."

Raphael: "This is as fast as I can go. I dont want our kids to mourn for there pareants and aunt."

(I throw my head back and feeling powerless.)

Raphael: "Inathi please sit down they will let us know if they have an update. Pacing up and down is not going to help."

(I look at him and Ma.)

Rose: "He is right, sit down Inathi. Bontle is going to be fine."

(I look at Daniel who has been standing at the window since they put us in this waiting room.)

Rose: "Where is Richard? He should be here. Bontle would love to see him when she wakes up."

Inathi: "i am very sure that Bontle ga a kake a bata go bona Ntša eo ga tase fa gagwe. (Bontle will not like to see that dog anywhere near her)"

Rose: "Ao! Why you calling him a dog ? What has he done?"

Inathi: "He is the whole reason why Bontle tried killing herself. He is nothing but a liar, a pathological liar nothing of a man. I hate him."

Rose: "What did he do?"

Inathi: "He is married, he has been lying to Bontle for the past 5 years Ma. He has a wife."

Rose: "Not Richard, you must be mistaken?"

Inathi: "Why would I lie? He has a wife, a wife of full 9 years. He has been taking my friend for a ride. I hope he gets hit by a lightning. "

(Someone clears her and we all turn to find a doctor behind us.)

Naledi: "Good day, I am doctor Naledi Moroka-Dlamini, Bontle's doctor."

Rose: "Doctor, how is she?"

Naledi: "We have managed to flush all the pills she ingested out of her system."

Inathi: "Why do I sense a but?"

Naledi: "She did not only drink pills but she also had Amitraz."

Rose: "What is that?"

Daniel: "An insecticide used to kill ticks."

Inathi: "Oh my God! Bontle! Is she going to be okay?"

Naledi: "She has slipped into a coma. And we have her on respiratory support because she has respiratory depression. She took a a great amount of amitraz, which supports its dose-dependent effects on the body system."

Rose: "oh! God, what are we going to do?"

Naledi: "We are hopeful she will pull through."

Inathi: "Thank you, please save her."

Naledi: "I have some bad news."

Inathi: "What is it?"

Naledi: "We tried to save the baby but we could not."

Inathi: "(puzzled)The baby?"

Naledi: "She was 4 weeks pregnant."

Inathi: "Pregnant?"

Raphael

I sit in the dark with a glass of whisky in hand. Today has been nothing but eventful and sorrowful. Inathi's friend lies in a hospital fighting for her life. Not just Inathi's friend but a brand manager to my bank, a great asset to the bank. If she does not pull through we will never find someone as brilliant as her.

I glance at my phone as it rings. A call from the Dlamini Company.

Raphael: "Hudson!"

Liam: "Liam Dlamini, here."

Raphael: "I believe its not good news if you are calling this late."

Liam: "Your father made a move,he ordered a hit on your twins and their mother."

Raphael: "That bastard."

Liam: "Do you want us to take care of it?"

Raphael: "No! He is my problem I will take care of him. Thank you for trouble, you will be rewarded handsomely."

Liam: "Its a pleasure doing business with Raphael Hudson."

(I hang up and finish my whisky, putting the lights in I walk to my dining table where I have my chess laid out on the table. I look at the pieces before making my move. With the white queen piece I make a move.)

Raphael: "Checkmate."

(Relaxing on the chair I lie back and make a call.)

Raphael: "Dan"

Daniel: "Raph!"

Raphael: "I know you still at the hospital but I need you to move the first stage. Leak the story Dan."

Daniel: "Are you sure?"

Raphael: "Molemogi wont stop at nothing until he has my family's heads. He ordered a hit on my family today. So I am not going to wait for him to kill my whole family before I take him down. So to answer your question I am sure Daniel. Leak it."

Daniel: "Okay, watch for the headlines tomorrow. I will send security to your premises tonight."

Raphael: "Okay."

(I hung up and make another call.)

Alejandro: "I take it its time."

Raphael: "Yes, bring all of them. We are about to have a field day."

Alejandro: "Alright. We will be there soon."

Raphael: "Great."

Inathi is my next person on the talk list.)

Inathi: "Hey!"

Raphael: "I know you are tired and worried about your sister. And I am sorry I have to spring this on you , but its now or never or better I would rather be safe than sorry. I need you to get some sleep. Tomorrow is going to be a long day."

Inathi: "Why? What is happening?"

Raphael: "I can't say. Just know that I will

do anything to protect you and the twins
even if it means putting myself in harm
way."

Inathi: "Raphael."

Raphael: "Worry not. I love you."

BINDED

Insert 44

"Smiling words are not always said by happy souls." - Owm'r F

Raphael

Every news outlet is buzzing with the news. and my phone has been ringing off the hook since morning everyone wants an exclusive scope or my confirmation about the allegations made against Molemogi Hudson.

I look outside and they journalist are camping outside like tsetse flies waiting for

their next feeding spot. Not that I am complaining its what I totally signed myself up. A call I have been waiting for since I made my first move finally comes through.

Raphael: "Father!"

Molemogi: "Are you going to throw me under the bus for a mere pussy Raphael. You can have any other pussy but no you have to choose her rotten smelling pussy over me."

Raphael: "Yes I just chose that rotten smelling pussy over me. And I love it just the way it is."

Molemogi: "I made you the man you are right now and this is how you repay me Raphael."

Raphael: "I warned you. You shouldn't be crying right now. You are the one who said game on after all."

Molemogi: "I cant have journalists investigating e and the police all over my business. Make this story die Raphael."

Raphael: "And why would I do that? ""

Molemogi: "You know it will affect my political career before it even started."

Raphael: "You think I care after tou ordered a hit against my family. I hope you get prepared becaust this is just the beginning not forgetting a good lawyer when I am done with you, you will be a miserable old man in an orange jumpsuit."

(I hung up before sitting down on my desk to continue responding to my messages.)

Inathi

Landon: "Mommy come see daddy is on Tv."

(I have been glued to the screen all morning since the news broke.)

Inathi: "I know baby. Please change the channel to cartoon network."

London: "But I want to see daddy."

Inathi: "And daddy will come see you when he is not busy. Change that channel."

(I don't know how to deal with everything, Bontle is in a hospital fighting for her life and the father of my child turns out that he was molested, sexually assaulted by his

adoptive father. Just when I think things out life will get back in place then they just spiral out of control. For the first time I find myself wishing I was a Christian. I could pray a storm to God about this challenges.)

I walk back in the living room and put their juices on top of the the coffee table.)

Inathi: "Aunty Leah is here to babysit you two while I go to check in Aunty Bontle at the hospital."

Landon: "Can't you take us to go see the daddy. He will bring us back."

Inathi: "No! You are not going to see your father today."

London: "But mom....."

Inathi: "No buts, you will remain with Leah and behave. If she reports any bad behaviour from you two, I will punish you."

(I grab my keys and get in the car. I feel the need yo cry but I promised myself I will mot succumb to my problems anymore. "Come on we can do this Inathi. You got this.")

I drive straight to his place, of course journalist are camping outside his house. I

don't know what I expected. I dial his number as I approach the gate.)

Raphael: "Baby mama."

Inathi: "Open for me I am outside."

Raphael: "oh okay."

(The security guards open up and I speed through the gate. Parking next to the his car I take the elevator and go up to his apartment. As I walk in I find him waiting for me in the living room. He is his sweatpants and a shirts, bare footed. He looks has his hands folded over his chest and eyebrows

raised in an arrogant sexy form. He looks so calm for someone who just had his life secrets spilled just to save his family.)

Raphael: "If I knew this is what it took you to bring you to the lion's den I would have long done it."

(I don't waste time I drop my bag on the ground and run into his arms hugging him.)

Raphael: "Hey! I am okay."

Inathi: "Are you really okay?" "I was so worried."

Raphael: "I am good sugar. Better now that you are here."

(I step back and look at him carefully.)

Inathi: "You should have prepared me. I was never ready for this."

Raphael: "Now you know. No stress. Plus its all in the past."

Inathi: "So you didn't just make it up so you can bring him down."

Raphael: "I know I am malicious and all but a liar its not one of them. That fucker did

sexually assault him since I was 10 years he only stopped after shipping me off to Oxyford. But I am not the only survivor. I can't believe you will think I would lie about something as serious as this."

Inathi: "I didn't mean any offense."

Raphael: "None taken. And I wont day I am suprired this is your thank you everytime I step up and help. You always have to spit on my face."

Inathi: "Thats not true and you know it. I did not come here to fight with you."

Raphael: "You came here to accuse me of lying."

Inathi: "No I came here to be with the father of my children."

Raphael: "Bullshit!"

(I look at him and smile. Our word fir "you are lying")

Inathi: "Okay let me rephrase that. I came to be with the love of my life in his trying time. I love you Raphael Hudson, it always been you and it always be you."

Raphael: "I know akere I told you I will ruin you fir other men did you think I was making empty promises. Come here."

(Pointing in front of him. I look atbhom and smile as I take a step towards him.)

Raphael: "Another step Sugar."

(I take another step until I am in his hands again. I put my hand around his neck. Finally that space is filled, this right here is home far away from home. In his arms like this, I found my home.)

Raphael: "You ruined me for other women

Inathi Jessica Hudson. I love you Sugar."

(I bring my lips to his and kiss him. He does not waste time he picks me up as he he walks towards his room. Before we can even leave the living room. The elevator opens. He turns spins around and we find his sister and a woman who I take must be his mother standing where I stood minutes back.)

Raphael: "Mother how many times must i ask you to announce your arrival."

Gosego: "I didn't know you had company."

Inathi: "(whispering) You can put me down now."

Raphael: "No!"

Inathi: "Raphael!"

(He looks at me irritated and sets me down. But he put his hand around my waist making his claim.)

Gosego: "Well are you not going to introduce me?"

Raphael: "Mother meet the woman I will move heaven and earth to keep safe from

Molemogi, Inathi. My love meet my adoptive mother Gosego Hudson."

Inathi: "Its nice to meet you Mrs Hudson."

Gosego: "Same here. Could I talk to my son in private?"

Raphael: "No you have something to say it here in her presence."

Inathi: "Don't be absurd, let me go check on Bontle. I will come back later with the twins."

Raphael: "You promise."

(I nod my head. And try walking away but he grabs me firmly. I turn to him with an angry look.)

Raphael: "Where do you think you are going without my goodbye kiss?"

(I scowl my eyes and kiss his cheek but he shakes his head and points to the lips. I kiss him quickly')

Inathi: "Please stop acting like a drama king"

(I grab my bag and sprint out of his

apartment.)

Bontle

I look at her and laugh.

Bontle: "Pregnant that insane u did a hysterectomy. I can't get pregnant."

Dr. Naledi: "Ms Moloji, I tell you, your uterus is still in place. Your whole reproductive system."

Bontle: "I am confused, I swear I did a surgical hysterectomy. Five years back in

London."

Dr Naledi: "Maybe there was a mix up. You tried killing yourself and found out that you lost your baby. This can be all too much. I will refer you to our psychologist and clinical social worker so they can come and see you."

Bontle: "I dont need a shrink. I am okay. Just discharge me already."

Dr Naledi: "We have to keep you for a few days for an observation."

Bontle: "Are you sure its just for observation

or you just want your hospital to milk me dry until I have no penny to my name."

Dr. Naledi: "I assure you Ms Moloji, we are keeping you strictly for medical reasons no ulterior motive."

Bontle: "For pit sake just call me Bontle. Okay I am staying just one more night after that if you dont discharge me I am going to discharge myself you hear me doctor."

Dr Naledi: "Crystal clear."

(I watch as she walks out and I look at my flat tummy. I was with a baby and I killed it.

Tears fall from my eyes. Maybe I am screwed for life and that baby is better off with a prostitute for a mother and a liar for a father she would have been screwed also for life.)

Nessa: "Is this a bad time?"

(I raise my head to find Vanessa Thompson with flowers and a balloon written "Queens fall and rise to occasion. Arise Queen B, you got this.")

Bontle: "No come in?"

Nessa: "Heard you were admitted and

decided to check on my favourite human."

Bontle: "Thank you."

Nessa: "I have been observing you for the last 5 months. I knew I had to make this visit before darkness swallowed you."

Bontle: "I am not following?"

Nessa: "You have darkness inside you, I have seen it, experienced it and lived it. I can help you turn it into something unimaginable. I can give you power to make those who wronged you bleed. You are a queen Bontle wake up and realise it. No

queen lets a man make her feel less of a queen. When you are ready to let that darkness out. You know where to find me."

(She turns and walks out. While her words linger in my thoughts all day.)

BINDED

Insert 45

"I have been screaming for years but no nody has ever heard me."

Inathi

Inathi: "Promise me B, you will never scare me like that ever again."

(She rolls her eyes at me and nods her head.)

Bontle: "I promise now yoy can stop being so loud my head is already hurting."

Inathi: "You scared all of us. Why didn't you reach out? I asked if you were okay."

Bontle: "It was an impulsive decision. I don't know but whe. You are already on an emotional verge the mind turns to make decisions based on what it is exactly feeling at that moment. It was never my intention to give you and ma a fright."

Inathi: "And stop acting strong when you are clearly not. It's okay to drop your guard at times B. It does not make less of human or weak. It just makes you human."

Bontle: "Alright Dr Phil. I will do that."

(I look at her and laugh.)

Inathi: "Don't you are making it difficult for me to be mad at you."

Bontle: "Simple, don't be mad at me. I am fine now. I survived a near and u can assure you that I have learnt my lesson."

Inathi: "The doctor said you are refusing to see a psychologist."

Bontle: "Talking does not help anything."

Inathi: "What are you goinv to do then? If

you wont talk them what Bontle?"

Bontle: "Whatever I have to do to survive."

Inathi: "Promise me it wont be another suicide attempt."

Bontle: "Been there, done that and not going back there I can assure you."

Inathi: "When you get discharged you are either moving in with me and the twins or we are moving in with you."

Bontle: "Honestly Inathi I don't need a babysitter I am good."

Inathi: "I wasn't asking you actually. I was just putting it out there for you. "

Bontle: "Don't you have somewhere else to be? "

Inathi: "Right here next to you is where I currently need to be."

Bontle: "Okay mma. Well you can sit there and watch me sleep. I am tired."

Inathi: "Okay babe. Go ahead."

(I watch as she close her eyes and sit down

reading the magazine by the table. Soon she is snoring and I walk to her bed and look at her as she is peacefully sleeping. I put my hand over hers and close my eyes)

Inathi: "Heavenly father I know I dont do this quite often but I pray for the two important people in my life, Bontle nd Raphael. I pray that you give them strength to get through this phase Lord. May you renew their strength lord and your mercies on them Lord. In your mighty name I pray. Amen."

(I kiss her forehead as I walk out, calling Derrick. It time to put things in order. His phone goes straight to voicemail so I decide to leave him a message.)

Inathi: "Hi, its me please call me as soon as you get this. We need to talk."

Bontle

I watch him standing by the window. I can tell from the stiffness of his posture that he is under a lot of stress.

Bontle: "Dan!"

Daniel: "I thought we agreed you will call me when it gets tough."

Bontle: "I am sorry."

Daniel: "Your sorry does not cut it now.
What if Inathi did not get there on time?"

(I look at him and smile)

Daniel: "Don't you dare. Don't you smile
Bontlenyane."

Bontle: "This is a good site to see. You all
worked up for my sake."

Daniel: "I care about you."

Bontle: "I know."

(He continue starring outside)

Bontle: "Vanessa Thompson came to see me earlier on."

Daniel: "Why would she come see you?"

Bontle: "She said she wants to help me get ovet what I am going through."

Daniel: "Bontle listen to me, the last thing you need is any association with the Thompson family. They are not the kind of

people you need help from."

Bontle: "(laughing) You should see your face right now. You almost pink."

Daniel: "Damnmit! Bontle why cant see you how serious this is? The only thing those people will teach you is darkness, they are kniw nothing but killing people. She just wants to turn you into a killing machine."

Bontle: "I already figured out that."

Daniel: "Promise me, promise me you will stay away from them. The devil of this country is that family."

(I look at him and keep quite.)

Daniel: "Bontle, please dont tell me you are considering her offer."

Bontle: "I wont lie to you Dan, its all I have been thinking about."

Daniel: "I can help you through this. It does not have to be them. We can do it together."

Bontle: "I already made my mind Dan, I am going to serve my revenge cold for all those who have hurt me. Even if it means I have to partner up with the Devil herself. I will so I

can make them bleed the tears I have shed."

(He looks at with nothing but pity which makes me even more mad. This is what I dont want at all. I don't want their pity. I will be strong again, I fell this once but this would be the last time I would ever be down.)

Raphael

*****flashback*****

Molemogi: "Tonight you will take this like a big boy you are. No crying."

(I look at him and the belt he is holding and nod my head.)

Molemogi: "Thats my boy. Come on then hold the table and stick that tiny little ass out for me. Dont let go no matter what."

(With unsteady hand I hold the table. I close my eyes hoping it will block out the impact of the belt. But it stings the minute the belt makes contact with my skin. And I say a small prayer to my mother.

"Mommy please come back I promise I will be a good boy from now on. I will no longer give you stress and headache. Please

mama rescue me."

But like any other night my prayers never get answered. By the third stroke, tears and mucus are clouding my sight.)

Molemogi: "Thats my boy. You are so clever. Thats why tonight I got you a gift. Penny come in here."

(I watch as the helper's daughter walk in with shaking legs. She is the only friend I have this in this compound. I shake my head at her, telling her to turn back and walk away.)

Molemogi: "Come in sweetheart, today you are going to reward Raphael for being a good boy."

(He drops the belt down as he walks towards the scared Penny.)

Raphael: "No leave her, you can have me instead. Leave Penny alone."

Molemogi: "I akways tell you are weak. Should I get Alejandro in here, I am sure he will be pleased to do it."

(He says as he tears up Penny's little dress.)

Raphael: "I said leave her alone. Leave her."

(I rush and hold his hand but he turns and punches me on the stomach and I roll down.)

Molemogi: "(kicking me on the stomach)
Finally growing some balls Raphael. Stand up moron if you,are going to act like a man stand up and fight like one ."

(from his back he pulls the gun. and point it at Penny.)

Molemogi: "Now are you going to fuck this whore or should I do it and blow her brains."

Raphael: "No don't kill her. I will do it."

(I stand up and grab Penny and throw on the couch. Pinning her hand down I tear her underwear before I shove cock myself into her flesh without any hesitation. Her empty cries fill the room fill the room while I fill her inside.)

Molemogi: "Thats my boy."

Penny: "Raphael, please stop I am begging you. Stop, stop. "

(I raise my hand and deliver a hot clap

across her face.)

Raphael: "Shut up bitch."

Molemogi: "Thats it get her in order."

(I keep thrusting in and out of sweet cunt. I pull out as my climax reaches and shove it in her mouth.)

Raphael: "Come on suck and swallow every bit of it."

Penny: "You are a monster just like him. A monster..."

*****End of flashback*****

"Monster! You are a monster Raphael!"

Her voice keeps repeating in my mind as I wake up drenched in sweat and disoriented. The nightmares or should I say flashbacks are back. I look around the room and the silence is too loud. Her voice is all I keep hearing over and over again. I try Daniel's phone but it goes straight to voicemail.

"Monster! You are a monster. Just like him."

Damn! I sprint in my wardrobe I change and grab the keys to my biker. Putting on the

helmet I ride straight to Inathi's house.

Calling her, I impatiently wait for her to pick up.

Inathi: "(sleepy)Hello."

Raphael: "I am outside, open up."

(Hanging up , after 5 minutes I park my bike in front of her house. She is waiting for me with a worryingly. I walk straight to her and smash my lips on hers. I kiss her hoping her innocence will give the peace I long for. It will wash me of my sins.)

Raphael: "you said you will come back but you didn't."

Inathi: "Sorry. Are you okay?"

Raphael: "I missed you."

Inathi: "Its two in the morning, you drove through the night just because you missed me?"

Raphael: "What is with the million questions so late?"

(I pass her and walk straight to my boy's room. I switch the light on and walk to his

bed. I kiss jos forehead.)

Raphael: "I love you little man."

(I am so afraid that I might turn out like Molemogi. That I am a monster just like him.

As I walk out Inathi is leaning against the wall studying me intensely. I ignore her and walk into the princess room. I also light her room, she is hugging her teddy bear and fast sleep. I kiss her cheek.)

Raphael: "I love you princess. And I will kill anyone who will try to hurt you. myself

included."

(Switching off her light and closing her door. I face her, I don't have my defense mechanisms in check, right now here, the in control Raphael I s no more. Just a vulnerable man afraid of his ghosts and demons.)

Inathi: "(opening her arms) Come here."

(I walk straight to her and let her hug me. Though it does not take away the troubles but its soothing.)

Inathi: "We love you daddy. Never forget

that. Come lets get you in bed big boy."

(I let her lead me to her bedroom. She strips me naked and walks me to bed. In her chest and protective hands I fall asleep.)

BINDED

INSERT 46

"She called me Night, because I loved the darkness. And I nicknamed her Luna, because she reflected the sun." - A. Bentley

Bontle

I look at the bed once more vowing to myself never to set foot in here again for the same reason that that put me here in the first place. I look at the notes on the bed for all of them. One for Daniel, one for ma and the other for Inathi. I am becoming a ghost until I have my demons under control.

Nessa: "Are you ready to leave?"

I turn and look her standing by the door. She specifically came for me. When u sent that text I thought she wikk send someone to come fetch me like her million agents.

Bontle: "Yah I am, can you make sure they get this letters. I don't want them to worry about me."

Nessa: "Consider it done. Is there something else?"

Bontle: "No thats all. But I do have a

question though."

Nessa: "I bet you do. Shoot I am listening."

Bontle: "I can't help but wonder why you came personally I thought you will send your agents."

Nessa: "Because you are personal to me. Special in your own way."

Bontle: "I swear everytime you leave me even more confused. Can we get out of here already?"

Nessa: "Of course. Lets go."

(We walk to her car packed in front. Once we get inside she looks at me and pulls a straight face.)

Nessa: "Are you sure you want this Bontle? Once you are inside there is no going back."

Bontle: "I am sure. I want this more than anything else."

Nessa: "Okay just needed to make sure. Ready to be a ghost for a few months or even a year?"

Bontle: "As long it makes me feel liberated I

am even ready to be a ghost my whole life."

Nessa: "I don't know if I should be moved to tears by your eagerness or scared."

Bontle: "(smiling) Both."

(I wink at her as I look outside my window taking in my surroundings. I don't know this may be the last time I see it.)

Narrated

Mel: "I thought you were on my side. This is a betrayal I won't take lying down Kaone."

(Kaone looks at her sister pitifully. It seems like every day her condition worsen.)

Kaone: "I was doing what was best for you."

Mel: "best for me? How is locking me in a psychiatric hospital le dithanyane tsone tse, exactly best for me?"

Kaone: "The doctor will help you be better and back to your old self."

Mel: "I am not crazy Kaone well except I am crazy in love with my husband. You have ruined everything for me Kaone."

Kaone: "This is the reason you are locked up. You infatuation or is obsession with a man who will never be yours."

Mel: "You are talking kaak! Even the ancestors know that he is mine come sunshine , hell or heaven. He is mine."

Kaone: "And for as long as you continue believing your delusions you are going to remain in here."

Mel: "We will see about that Kaone. We will see darling sister."

(She looks at her sister with a cunning smile.
That gives Kaone the creeps.)

Kaone: "I hope you are not planning
anything Melinda. Legale you are locked
here with no where to go."

Mel: "You just said it yourself I am locked in
here do you absolutely have nothing to
worry about."

(She stands up and whistles as she walks to
her room. Kaone starts at her completely
worried about her.)

At Gloria's house

Basadi used warm water to wipe her mother. It was clear that she was in pain, although she had already given her morphine to ease the pain but she was still in pain. The hospital has done all they could and could no longer cure her but rather only manage under palliative care while letting the disease take its course. Gloria was diagnosed with CA of the colon early this year. Unfortunately for her it was already at an advanced stage where chemo and radiation could no longer treat it.

Basadi: "Ma! Are you sure you don't want me to increase the dose. You seem to be under a lot of pain."

Gloria: "its okay my child. Did you manage to get hold of your sister?"

Basadi: "Her phones are still not going through. The doctors said you don't have much time left I don't know why you got to spend the remaining days of your life pinning over someone who wants nothing to do with you."

Gloria:"Do you know the sacrifices Inathi made for this family? Do you know you were able to get through gates of varsity because of her endless sacrifices?"

Basadi: "How can I forget when its a you

talk about these days? I get she sacrificed a lot but it does not mean we now have to worship the ground she walks on."

Gloria: "I have wronged her in so many ways Basadi. I need to make it right before I leave this world."

Basadi: "Just let bygoners be bygones. Inathi is leaving her life. I don't even think she remembers that we are still alive."

Gloria: "It does not matter. Come on please honor the wishes of a dying woman."

Basadi: "You sure know how to make

someone feel bad ma. I wilk try her phone bone last time if it does not go through thats it we are letting it go."

Gloria: "Okay, but put more effort and remember its not Inathi who is at fault its us, its me."

Basadi: "Got it."

Inathi

His tears wet my tshirt as he narrates his story. He has his head on my stomach. He

was awoken by a nightmare and started telling me his dark history.

Inathi: "And Penny where is she now? Did she ever escape?"

Raphael: "Before I left to UK I helped her escape with the help of my mother. We loaded her backpack with money before shipping her off."

(He takes a moment to collect himself.)

Raphael: "She is now a sex therapist, staying in Florida."

Inathi: "Are you guys still in touch?"

Raphael: "Yah, check in each other once a while. Penny never really got over what happened. I guess we all did just learnt to cope with it. We all did."

Inathi: "You are not a monster Raphael. Penny is still alive today because you were brave enough to choose her life even though it was not an ideal decision."

Raphael: "Thank you for listening and not judging me."

Inathi: "I love you and here for you everytime

you need me. Now let me go draw you a bath before your rascals wake up."

[I prepare him a nice bubble bath. While he takes the bath I use the time to prepare breakfast. The twins wake up and together as a family we gave breakfast. Once done we settle in the living room to watch a movie. I wear a throw with Raphael my head on his chest. The twins are playing on the mat when the front door opens and someone I least expected walls in.)

Derrick: "Surprise!"

(I raise my head and look at him with flowers and chocolate. I stand to my feet

abruptly making the throw fall and expose that I am going to be putting on Raphael's t-shirt.)

Inathi: "Derrick what are YOU doing here?"

Derrick: "Thought I suprise you. But I can see that was totally unnecessary."

Inathi: "Derrick look I can explain."

Derrick: "Go on I would like to hear what lie you are going to cook for being caught cozy with your ex."

Raphael: "Baby daddy."

Derrick: "Huh!"

Raphael: "Not just ex , baby daddy. You can go ahead take some water looks like you need it."

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Short, dosing a lot. Its been a long day.

Attending a workshop this week but I also want to try writing everyday like I used to. .

BINDED

INSERT 47

"She is a combination of savage and sensitive."- unknown

Bontle

I am in this facility that I dont even know inside but what I know is that there is about 5 of us females amongst magnitudes of males. I have tried to find out where exactly I could be but no luck.

Some are training you can see that they are used to this kind of thing. One thing its

crystal clear this is a training facility. And I am the newbie because all this other guys have been watching me since I got here.

I sit by the corner as I enjoy my dinner in peace. Somehow I wish I could have my earphones plucked into my ears so I can ignore all this chaos and noise going around. Especially the jerk that just jumped on top of the desk I am occupying.

Agent 47: "So newbie where are you from and how did you get here?"

(I look at him and ignore him as I slice my steak and put it into my mouth.)

Agent 47: "I guess you dont know the rules. No one ignores around here."

(I take a sip of my juice before standing up to walk away. I honestly dont have time to entertain hos rush of testosterone to impress all his friends. He grabs my hand as I am about to walk away and I turn around and slap him hard across the face. The whole dinning hall falls silent as they look at us. He raises his hand to strike me back but Nessa holds his hand.)

Nessa: "She is mine. You ever lay you hand on her I will have all your fingers sliced. You hear me Agent 47?"

Agent 47: "Crystal clear boss lady."

Nessa: "Commotion is over, finish up, next class is in 15 minutes. (She looks at me)
Follow me."

(I follow her to a room with a single bed, decorated in red and white. There is a study table and a desk with a chess board and its pieces laid nicely on top of it. Then an empty book shelf, a vintage wardrobe.)

Nessa: "This will be your room."

Bontle: "Okay thank you."

Nessa: "Bontle is no more, within this walls you will be known as Red."

Bontle: "Not agent something something?"

Nessa: "No, just Red. Thats your code name. Now can we begin the rebirth of Red."

Bontle: "I guess so."

Nessa: "Sit Red, have you ever played chess?"

Bontle: "I always thought of it as boring."

Nessa: "The reason why your life is in chaos is because of that. People who play chess have control in their lives because there every move is always calculated."

Bontle: "There are so many ways to have control in life."

Nessa: "Playing chess teaches you to learn your enemy to calculate their move before they even make it. It gives you control in your game. And that is your first lesson. Learning control Red."

(She moves one of the pieces across the chess board.)

Nessa: "learn it, once you have mastered it we can proceed to lesson 2. Remember control Red. Master the your enemy's moves."

(She walks out and I stare at the chess board before moving to my bed. I did not come here to be schooled on how to play chess. I lay on the bed and close my eyes.)

Narrated

Pogiso sings as she sweeps her yard. Ever since moving to the village and starting her tuckshop business things have been better. Although she still wishes that she had her

Gaborone house. She has gotten used to being the village talk, how the mighty has fallen it how often they described her.

MmaBoi: "Heela MmaT ema ga re re me-me?"

(She looks at her neighbor and rolls her eyes before walking to the fence to speak to her noisy neighbor.)

MmaB: "Akere I know ga o na TV ne ke re ke go update ka tsa ko Gaborone." (I know you don't have Television so I thought I should update you.)

Pogiso: "It better be something important as you can see I am sweeping the yard."

MmaB: "I don't know why you must always sweep you yard yoh barely ever get guests nit that I blame them I mean yoh stay in a one room traditional hut where would they possibly sleep if they visit."

Pogiso: "Are you going to tell me or ke ithoboge mma. Tshele ya gago setse e nkeme ha."

MmaB: "I was saying maybe you should make peace with your late husband's son seeing that ever since Tumelo passed on you don't have any peace or anything for

your name."

Pogiso: "I knew this was just going to be zero. Dont you have anything better to do than stivking your nose into my business all the darn time MnaBoi."

MmaBoi: "Wait! Sa ngala a ko the le wena ga o itsi go tshameka (laughing) I was going to say looks like that boy is being punished for all that he put you through and Tumelo. Turns out his adoptive father sexually abused him while he was young."

Pogiso: "Good for him. He will never know peace for killing my son."

MmaBoi: "But I still think you should make pe..."

(Pogiso turns and walks away leaving MmaBoi standing by the fence talking alone. She walks to her tuckshop to attend to the customer.

She smiles when she realises it her favorite customer who somehow reminds her of her late Tumelo before he became fat.)

Customer: "Mme dumela. (Hello ma'am)"

Pogiso: "Ngwanaka, a o thotse? Nka go thusa ka eng?" (Hello my child? How are

you? How can I help you)

Customer: "I was just passing by from town
ans I thought I pass by to give you money
for sugar."

(He hands her a p200 note.)

Pogiso: "Ohh bathong! Thank you may God
bless you more."

(She looks sadly at him wondering what is it
exactly about him that reminds her so much
of Tumelo.)

Customer: "Ma! Are you okay?"

Pogiso: "I am good my child. Just thinking a lot about my child I guess."

Customer: "Oh! where is he?"

Pogiso: "He passed away about 5 years ago. I guess I turn to miss him."

Customer: "It must be hard on you. Be comforted ma'am I sm sure he is in a better place. Let me leave you."

Pogiso: "Thank you. You are kind."

(She watches her customer as he whistles

to his car, a similiar whistle to that which Tumelo liked in his prime age. Reminding her again of him.)

Inathi

Raphael: "Not just ex , baby daddy. You can go ahead take some water looks like you need it."

Inathi: "Raphael!"

Raphael: "What? Darrium here needs to take a hike. I mean he is busy asking irrelevant questions at obvious things."

Inathi: "Derrick can we talk, (i look at Raphael) in private. Raphael take the kids on a walk or something."

Raphael: "5 minutes thats all I am giving you."

(I roll my eyes at him as gmhe walks out with the twins.)

Inathi: "Can I get you anything to drink?"

Derrick: "No I am all good Duddle bug."

Inathi: "Derrick I am sorry I never meant for

you to find"

Derricks: "(interrupting me) Look Doodle bug, I forgive you. I forgive you for falling into temptation I should have never left knowing tgat predator is here. Lets just rewind back my love and move on."

(I look at him a bit puzzled.)

Derrick: "This things happen. I won't dump you just because you cheated on me with Raphael. Its okay when he comes back just ask him to give us space to work out our things."

Inathi: "Derrick, we have been through a lot together."

Derrick: "I know my love that's why we can't let this thing get between us."

Inathi: "And I appreciate all that you have done for me so far but I love him. It always been him and it will always be him."

Derrick: "No! You are just confused. You love me Inathi. Me your Snuggles not that arrogant jerk."

Inathi: "I am so sorry Derrick. I have already decided that I am going to give him a

chance. Give our family a chance."

Derrick: "As the other involved party in this relationship I am sorry to inform you that I refuse that decision."

Inathi: "(confusingly) What?"

Derrick: "You made a decision regarding our relationship without consulting me first. When we got into this relationship we both made that decision. So it's only fair that when we break up it's also a collective decision from both of us not one party."

Inathi: "But Derrick."

Derrick: "No buts. I am not going to be used and discarded like I am a plastic bag. You used me when your lover was not around now that he is back you think you can just throw me away and my feelings like we dont matter anymore. Nyaa ga e bereke jalo."

Inathi: "I love him Derrick."

Derrick: "And I love you simple. We have been through so much together. I am not going anywhere. In fact let me get my father's wine and make myself comfortable."

(He says as he walks to the wine cellar and grabs a bottle of wine and glass. Crossing his legs on the couch he indeed makes himself comfortable and drinks it with no worries. I am just too stunned to do anything.)

Derrick: "You think you can use me and throw me out. Ke to go ruta go phela le batho, lo nyatsa batho."

(The door opens and Raphael walks inside.)

Raphael: "Is he go.....What is he still doing here?"

Derrick: "This is my girlfriend's house. I am not going anywhere."

Raphael: "Are you insane? She does not love you."

Derrick: "Oksalayo, I am not going anywhere. Le ka nna la bitsa katakata, I am not moving."

BINDED

INSERT 48

"Lovers dont finally meet somewhere. They are in each other all along." - Rumi

Raphael: "Are you insane? She does not love you."

Derrick: "Oksalayo, I am not going anywhere. Le ka nna la hitsa katakata, I am not moving."

Raphael: "Heelang naare wa gaafa. Get out, with your hotspot love before we forcefully remove you."

Derrick: "You are making noise. I am trying to concentrate."

Inathi: "Derrick, look I am so....."

Derrick: "(interjecting) Not a word your mouth Inathi. You have made your choice. But I want you to know you shall remember me when he fucks you up. You shall experience the same pain you put me in double. Wish you all the best."

(He grabs the wine bottle and walk out.)

Raphael: "Well that went (scratches his

head). Why do you always have to fall for the worst people ever?"

Inathi: "(raising an eyebrow) Yourself included?"

Raphael: "No, I am the best thing ever."

Inathi: "Well you and I surely know how to pick them. Dont forget you were married to a mental case."

Raphael: "Mel....."

(His phone rings and he pulls ot out from the pocket and picks up.)

Raphael: "Talk to me."

Alejandro: "Hope you have booked us to a nice luxurious hotel."

Raphael: "All arrangements has been made."

Alejandro: "Good, expect us in 2 days. In the mean time find something to keep the fire burning."

Raphael: "On it."

Alejandro: "Great, see you soon."

(He hangs up and he receives another phone call. I sit down and look at him. As he talks, I am completely mesmerized when it comes to him.)

Raphael: "Penny."

(My eyes pop out as he mentions her name. He notices as he comes to me and give me a perk on the lips. Before sitting down and putting my feet and playing with them)

Penny: "Your father is trending on the news."

Raphael: "Yes, the monster finally gets his dues."

Penny: "Tell me something Raphael, are you behind this."

Raphael: "Yes I am the one who leaked the story."

Penny: "Why? We made an agreement you, I and Alejandro that the world shall never know what made us who we are today. So why did you decide now to air our dirty old laundry to the world?"

Raphael: "I needed to stop him. Someone

needed to stop him before he hurt more innocent people."

Penny: "You always turned a blind eye whrn he hurt other innocent people. Preferring to clean up his mess. Why now?"

Raphael: "I have a family and he was coming after them. This was the only way to stop him."

Penny: "I knew it. It has to be for your own personal gain. After all you and Molemogi are just thr same, always pushing your own agendas."

(I feel him tense a little)

Raphael: "Penny listen your name won't be mentioned at all. You can rest assured of that."

Penny: "I am sure it won't because you know why, you wouldn't want the world to know that you are just like him. You enjoyed it as much as he did. And here I thought I was wrong about you all along but you go on to prove to me that you are just a monster maybe even worst monster than him. How do you use people's lives to fight your battles with your father. You disgust me."

(She hangs up and ,Raphael puts his phone down before turning to me. For a second he looks vulnerable but it quickly dissolves into his controlled self.)

Inathi: "Are you okay? What did she want?"

Raphael: "(teasingly) Is this how its going to be, discussing my phone calls."

Inathi: "Ra...."

Raphael: "She wanted to make sure that her name will remain out in all of this. I have to go out and sort a few things."

Inathi: "What about the press? They are still waiting at your place like vultures."

Raphael: "I am not going to hide here because journalists wants a scoop of my story. I am going out there to make sure Molemogi is put behind bars for a long time. In the mean time you look after your pretty self and our children."

(He stands up and pulls me up with him. Cupping my face he kisses me. When he pulls away, his face lingers on me for a while.)

Inathi: "What is it?"

Raphael: "I missed out on your pregnancy with the twins I think I should knock you up again."

Inathi: "(I smack him lightly on the stomach) unless you are prepared to be the one carrying the baby to full term there will be no knocking me up."

Raphael: "(smirks and spanks me lightly) We Will see about that."

(I am about to reply him when my phone rings.)

Raphael: "I will see you soon. Don't miss me

a lot."

(He kisses me again and I watch as he strolls to the bedroom.)

Inathi: "Hello!"

(I hear a cough in the background)

Inathi: "Hello."

(There is absolute silent at the end of the line. I look ay me phone before hanging up.)

Inathi: "Probably a wrong number."

Melinda

I sit excitedly as I wait for his visit. His visits are what keeps me going in this hell hole. My own secret rescue man.

He walks in whistling like usual and I smile at him as I sit down.

Man: "You look better today."

Mel: "Thank you, I have been taking my medication."

Man: "Good to hear. That means our plan is working out perfectly."

Mel: "Anything I should know."

Man: "Ah no nothing of great importance. Keep on taking your meds, so they can release you soon. Once you get discharged you will find everything you need ready, a flight on standby to take you back to Botswana and a house there for you."

Mel: "Ohh thank you so much. You still haven't tolf me why you helping me."

Man: "Joined forces are better than one man standing alone."

Mel: "I am not following."

Man: "We both have a common goal. We want something and I order to get it its better if we work together than as individuals."

Mel: "Okay, go on."

Man: "You want Raofe, I want my girl back."

Mel: "(confused) Raofe??"

Man: "Sorry I meant Raphael. You want Raphael and I want Inathi. You can keep him and the twins as a present from me. We won't be needing them."

Mel: "Ohh!-really. Finally, my family back in one piece. Thank you so much."

Man: "No need to thank me. Remember in order for this plan to work it all relies on you getting out of here. Once you are out then everything will be a piece of cake."

Mel: "Got it. Don't worry I will be out in no time."

Man: "Good to here. Take care Melinda."

(He stands and turns to leave whistling. I stand up and whistle also going back to my room feeling motivated enough for anything that might rise. Mostly filled up with hope and happiness that I am going to get my family back in one piece.)

Inathi

I wipe my hands with the cloth as I walk check out who is buzzing outside.

Landon: "Mommy I don't want the green

beans."

Inathi: "(rolling my eyes) Stop being a picky eater Thami."

(I press on so I can see who is outside and I am surprised to see Martin. Puzzled I open the gate for him and wait by the door as his car drives inside. The minute it packs. Two faces that I have been missing a lot come running to me.)

Katleho: "Mommy!"

(I open my arms and they roll into them hugging me tightly. I kiss their foreheads.)

Inathi: " My two handsome babies."

Tumisho: "I am not a baby anymore."

Inathi: "You will always be my baby Tumi, no matter how old you get."

(I shift attention to Katleho and he gives me a giddy bubbly smile with two missing teeth. My heart melts looking at him.)

Inathi: "Did you sell your teeth to the Teeth Fairy again?"

Katleho: "This time around he stole my

teeth while I was sleeping."

Tumisho: "Where is Nami and Thami?"

Inathi: "I bet he did. Go on inside , you will find them in there."

(I watch as they race to the door.)

Inathi: "No boys, the rules have not changed. No running in the house."

Katleho: "Yes mommy."

(I smile looking at them.)

Inathi: "They sure do grow up fast."

Martin: "It feels like yesterday when I was here to pick them up. Hard to believe its been 5 years already."

Inathi: "True hey. What brings you guys here so late?"

Martin: "Mbali was supposed to get them but she says she is out of the city and will only be back after two weeks."

Inathi: "Mbali will always be Mbali. Koore will she ever grow?"

Martin: "I highly doubt it. I had already made plans with my wife to go on the promised honeymoon we never got. I am sorry to impose these on you but could you look after them for a while I will get them as soon as I get back."

Inathi: "No need to apologize Martin. I told you Tumi and Katli are always welcome here. This is also their home. Go and have fun with your wife the boys are going to be well take care of. "

Martin: "Thank you so much. I don't know how I can ever repay you for all your troubles."

Inathi: "You are already repaying me by giving them the best care."

Martin: "Alright, let me get their bags so i be on my way back."

Later in the evening we have laid our mattresses in the living room in front of the tv. I am stuck in the middle on the. They are snoring and I look at them smiling. My cute little moraka, the only thing in this herd of cattle is the bull. I wonder where he is and if he is okay?

BINDED

Insert 49

"Sad birds still sing." - Faraway

Inathi

"Breaking news the business mogul, our handsome bachelor banker has come out to confirm that indeed the allegations against his adoptive father are true."

I change immediately change the channel. Since morning every News outlet has been buzzing with Raphael and his story. I settle on the Dlamini channel.

"Recently, newsrooms have been buzzing none stop as news broke out that there is more to skeletons hidden in the Armani suits that the Hudson men wear. Strong allegations have been made against the notorious Molemogi Hudson. In this allegations the man has been accused of sexually molesting his adoptive son. Who would have ever thought that beneath the suit its nothing but a pedophile. Just this morning his son came out to confirm that indeed the allegations are true. And guess what we have Banker Bae as the ladies call him on studio with us today. I am your host Busi Thompson and this is the Daily Dlamini talkshow, without any delay i help me welcome Raphael Hudson on stage."

(I sink into the couch as I look at him assessing him. He looks in control like always.)

Busi: "Thank you for deciding to have your story aired on our show."

Raphael: "No thank you for letting me use your platform to share my story."

Busi: "Batswana ko Iwapeng, myself included are very much curious about the recent news that made headlines."

Raphael: "If this is your way of asking if it is

true, then yes its true. I got adopted by Molemogi and Gosego when I was 10 years along with another child Alejandro, who was 2 months older than me . A year after the adoption he started molesting us and whenever he got satisfied would force either one of us to rape the other. Sometimes even other children which he would have scouted in near by places. He said he was making us strong to withstand anything."

Busi: "Such an awful thing to go through as a child. So how did you and Alejandro escape?"

Raphael: "It went on until I was 17. Mrs Molemogi fell pregnant and excitement

took over for some time. In that time Alejandro had already escaped and I got shipped off to a boarding school and later to Oxford university. Once I got to UK I made a vow to never return until I had my own place and money."

Busi: "Any idea about where Alejandro could be? If he survived like you?"

Raphael: "He survived just different from my survival. We are brother though not blood related but what father made us go through brought us closer than ever before. "

Busi: "I am curious about something, all this years of silence why break the silence

now?"

Raphael: "I have always been a proud man and I never spoke out because I thought it will make me look weak and pathetic but recently I got to learn that I have two beautiful twins, a boy and a girl along with their beautiful mother, my father has threatened them. Knowing the man he is and what he is capable of I couldn't just sit back and let them endure what I endured."

Busi: "Aww! congratulations. Are we going to be hearing wedding bells soon?"

Raphael: "Hopefully yes."

Busi: "You heard the man ladies, Banker Bae is officially off the market, he is taken. Any last words you will like to say before closing Raphael?"

Raphael: "I am pleading to victim or should I say survivors that have been molested by Molemogi Hudson to come out and help me but him behind bars where he belongs. I know its difficult and some are scared because he has threatened you but you have nothing to worry about. The state and I are hundred percent behind you. I can't do it alone,I need youe help so we can have a safe streets to raise our children without fearing pedophiles like Molemogi."

Busi: "You heard the man, this is the time to

Speak out, break the silence and save the next generation from monster like Molemogi. From me Busi Thompson and the rest of the crew thank you for turning in. Have a lovely day."

I switch off the tv and stare at the blank space. This is going to be a lengthy war and I honestly don't feel like it's a win for us. As much as we will win against Molemogi but it's also going to open many doors of pain for us. Many doors which I would rather they remained closed. I close my eyes and put my hand before me.

Inathi: "Heavenly father I don't do this often and everytime I do this it always feels like I do it because something is wrong in my life

but I honestly don't know where to turn if not to you. I am asking you to give me strength to be strong for him for the storm we are about to experience. I am asking you to open up his heart to receive my help in any way might offer him. In this trying times I ask you to please keep our family together and protected at all time. We have fallen short of your glory but today I turn back and ask you to come once again and reside in our hearts and home. In your mighty name I pray. Amen."

(I walk to their rooms and pack them overnight bags.)

Inathi: "Boys come on we are going for a sleepover at Aunty B's house."

Inathi

I smile as I park the car next to Daniel's car. Before I get off the car Daniel walks out holding 3 white envelopes.

Daniel: "I was coming to see you."

Inathi: "And here I am. Is B inside I brought her company that might cheer her up."

.

Daniel: "She is not here. She wanted you to have this."

(I get the envelope with my name written outside. And I open it inside there is a letter. I take it out and open it as I start reading')

"Dear: Wifey

For the longest time I have been searching for my purpose and peace. But in everything I set out to do it, I never gotten the purpose and peace,of it.

Recently I met a woman, a queen who resembled that longing for peace I wanted. And who have offered to teach me on how to tap into that peace and purpose I have been seeking. I have decided to grab that

opportunity with open arms.

In my search for tht peace and purse i am going to disappear , I don't know for how long it could be days, weeks, months or even years. It will all depend if I have found what I am looking for.

Don't worry about me just take care of yourself ,mama and the kids. I will try to write as much as I can. But no that I will always be thinking of you.

Love you Inathi.

Bontlenyane jwa gago."

(I close the letter and put it back in the envelope before I turn to face Daniel.)

Inathi: "We have to find her Daniel what if she tries to kill herself again."

Daniel: "Dont worry she won't and we won't find even if we, tried. She is safe there but you might not get your usual bestfriend when she returns."

Inathi: "What do you mean?"

Daniel: "The place they took her to, it changes people. Bontle won't be the same

when she returns. I have to go. I will see you around."

(Conflicted and confused I get in the car and drive straight to Lorato's house. She is with Landa.)

Lorato: "Ijo o sa phela ne ke setse ke organiser after tears party."

Landa: "What are you doing here arentvtou supposed to be standing next to your dead drop baby daddy supporting him."

Lorato: "O ta supporter Raph yang o lebala two minutes and his insecurities."

Landa: "Tumi go inside with the children.
The others are playing in there."

Inathi: "I broke up with Derrick."

Lorato: "Hey finally you got rid of that
minute problem. Tell me you are back with
Raphael. Legale ka he already confirmed it
on national tv this morning."

Inathi: "Yes, he is back home where he
belongs."

Lorato: "So vele what are doing here
shouldn't you be there taking good proper

care of him."

Inathi: "I wanted to drop the kids at Bontle's house but she is not around and their nnau is on leave. So I am stuck."

Lorato: "Inathi le wena o rata merwalo koore you have 2 already o oketsa ka 2 o mongwe godimo."

Landa: "I will get all of them. Just go take care of Raph."

Inathi: "Thank you Landa. You are such a great Aunty unlike some people."

Lorato: "Just go get laid you need it. We all know it has been a dry season for you, for the past 5 years."

Landa: "Go get a Brazilian wax, buy lingerie and, remind that man what he has been missing out."

Inathi: "I should also get some morning after pills. Raphael will never agree to put on the rubber and he is on some mission to knock me up. I am not on any contraceptives."

Landa: "Once they put that mission in their heads its hard to change their minds. Gabriel made it jis mission and he did not

stop until I was pregnant."

Lorato: "Here comes another pair."

Inathi: "I will make an appointment with Dr. Ace for contraceptives after tonight. Let me say goodbye to my babies and leave."

Lerato: "Listern make sure you give it to him good. In fact mo e neele fela yotlhe le bana ba yone."

At 8 pm I am in his apartment, he is not yet home. I have lit up the scented candles, my dinner table set for two people. Sevyn

Streeter and Chris Brown, it wont stop is playing on repeatedly. I have a glass of chardonnay. I am wearing a little black number and heels.

The minute I hear the elevator moving, I stand by the dinner table I set up facing the elevator as i untie my silk gown letting it drop to the ground. I stand in nothing but black high heels and lingerie. My back to the elevator. I wait for the ding.

Inathi: "Right in time, main course or dessert first?"

Alejandro: "Shit! Definitely dessert first sweetthing."

(I turn around horrified to find a topless veemry muscular man with tattoos covering his whole body standing putting on basketball shorts pants. I stand there frozen on the spot. Raphael emerges a minute later behind holding the basket ball also topless he busy in his phone , when he lifts his sees me.)

Raphael: "What dess....Sugar! Shit! ""

(He rushes to me as he picks up the gown and covering me up.)

Alejandro: "Now this is the welcome home surprise I wanted. In fact craved."

BINDED

Insert 50

"Women don't age, they evolve" - Swati

(I turn around horrified to find a topless veemry muscular man with tattoos covering his whole body standing putting on basketball shorts pants. I stand there frozen on the spot. Raphael emerges a minute later behind holding the basket ball also topless he busy in his phone , when he lifts his sees me.)

Raphael: "What dess....Sugar! Shit! ""

(He rushes to me as he picks up the gown and covering me up.)

Alejandro: "Now this is the welcome home I wanted."

Raphael: "If you don't want to lose your teeth along with that talkative tongue I suggest you keep quite. Babe!"

(I turn and hurry to his room. Just how many embarrassing moments do I have to endure in his presence. I am just lucky that I did not pee on myself this time around. I stand by the bed biting my nail, I don't even know how I am going to walk out there. The hair on my back stands and I get goose

bumps as his hands come around me hugging me. His warm breath on my neck. He kisses me neck.)

Raphael: "I think I just nutted on my self just by looking at you. I am such a lucky devil."

(I want to stand longer so this moment can last forever. I am so thirsty for him but at the same time I can't just sweep what just happened under the carpet and pretend that I did not just embarrass myself in front of his brother. So I slap his hands away and put some distance between us. As I swing around to face him. He has his playful smile on.)

Inathi: "You shouldn't even be smiling right now. I just embarrassed myself out there."

Raphael: "I know but it was so damn sexy. Are you even sure you gave birth to our babies?"

Inathi: "Raphael."

Raphael: "I am serious, I have never seen a hot mama like you my love."

Inathi: "This is useless."

(I say as I pull his shirt from the closet to put on.)

Raphael: "Whoa! What are you doing?"

Inathi: "Changing what does it look like?"

Raphael: "Ahh! I thought this was my surprise." .

Inathi: "Surprise took a wrong turn.
, are you forgetting?"

Raphael: "We can rectify that now now."

(He stalks toward me and pulls me close to me making me feel his erection.)

Raphael: "My buddy here can make you forget all about that embarrassing moment."

Inathi: "Its not even about."

Raphael: "What is it about then baby girl?'
Tell daddy so I can fix it fast."

Inathi: "The fact that you dont see that you are the one at fault here makes me want to strangle you."

Raphael: "You always been handy when it comes to me."

(He picks me up like I weigh nothing and drops on the bed before he climbs on top of me.)

Raphael: "Are you going to tell daddy what has you all worked up? Or I am going have to use my ways to get it out of you?"

(He says as he gets between my legs and rubs his groin against my hootchy. I get all kinds of excited, and all the electric sparks that have been asleep come alive lighting up the powerhouse in an instant. He leans forth and kisses me slowly, and softly arousing me even more.)

Raphael: "Well daddy is listening sugar, tell me."

Inathi: "You don't play fair."

Raphael: "I never promised fairness my love, just lots of love and love making."

(I close my eyes and curl my toes as he kisses me going down to my neck.)

Raphael: "I guess I gotta employ other means to adress your issue akere my love."

(He says as moves to boobs. Before he can do anything the party pooper comes

knocking.)

Alejandro: "YooH! Homies don't make the nigga hold the candle out here alone, its too hot. Come one guys homie is out here."

Raphael: "F*ck! Get lost AJ."

Alejandro: "No homie this is not how you treat another homie."

(Raphael rolls his eyes and I shift to get him off me.)

Inathi: "Come on, you heard the man."

Raphael: "Lets just ignore him. "

Inathi: "No! Thats not how we treat guests."

Raphael: "E ta ke kgomise hela hlema."

Inathi: "No! Move."

Raphael: "Ka go kopa hlema Inathi, ke kgomise hela. Just go kgomisa."

Inathi: "No, your guest is waiting. Next time you will know better. You dont cut me off whenever you are going through something. You communicate with me. I wouldn't have come here if you had told me your brother

was in town."

(I move and he buriness his face in the pillow screaming into it. I smile as I pull his shirt on me.)

Raphael: "Why you punishing me like this?"

Inathi: "You will know better next time my love."

(I say as I pull his sweatpants on. He stands up and pulls his briefs down exposing his beautiful erect groin.)

Raphael: "Babe hlema I don't think I can

survive going out there like this. I feel like I am going to burst any minute."

Inathi: "Thats your dick talking my love. You are stronger than that erection. Dress up and lets go, or do you want me to go out there and meet your brother alone after he saw me in nothing but a lingerie."

Raphael: "You are wicked you know that. Moloji ga se yo o tsogang bosigo hela o mongwe wa bone ba motshegare."

Inathi: "Yah yah! Are you coming or not?"

Raphael: "Fuck! Don't even think about

going to meet that fucker in my absence."

(He says as he takes his grumpy ass to the closet and I smile. After what seems like ages he walks out. I smile at him.)

Raphael: "You wont be smiling like that once I have my way with you. Just wait and see my love."

(I smile as I walk to the door. He comes after me with his arms around my waist possessively.)

Inathi: "No need to act all possessive he is your brother."

Raphael: "You don't know that f*cker the way I do."

(Alejandro is sitting by the dinner table I set enjoying our main course meal.)

Alejandro: "Well it looked like you chose the latter so I decided to be useful and help out with the other untouched meal."

(I smile at him. I am still utterly ashamed. He still has not put a tshirt or vest on. I can't help but wonder how he endured the needle when he was covering his whole body with all this tattoos. I look down wondering if his pipi is also tattooed.)

Alejandro: "No! It not, I think I wouldn't have endured it."

(Can this get more embarrassing,he can read minds too? I keep my eyes to the ground as he stands up. And wipes his hands with a napkin.)

Alejandro: "You can let go of her Raphael,I am not going to bite, well not yet."

Raphael: "Shut up."

Alejandro: "Well I can see oh no I mean have seen (chuckles) why you get so worked I

would to if I were you. Its not everyday you meet a true African queen."

Raphael: "I swear I am going to punch you if you speak garbage again and stop undressing my wife with your eyes."

Alejandro: "Wife homie, nah she is not cuffed yet so I still have a fighting chance right sugar?"

Raphael: "Alejandro Hudson I am warning you. Come babe no need to listen to this crap anymore."

(Alejandro laughs.)

Alejandro: "I didn't mean to get under you skin. Le wena mona o sensitive. So this is the famous sugar. Which sugar is it? Sugar cane, white sugar, brown sugar, blue crystal sugar, yarona sugar, sugar in the sachets. Which one?"

Raphael: "Raphael sugar."

Alejandro: "Look at you being so chessy."

Raphael: "Aj meet the love of my life and mother of my babies Inathi Jessica Modise-Hudson. Babe this is my annoying brother Alejandro."

Alejandro: "You can just call me Aj or daddy Ah, uncle AJ for bontwana. (Kissing my hand) I am very much pleased to finally meet a beauty like you."

Inathi: "It is a pleasure to meet you Aj."

Aj: "Or believe me when I say the pleasure is all mine."

Raphael: "Get lost already."

AJ: "Come baby girl I know you must be hungry. Have dinner with daddy Aj."

Raphael: "I swear once this blows up I am shipping you back to Brazil."

AJ: "Don't spoil the fine. I just got here."

(I look at him and smile. He is the complete opposite of Raphael, with a non stop talking mouth. And the tattoos, I won't be surprised if he is involved in some shitty illegal things. the fact that he just got here and Raphael has started cursing like no body's b tells me I am

in for a very nasty surprise.

Bontle/Red

I thought I lost my power and purpose but to only realise that its in the grasp of my hands. Everytime the ship sinks deep into the water, the struggle to breath under water becomes difficult.

"Until you learn to master the current of the water you will always drown Red! Master your surroundings."

The chair topless and I go down again into the freezing showers. Master your environment Red. I whisper to myself as soon as my body touches the water. This time around I dont try to swim instead I lay

still and low in the water bringing my body together I fold my knees and concentrate on control my breathing. Like a ball I float to the surface and I spread my arms and legs like a leaf once at the top.

"Its a pass. I told you everything is in the grasp of your hand."

Just when I think I have passed the hardest test I am thrown into a ring with nothing and told to fight to kill or be killed. My opponent man, she is twice my size but instead of fridgeting in a tight corner like a scared little puppy. I fight until my last breath.

Today I sit as the only female amongst 10 males the who has made it through like elimination process. Studying the Anatomy of a human body.

And there is one thing I have drawn from all of this. They are making us "Killing sex machines, naked weapons." I feel like that russian lady in the movie Red Sparrow. The thought alone of using my body so I can kill predators should scare me but yet I find myself more excited about the prospects of it I already have a list of who to lure in using my body only to drive a dagger through their heart when they least expect!! I guess what I once said to Inathi is true, our pussy is the most deadliest commodity God has ever given us and I intend to use mine

until the end of time.

6 months later!

BINDED

Insert 51

"I stopped bringing flowers to the grave of the teenager I used to be. " - Blythe Baird, if my body could speak

6 Months later

Inathi

I stand in front of him as I fix up his tie. Today is the day that justice will finally be served. After 6 long months the court is finally giving its verdict today. It has been an emotional rollercoaster more especially when more victims came forth, and new

evidence brought up proving just what a twisted monster Molemogi really is. I remember the young lady with the child who looks exactly like Molemogi. And the woman who now can't give birth because of the many back door abortions she had to do in the hands of Molemogi.

Alejandro somehow I understand how he turned to be the way he is, he is a pimp and the tattoos finally I understand them. they are just representation of what he, Raphael and all other children had to go through in the hands of Molemogi. But beneath the marks its just a scared frail man. Raphael rejected by his own father, he though he had found a father in Molemogi, but instead he met a monster. Beneath the suits, the in

control alpha male its just a child who thinks the worst of himself.

Raphael: "Spit it out?"

Inathi: "What?"

Raphael: "You tell me."

Inathi: "Nothing, I just wanted to tell you that I love you."

Raphael: "(raises his eyebrows) You are a liar now?"

Inathi: "Of course not."

Raphael: "So why you lying to me now?"

Inathi: "Lets not do this right now."

Alejandro: "I dont even know why I let you talk me into wearing this. This is not my style at all."

(I turn around to see Alejandro as he joins us in the living room. He is wearing a suit I picked out for him to wear. I smile at him as I walk towards him.)

Inathi: "You look handsome Aj."

(I stand before him as I undo the last two buttons of the shirt. I might now agree with how he does things but I have grown him to like him as a brother.)

Alejandro: "yeah right."

Inathi: "I am serious. Right Lala, he looks handsome."

Raphael: "You mean less thuggish, yes he does."

Inathi: "Raphael!"

(The twins walks in with their nanny.)

Landon: "Uncle AJ are you going to catch that fucker who hurt you and daddy?"

Inathi: "Landon what did I tell you about using that word?"

Landon: "(pouting) But Uncle Aj and daddy use it all the time."

(I look at Raphael)

Raphael: "Blame Aj not me."

(I look at AJ)

AJ: "I am innocent this time around."

Inathi: "You both will stop swearing in front of my children or I will throw you both out."

Raphael: "Ao! Sugar...."

Inathi: "No! Don't I always tell you guys that (pointing at them) they are old enough to catch whatever you say. So if you can't mind your language in front of them you might as well move out so I can have a conducive environment to raise them. What happens next time he swears when at

school or at someone?"

Landon: "Mommy are you mad at Daddy?"

Inathi: "Not mad , super mad. Not only at him but you also. How many times must I tell you not to say that word? Do you want me to send you to granny to go to the village and stay with her?"

Landon: "No mommy, I won't say it anymore."

Inathi: "Say it one more time and I am getting rid of you Landon Thami Raphael Junior Modise."

Landon: "(crying) Mommy I promise I won't say it. Please mommy don't get rid of me."

(I sit down and pat on my lap.)

Inathi: "Come my boy. Come here."

(I pick him up and cradle him up. I wipe away his tears away and kiss his head.)

Inathi: "Shh! You are my favorite boy, I won't get rid of you. I will never get rid of you okay. But you need to be a good boy stop making mommy mad like daddy okay?"

Landon: "Okay."

(I set him down and look at Raphael. With his head hanging down like his son. They are like scared little dogs with shame after getting scolded. It frustrates me how much Landon takes after his father. It even frustrates me more that I have to deal with the young Raphael and deal with the old Raphael because they behave exactly the same way.)

Inathi: "Go to Daddy. Sparkles come to mommy baby."

(She walks to me and I lift her up before I tickle her.)

London: "(laughing) mommy stop. Stop I am peeing on myself."

Inathi: "I am going with Daddy and Uncle Aj to see grandpa. So I am leaving you with Aunty Boi, you will behave right?"

(She nods her head)

Inathi: "And no picking a fight with your brother?"

London: "Roger that "

(I look at her and smile.)

Inathi: "Go say bye to Daddy and Uncle. You will find me in the car."

(I don't wait for them to reply as I walk to the car.)

The court room is already buzzing with hundreds of people by the time we make it there. The paparazzi is also there ready to air the story to other Batswana who could not make it here today but waiting eagerly to hear the court verdict. I think this is one of the cases that had the whole country's attention. If Molemogi was to walk free I don't think he would live to tell his story

because there are people out there who want him suffering for his crimes. A mob justice that will not rest until the man has paid for his sins with his dear life.

As we stroll inside I roll my eyes to the back of my head as I spot his mother Gosego with Lorraine and some woman I dont know. It is crystal clear that I am not Gosego's favourite, in her eyes this is all my fault. A woman who made her sons turn against their father and put him behind bars.

Aj: "What is she doing here? I thought you said she does not want anything to do with this."

Raphael: "Your question beats me also."

Gosego: "Raphal, AJ lovely for you to join us. Look who decided to be here today."

(I don't miss the frown across Lorraine's face. Raphael put his arms protectively around my waist as if he wants to send the message out very loud.)

AJ: "There was no need for her to be here after all she had no input in serving justice."

Gosego: "AJ!"

Aj: "What! Kana ke a yaaka? Penny wanted

to save her face and dirty little laundry rather than letting justice prevail."

(Ohh! This is the famous Penny. I assess her from head to toe. She is not exactly what i expected. She has the body but not much sure about the face. It is clear that she has been under the knife. That is not bitterness talking because i have nothing against the woman right?)

Raphael: "Penelope!"

Penny: "Raphael!"

Gosego: "Oh come on, you haven't seen

each other in ages is this how you are going to be greeting one another."

(I give her death stare. Really now?)

Penny: "Its okay Gosego. Raphael has always been the emotionless. I take it you are the baby mother?"

Inathi: "Love of his life."

Penny: "(taken back) Huh!"

Inathi: "Thats how he normally introduces me , right lala?"

Raphael: "Yes, Penny meet the love of my life and mother of my children Inathi. Sugar meet Penny."

Inathi: "It is a pleasure to finally meet you Penny."

Penny: "Same here. Though I must say I never thought I would live to see the day where Raphael is madly in love."

(Her eyes on my man lingering a bit longer than I would like. And that gives me enough to conclude that I don't like her. I don't care if she has been through the most like them. I don't like her.)

Lorraine: "Well we are about to start so can we get settled."

(She holds my hands and squeezes it before she whispers in my ear.)

Lorraine: "Keep him away from her, she is another Melinda in a victim skin."

(She winks at me as we go to the front to get settled.)

RED/BONTLE

He closes his eyes as I moved slowly slowly

on top of him driving him wild with passion. While he is still in the throes of climax I dont waste time I pull the sharp pin I used to hold my hair and drive it in his left ear and pull it out on his right ear.

His life flash before his eyes before darkness takes over. He drops down the the bed like a corpse he is and I stand up. Fixing up my dress back into into place. I walk in the bathroom and use the mirror to fix my lipstick and use the pin to hold my hair back in place. I walk back to the bedroom and sit down with a glass of champagne as I contact the agency.

Agent: "Thompson Empires!"

Red: "This is Red password 0986. Put me through."

(I hold the phone as I take a sip and light up my cigarette. I take a puff and blow it slowly feeling liberated. I cross my legs and look at the dead Russian on the bed.)

Nessa: "Red, tell me you are okay? We haven't heard from you in 2 weeks."

Red: "Mission accomplished. Target neutralized."

Nessa: "Great! Are you still in Russia?"

Red: "Tell them to get the jet ready. I am leaving."

Nessa: "Okay, should we send you, your next target. Agent 47 can send you the detail."

Red: "No! I am coming home."

(I hung up. Dropping the ciggerette in the champagne. I toss it in the dumpster 6 floors down. And I grab my purse as I walk to the door wherr the,security guards are waiting.)

Red: "(in a russian accent) The General asked not to be disturbed for the next hour."

(I tell his security detail as I blow my gum walking to the elevator.)

Red: "Bloody fools."

(A week later the plane touches base and step out taking off my glasses I see him leaning against the car looking up at me. Cocky bastard. I murmur, keeping my eyes steady on him I walk straight to him.)

Daniel: "You have been busy."

Bontle: "Glad you noticed."

Daniel: "So am I talking to Bontle or international most wanted assassin Red?"

Bontle: "Depends on who is asking, Daniel the spy or Daniel the Raphael's Head of Security or Daniel my friend."

(He looks at me and smirks and I smile. I missed him. I missed home).

Daniel: "(opening his eyes) Come bring it here, bring it home."

(I hug him and put my head on his shoulder.)

BINDED

Insert 52

"Every fall is a chance to rise." -K. Tolnoe

Bontle

I glance at him as he drives. He has aged in the last 6 months like fine wine. He is definitely one of the people I looked forward to seeing when I got home but I never thought he would be the first. The Agents have told me that he has been on my tail since I got into the field. Wanted to know if they should eliminate him but I gave them assurance he means no harm.

Daniel: "You are staring B."

Bontle: "Can't help myself you get more and more handsome everytime I see you."

Daniel: "Are you flirting with me Ms Moloji?"

Bontle: "Its a compliment."

Daniel: "Right!"

Bontle: "This is the part where you say thank you."

Daniel: "I don't want to. I missed you."

Bontle: "I know you did, thats why you had your guys tailing me. As much as it is cute but I need you to back off before you get hurt Taniele."

Daniel: "And I don't?"

Bontle: "(I lean on and kiss his cheek) You are one of the good guys Dan. I don't want to hurt you."

Daniel: "I am sure you don't."

Bontle: "Glad we understand each other."

Drop me at the next stop."

Daniel: "Will I see you again before you disappear to your next missions."

Bontle: "Ohh! Danny, don't worry I am sticking around longer this time. There are people who owe me and its time to collect my dues."

Daniel: "I hope it will give you the closure you have been longing for."

Bontle: "Closure or no closure, I know I will enjoy every minute of it."

(I lean forth and kiss him on the mouth.)

Bontle: "See you around Danny."

(I jump off his car into the SUV that's packed behind us. It takes off I glance at Daniel as pass his car. I am in the back with Vanessa)

Nessa: "Should we be worried about him being a thorn on our path?"

Bontle: "No! He is mine. No one should touch him."

Nessa: "Feeling are nev...."

Bontle: "If we are going to be talking about feelings. Start with your feelings to your husband then we can talk about mine."

Nessa: "(sighs) Just making sure there are no loose ends."

Bontle: "Take care of your business Vanessa, I will take care of mine. I am sticking around so no more international assignments till I say so."

Nessa: "Are you back for them?"

Bontle: "Its time I take care of some of my

loose ends."

Nessa: "Okay! Do you need help?"

Bontle: "Just make sure the cleaner is on standby have a feeling that I might need him."

Nessa: "Done."

Bontle: "Drop me at the court room there is someone who I am dying to see."

(She nods at the driver. And I stare outside taking the city in.)

Inathi

We step outside and the reporters are already shoving their cameras on our faces trying to get a statement.

Everything feels surreal, Molemogi has been given 30 years of imprisonment no parole and a fine of one million. Raphael is not happy because he thought they will give him life imprisonment.

Reporter: "We are high at the high court where Judge Morupise has just passed a

sentence of 30 years of imprisonment with no parole and a fine of one million pula to the notorious Molemogi Hudson. Do you think the man got what was coming for him? Lets hear from his adoptive sons who also happen to be victims of his, Raphael and Alejandro Hudson. Mr Hudson do you think justice has been served?"

Raphael: "It does not even begin to pay for anything that each victim if my father went through but I guess it gives some kind of closure. To see him finally paying for his sins."

Reporter: "And you Alejandro, anything to say?" .

Alejandro: "They should have locked his sorry ass in there for life. I hope they make his stay in maximum prison hell."

Raphael: "We are not going to be taking anymore questions. This is all over now and we would like to pick up the pieces and move on with our lives. Forget this whole ordeal. Excuse us."

(He says as he put his hands around my waist and helps me down the stairs to the car with Aj tolling behind us.

As I look where the car is parked I notice her sitting on the car bonnet pressing her

phone. She lifts her face up and our eyes meet. She smiles as she jumps down. I take of running towards her and she meets me half way. I throw my hands around her and hug her she hugs me back. The tears of joy let loose. As we both pull back we look at one another and laugh both we both wipe each other's tears.)

Bontle: "Damn you Jessy, you always have to set the water works on me."

Inathi: "You stupid foolish girl. Do you even have any idea how worried you made me?"

(Hugging me)

Bontle: "Well MamaPea is here now, the Pea can tell mommy all about it."

Inathi: "I missed you B. I never thought I will see again."

Bontle: "You can't rid of me that easily."

AJ: "Okay, I am getting a hard on from this."

Bontle: "I was gone only 6 months and you are hanging around thugs now Inathi?"

Inathi: "You were always good at sarcasm B."

Raphael: "You are back now?"

Bontle: "Yes"

Raphael: "No more disappearing stunts."

Bontle: "At least not for a while."

Inathi: "Bontle I would like you to meet Raphael's brother Alejandro. AJ meet my life diary, my sister Bontle."

AJ: "You can call me Daddy AJ."

Bontle: "Right."

Penny: "Raphael, can we talk for a bit?"

(Raphael looks at me andbu shrug.)

Bontle: "Well come on let us get out of here. I can't wait to see my babies."

Inathi: "Lala, I am going to take off with B. I will see you back at home."

Raphael: "Come here"

(I roll my eyes and walk to him. He grabs my hand and pulls me against his chest, his hands around my waist and his mouth

waste no time covering mine.)

Raphael: "Who said we are going home?"

Inathi: "(puzzled) We are not?"

Raphael: "You owe me and its time for you to pay."

Inathi: "The twin...."

Raphael: "AJ is babysitting them this weekend."

AJ: "I am?"

Raphael: "I am going to hear out she has to say. Then wrap a few things at the office. I will find you there around 6 once I am done."

Inathi: "Where?"

(He hands me the access card to the presidential suite at Avani.)

Raphael: "Dont bring anything, just your pretty self. And leave dont worry there will be instructions on what to do once you get there."

Inathi: "(excitedly) Really?"

Raphael: "Yes, dont come late."

(He bends and kisses me once more. As I walk to B.)

Raphael: "And Sugar,"

Inathi: "Yes daddy."

Raphael: "(winks) I cant wait to make you pay." (He winks)

(I stare at him as he walks to Penny , my

panties already soaked. I keep my eyes on Penny , she glances at me before giving Raphael undivided attention.)

Bontle: "Okay someone update me who is the Barbie with the fuck me shoes."

AJ: "You don't want to know. Come ladies let me drop you at home. I need to go her laid before babysitting duties begin."

Inathi: "No cursing around my babies. You have already damaged their ears with your foul speech."

AJ: "Roger that."

Mel

she steps outside and close her eyes as I feels the cool breeze of air. Mostly she can taste her freedom. The freedom she long longed for. A smile comes across her smile as she whirls around like an excited child who plays on under rain drops.

Man: "I have signed your papers ready to get back home?"

Mel: "As ready as I can ever be?"

Man: "They have given me your medication." (Waving the dispensing bag at her)

Melinda): "I don't need it. You can throw it in the next trash can you spot."

Man: "Are you sure?"

Mel: "If you want performance of the year from me then make sure you keep those pill away from me."

Man: "Okay if you say so. Any last stops before we leave."

Mel: "No take me back to Botswana ,my man awaits for me."

Man: "Okay, I have a house already set up for you. With everything you will need."

Mel: "okay. Any update on Raphael?"

Man: "Nothing new, he is back with Inathi. Managed to get rid of Molemogi. He is behind bars."

Mel: "Okay, but I liked the old man. He had my back."

Man: "We need to act fast when we get there. Before Raphael impregnates Inathi worse marries her."

Mel: "I don't understand why you can't just claim her. I mean you have all the resources."

Man: "Dead people stay dead for a reason."

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MONDAY's Insert

Sorry it came two days later. excuse typing errors if there are any...

BINDED

Insert 53

"I want to touch you in all the places you ache to be touched." - Unknown

RED

I stare at my map. Looking at both of them. The first one will give me trouble but the second one should be easy. We already have history and insatiable hunger. I toss my dice as I walk into my closet. Pulling on my leather pants along with red heels, and a red Victorian lacy corset. I put on my brunette fringe wig before fixing up my make up. I grab my helmet , gloves and leather jacket.

Red: "Time to paint the city Red."

I climb on on my latest Toy, I start the ignition and get a pre-orgasm as it roars to life. Getting the red Yamaha YZF-R6 motorcycle was one of the best decisions I have made. I put on the helmet and take the beast out of the garage. I drive out of my compound before activating the security surveillance. If anyone tries anything the company agents will deal with them. I guess its one of the luxury that comes with the job.

As I park in front of the hotel I toss my keys to the valet boy.

Red: "If I find a single scratch I will cut your dick and feed it to dogs."

Eyes fall on my as I walk into the bar area. Nothing that surprises me, I am used to the looks. I shrug my jacket and hang at the back of the seat before I seat down.

Red: "Get me bourbon, neat please."

I take in mt surroundings. Mostly the bar is filled with business people, there are 3 types of peopke here, who are here making a fast stop before getting home to their boring wives like the guy on the 2nd table on my right. The second class, they are

ones who are here to conduct business deals like the 3 guys to my left. The 3rd class is my type of people, those who are scouting for their next prey like the guy sitting in the dark corner who raises his glass at me. I smirk as I wink at him before gulping down my drink.

Red: "Keep them coming."

Richard: "Maybe you should slow down, the night just got started."

(Bingo! Now the first lay for the prey has been laid.)

Red: "I am lady who can handle my alcohol consumption."

(I throw my hair over my shoulder before I turn to face him.)

Richard: "I remember a time when you couldnt."

Red: "Times change."

(I keep my eyes on him as I once again take in my drink. This time around I don't drink it all. I place the glass down and he takes it finishing it.)

Richard: "I can tell, even your taste in alcohol has changed."

Red: "You can call it the rebirth."

(I reach in my back and take out a 100 us dollar bill and put it beneath the glass.)

Red: "You can keep the change."

(I telk the barman.)

Richard: "Leaving already. I just got here."

Red: "I have my eyes on someone."

Richard: "I was hoping you could keep me company."

Red: "My company is quite expensive. I am not sure you can afford it Moeti."

Richard: "I am sure we can reach an agreement. We always did."

Red: "You want me come find me Moeti, no poaching on my time."

(I slide off my seat and make my way out. I can feel him hot on my tail. Richard is no fool he knows about my recent activities

but at the end of the day he still like other man. He lets his dick control him. I get to the door and nod to the valet to bring my ride around.)

Richard: "You disappeared on the face of earth of 5 months."

Red: "6."

Richard: "Huh?"

Red: "Miscalculation, its 6 months."

Richard: "No! Its 5 months. Then about a month ago I got hired to chase a ghost, a

woman assassin by the name Red, who is taking out cartel leaders around the world."

Red: "Really! Sound exciting."

Richard: "Yes more especially when I think that woman is the one standing in front of me."

(I look at him and burst out laughing)

Red: "Your confidence in me moves me honestly. Me assassin. (Strapping in my helmet) You want to know what I have been upto, come find me Richard. You always liked the chase."

(I wink at him as I ride my sexy beast away.)

Red: "Come you bastard. I have everything planned for you."

Inathi

I am 30 minutes late, I take a huge breath as I step into the room. I breath out in relief when I don't spot him anywhere inside the room. but it cut short when I step inside the bedroom and he is sitting comfortable in the arm chair, jacket, shirt, tie , shoes and socks gone. He is holding a glass of whisky.

Shit! I am in deep trouble with a capital letter T.

Raphael: "You are late."

Inathi: "I know, babe bona I can ex...."

Raphael: "Daddy."

Inathi: "Huh?"

Raphael: "Tonight you will call me Daddy and we will hear that explanation after we are done."

Inathi: "Okay."

Raphael: "Daddy."

Inathi: "okay daddy."

Raphael: "Thats it baby girl."

(No Sugar, okay I am in the deep shit.)

Raphael: "Strip."

(He brings the glass to his lips not taking his eyes off me. I don't know how he can remain calm when I am already burning up.)

The temperatures in this room are hitting up.)

Raphael: "You know I hate repeating myself."

(I drop my purse to the ground and pull the dress over my head. I unclasp my bra behind me. I reach for the heels.)

Raphael: "Leave the shoes on. You are not done."

(I reach for the lacy thong and pull it down slowly.)

Raphael: "Lay on the bed, knees up, and spread yourself for me. I want to see you Sugar, all of you Sugar."

(I lay on the bed as instructed. My heart is beating erratically with anticipation. I am already dripping for me but he has not even touched me yet.)

Raphael: "I can taste your arousal. It lingers in the air."

(He stand up and walks to the front of the bed. He puts his glass down from the side of he pulls out handcuffs, he secures them on my left hand and goes to do the same with the right hand. I and cuffed to the bed

at his mercy.)

Raphael: "Now, I gotta taste you."

#Scissored✂✂✂✂✂

(This part is in the group)

*****From #Scissored✂✂✂✂✂ *****

Raphael: "Lets ger you cleaned up"

(I am surprised to find rose petals on the floor and bathtub along with bottle of champagne and glasses in the bathroom. He opens the tap. Once the water is in the right condii he places me inside while he

settles behind me. I relax against his chest. Sevyn Streeter and Chris Brown- It won't stop plays in his phone. He washes me and himself. Leaving me in the water he comes back wearing a bathrobe engraved Mr Hudson. He pops the champagne as hands me a glass. I drink as he looks at me. He smiles and I get the stomach butterflies. I wonder if I will ever get used to the feeling or if it ever grow old.

I am about to hand him the glass back when I spot it. My heart stops for a bit and he smiles taking the glass from me.

Raphael: "You are a masimo girl you know that."

Inathi: "Wait! Is that what I think it is?"

Raphael: "Yes, I want to make it official that I own your pussy. I want to wife your ass. Now do I also need to fuck you into saying yes,?"

(He holds the sparkling platinum ring with a stunning sapphire diamond.)

Inathi: "I should say yes but I think I like the idea of you fucking me into saying yes more."

(He slides the ring into my finger.)

Raphael: "Never take it off. Now let me get you out of that water so I can fuck you into that yes."

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#Scissored will be posted in the group shortly

The insert is not short. Another version of it
its in the group.

BINDED

Insert 54

"I love road trip drives with you especially when you are wearing mini dresses. You are accessible" - Author S Mods, Raphael (Binded)

If someone told me 5 years ago that I would experience the this kind of happiness I would have called that person a liar and a dream seller. This is not the kind of happiness that I never thought could exist in my life. This is type of happiness I thought could only be seen in movies Hallmark movies or Korean Dramas to be specific where both the female and male

lead go through hardships before they have their happily ever after. Could this possibly be my happily ever after with Raphael? He has assured me not to be anxious about tomorrow but rather focus on today. And that's exactly what I am feeling.

I glance at him, nothing turns me on watching a man drive especially my man. He has a stubborn stubble on his face and he keeps biting his lower lip. One hand is on my lap holding my hand while the other is on the steering wheel. His full attention is on the road. I am surprised I still get wet just by looking at him more especially after this weekend. He has taken care of every need my body needed. I take his phone and press next, Maria ft Zendaya

"Let me love you" plays next. And he throws me a side glance as he licks his lips. His beautiful fingers take on the steering wheel at the traffic light as my favorite part of the song comes on. I immediately sing along as he joins in.

Unison:" (singing) If I was you man (baby you'd)

Never worry about a thing (what I do)

I'd be coming home (back to you)

Every night, doin you right

You the type of woman who (deserves good thing)

Fist full of diaminds (hand full of rings)

Baby you are a star (I just want to show you,

you are)

Baby you should let me love you.

Let me be the one to

Give you everything you want and need....

Babe good love and protec....."

(The car hooting at the back make us cut it short and realise this light is green. He shakes his head smiling as he drives off.)

Raphael: "have I told you that I love road trip drives with you especially when you are wearing mini dresses. You are accessible."

(He says as his hand pushes my dress up

exposing skin and underwear. I immediately slap his hand away.)

Inathi: "We have two lousy creatures at home waiting for us. Concentrate on driving."

Raphael: "Wa simolola akere (you are starting) denying me my things."

Inathi: "I wouldn't dream of it. But I am just being the responsible one."

Raphael: "I am still mad that you took emergency contraceptive pills after making my sweat all weekend. Kana I was sure that

my boy and will be getting a little brother soon."

(I laugh and put my legs on the dash board.)

Inathi: "You are an idiot Raofe."

Raphael: "(slapping my feet) Respect Nat please. Get your legs off her. Why you behaving like a loysy side chick in my Nat?"

Inathi: "(rolling my eyes) Will she will you a head ene Nat?"

(He looks at me and cracks up.)

Raphael: "We both know you do a better job there. But still get your legs down."

(I bring them down before I turn and look at him giving him a my secret charm smile with puppy eyes.)

Raphael: "No its not going to work. Whatever it is the answer is no."

Inathi: "Ao daddy, but you haven't even heard what I want."

Raphael: "The answer is still no."

Inathi: "The range rover is old now. I want a

new car."

Raphael: "You can afford to buy yourself a new car. The music school and your career are paying well."

Inathi: "Its not the same as the one you bought me. Come on the last time o mpechetsa ke 5 years ago, a BMW X6nyana will not be bad, maybe with a housenyana outside Gaborone in a farm."

(He looks at me and laughs.)

Raphael: "You have lost your marbles my love."

Inathi: "Okay forget the farm, the car ee.
Come one you got 3 cars I don't understand
why I can't get second car."

Raphael: "You want a car my love , get
yourself one."

Inathi: "fine."

Raphael: "I love you too."

Inathi: "Kante why do men do this, you make
us get used to you guys buying us things
then all the sudden stop."

Raphael: "A strategy to woo you. Akere le easy, you get spend few thebes on her and you get her wrapped around your dick."

Inathi: "Mxm. I am not marrying you anymore."

Raphael: "We will see about that."

(He says as he pulls by Engine filling station. Je hands me his bank card.)

Raphael: "Top it up, and change seats you are driving from here. I am going to get something grab some snack for the kids and us. Anything you want?"

Inathi: "A packet of doritos and coke will do."

(He,shakes his head but reserves his comment. He does approve of my coke addiction. I watch his as he walks to the ship. His ass looks extra hot in those shorts. Okay its official I am whipped.)

Inathi: "95 Full tank please bring a swiping machine also."

(I tell the attendant as I switch driver seat. Raphael returns as I move the car to let the person behind get assisted.)

Inathi: "Some group rules?"

Raphael: "Okay."

Inathi: "I get this is your favorite Nat but for as long as I am driving I dont need a lecture on my driving skills or any comment. You are going to sit there and let me drive or else I will pull down and let you drive."

Raphael: "Roger that ma'am."

Inathi: "Anymore stops?"

Raphael: "No! The next stop is our home."

(I smile at him as I join the road while he starts pulling his snack from the plastic.)

Raphael: "Goriamo go monate go kgweediwa ke mosadi wa gago." (Its nice to be driven by your woman.)

(I roll my eyes and keep my eyes on the road. Just as I get in the city my phone rings.)

Inathi: "Lala can you get that?"

Raphael: "Sure."

(He searches my bag for my phone.)

Raphael: "Its an unknown number."

Inathi: "Ahh answer and put on loudspeaker. Probably people who I promised I will visit their church this Sunday."

Raphael: "Hudson deliveries hello."

Basadi: ",Uhu! A se Inathi. Ijoo wrong number motho wetsho."

(I recognize the voice instantly that my little sister.)

Raphael: "Its not a wrong number, this us Inathi's phone. You are?"

Basadi: "Basadi, her sister the one she abandoned along."

(I can't help but roll my eyes. Always playing the victim.)

Raphael: "(sarcasticaly) Well your sister who abandoned you is currently indisposed can I take the message?"

Basadi: " Yes, you tell her that her mother whom she has abandoned also, is in a sick bed. She has been diagnosed with stage 4

CA of the colon and there is nothing the doctors can do for her. She will corpse anyday from now but before she do that she wants to see her estranged daughter Inathi."

(All color drain from my face and u become pale as ghost.)

Raphael: "Pull over right j w"

(I put the hazards on and stop the car immediately.)

Basadi: "Hello! Are you still there? Tell her she does not have much time left so she

should snap out of her self-righteousness and come see her."

Raphael: "Sharp."

(He hangs up.)

Raphael: "Sugar are you okay?"

Inathi: "(smiling) Why wouldn't I be? I long disowned her. She can die for all that I care."

Raphael: "Inat..."

Inathi: "No! Raphael I don't need this right now especially not after the weekend we had. I just want to go home to my babies."

(I turn the car on and start driving. But it feels like I have been poured with cold water. I am in shock. I knew this all waa just too good to be true, there is no happiness for me. Only sorrow after sorrow. I am truly cursed and the witch who did all this must be deas who he would have long shown me some mercy.)

Bontle

I rub my hands together I am honestly

nervous I dont know how to face her. How do I even approach her, as her bubbly Bontlenyane will it even work this time around? Ohh mama! The things I put you through, I don't deserve you just Like he didnt.

I press the intercom and wait for him with battered breath.

Rose: "Yes, who is there?"

Bontle: "A delivery for Ms Rose Moloji from Bontlenyane."

(The gate immediately rolls up and I drive

inside. She stands by the veranda. She has lost weight. Ohh! This poor woman. Why did she has to give birth to a broken soul like me? Why does she continue loving a broken soul like me?

I grab the flowers and gift bags as I step out and smile at her.)

Bontle: "Don't tell me you thought you got rid of me that easily."

(Tears fall from her eyes as I smile at her. Putting them down I walk to her and hug her.)

Bontle: "I am so sorry Rosie wa Bontle. I will never put you through this again. I promise."

Rose: "You stupid girl, you won't be happy until you see me in a grave."

Bontle: "I am so sorry mama. Please dont cry I am here now. Not dead. I am here mama."

Rose: "I thought something happened to you. You just upped and left. No one knew where you were?"

Bontle: "Bontlenyane wa gago is here now. No more tears and sadness. I would never

leave you again."

BINDED

Insert 55

"Inner peace begins the moment you choose not to allow another person or event control your emotions." - Pema Chodrom

Inathi

2 days have already passed since her last call. I find myself pacing every day in my bedroom. My emotions are having a field day with me. I don't know how many times I have gotten in my car then jumped out and came back into this room. How many times I have dialled the number in my phone only

to put my phone away without calling.

I am anxious, a part of me wants to go see her maybe I am a fool when it comes to loving because despite everything she has put me through I still love her. At the end of the day she is my mother and grandmother to my babies. But another part of me wants nothing to do with her. To let her take her guilty conscience to the grave. To hold onto this grudge and resentment until she passes on. I sit by the window and watch the rain as it falls down.

The bedroom door opens and Raphael walks in holding a glass of milk. I look at him and smile.

Raphael: "They are finally out after I had to diffuse another war regarding a bed story to read today."

Inathi: "Thank you my love."

Raphael: "we are in this together. I got your back."

(I turn and face back at the window. He comes and wrap his hands around me. We stay silent watching outside. After some time Raphael guides me to the arm chair while he occupies the ottoman next to it. Taking my hands he kisses my knuckles.)

Inathi: "This is supposed to be the best week of my life but yet I am drenching in sorrow Raphael."

Raphael: "Do not let her or any of the circumstances surrounding her steal your joy and peace."

Inathi: "how do I deal with all of it. I am at the crossroads and I don't know which way to go."

Raphael: "We never curve around the problem or try to go around it. We always go straight and face it. Face your demons my love."

Inathi: "I am afraid that if I don't go I will feel guilty all my life but I am also afraid if I go what if she hurts me more than she already have."

Raphael: "Don't you give her that much authority over you. There is nothing more that she can say that will hurt you. You know why? Because you are no longer that young girl she sold to a monster sold in earn a living. You are an overcome Inathi."

Inathi: "Your faith in me always moves me Raofe."

Raphael: "I don't like that name, I don't even

how Tumelo got to Raofe from Raphael."

Inathi: "Its quite cute mme."

Raphael: "No its not. Anyway I was saying, if I were you I would go and see her. Give her, her last dying wish."

Inathi: "Is it worth it?"

Raphael: "If it costs you, your inner peace then it definitely worth it. Tell you what sleep over it then in the morning you can decide if you want to go or not."

Inathi: "Okay, can I also get a bedtime story

daddy?"

Raphael: "There is your milk finish it then I will see what I can do."

(I finish my cup of milk and jump into bed. Putting my head on his chest I snuggle close to him.)

Inathi: "Okay I am ready."

Raphael: "I had a talk with Kevin today and he said something which I thought was so profound."

Inathi: "I am listening."

Raphael: "He said his and Thelma's secret to their happy marriage is God. They got each other but they also got God involved."

Inathi: "Okay, I am not following."

Raphael: "We have been fighting battles every corner. Dont you think its time we now let God do the fightibg for us."

Inathi: "How?"

Raphael: "We invite him in our lives. We take baby steps starting tonight. Instead of that bedtime story lets pray and I will read us a

verse from the bible."

Inathi: "Okay. Will you also pray?"

Raphael: "Yes sit up, so I can pray. I have never done this so don't laugh. There is no right or wrong prayer right?"

Inathi: "Don't worry I am sure you will do a better job than me."

(We sit up and hold each other hands as he pray.)

Raphael: "Dear God, we come before you today, we are no perfect family and at times

we make decisions that are not morally right but at the end of the day we are your children. (He pauses and opens one eye looking at him. I nod so he continue) At this moment almighty father we ask to come and be with us. We don't know what tomorrow holds but we are trusting you to lead us there. We ask for your protection. We pray for our family's healing. We pray you heal the broken relationships and mend our hearts with your love. Mostly we pray for our little babies Landon and London cover them with your blood and let your will be done in their lives. I pray for my beautiful fiancée that you give her strength and that she leans more on you and let you take care of her battles. In your mighty name I pray Amen."

Inathi: "Amen."

Raphael: "I love you."

Inathi: "I love you more my prayer warrior."

(I curl once more next to him , smiling as he opens the bible app in his phone. Nigga came prepared I see.)

At the end of the day voice of reasoning that won is the one that said I must go see mama. But before going I stopped by Bokamoso Hospital to check on another cancer warrior. She is on her third cycle of

chemotherapy.

To my surprise Landa and Thelma are also here checking on her. She looks frail putting on a jersey and a head wrap. Well she looks frail but her mouth is not frail as she looks.

Lorato: "Heelang! So many visitors in one day ese gore Bra Jesus o le sebedi gore wa ntsaya today le te go laela?" (DID Jesus tell you guys that I am dying today so you have to come bid me goodbye.)

(I roll my eyes at Raphael giving him the I told you so look.)

Raphael: "Good to see you still got your sense of humour."

Lerato: "Ohh they didnt tell you while the cancer cells increase more and more, the humour also triples."

(I bend down and kisses her cheeks.)

Thelma: "Your jokes honestly suck."

Lerato: "I need you all to stop treating me with kid gloves. I am not dying."

Raphael: "Good to know. I saw Leo outside let me go and see him a bit. Sugar you will

find me outside when you are done."

(I nod my head)

Lerato: "Sugar, where are your sachets? Did you leave them today?"

Inathi: "I couldn't bring them with me to the hospital unless I wanted million questions."

Landa: "Is that what I think it is?"

(Pointing to my finger.)

Inathi: "He proposed over the weekend. I

said yes."

Thelma: "Congratulations, you two make a cute couple?"

Lerato: "Aoo! Banna two minutes noodles koore go padile ka ene? Kana mme deep deep down I was Team Noodles."

Landa: "(sarcastically) Yah right! Congrats my love."

Lerato: "At least he has a chopper despite the two seconds noodles part."

Inathi: "Lerato!"

Lerato: "You know I am right. Gape you don't look for a girl who just a platinum ring?"

Inathi: "I am happy."

(They all raise their eyebrows)

Inathi: "No guys I am happy or was happy until my dying mother ruined everything."

Landa: "Uhu! She is still alive?"

Thelma: "Yolanda!"

Inathi: "Yes, she is but not for long. She wants to see me."

Thelma: "The most difficult thing. You nothing hurts like forgiving a person who have put you through hell more especially your mother."

Lerato: "Naturally we expect the mother to be the shield to we expect her to protect us from all evils of the world and it stings when she ends up being the cause of pain."

Landa: "It hard but sometimes holding onto pain hurts more than letting go. Do not hold a dying woman's breath in your hands babe

its just going to hurt more."

Thelma: "My husband likes to say let go and let God."

Lerato: "Go and set her free. Give her , her last dying wish. You are not doing it for her but for yourself my love."

(I wipe my tears away and Thelma hugs me, Landa joins in.)

Lerato: "Nyaa! Not while I am bed ridden. Cut it out."

Landa: "Can we have a moment please? In

peace?"

Lerato: "Not on my watch. Gape I have a bridal shower to plan."

Landa: "No way, not you. We have put up with your wack plans in the past no more."

(The whole room turns into a debate room and I make my escape while the cousins argue back and forth.)

Raphael

I sit by the bench outside sipping my Americano. Lost in thoughts only to be

interrupted by my phone vibrating the pocket. As I pull it out I roll my eyes as I see the caller.

Inathi's habit of rolling eyes is definitely rubbing off on me.

Raphael: "(answering) Yes!"

Kaone: "Wow! For your own info I also don't enjoy calling you. Not even a bit."

Raphael: "Then stop calling simple."

Kaone: "I would, if my sister did not get checked out of the hospital."

Raphael: "So you think I would have checked her out. Can you get real please? I told you I want nothing to do with Mel."

Kaone: "Raphael I have no idea where she is? They said a man came to get her so I immediately thought of you."

Raphael: "Mel is no longer my responsibility and why on earth will I get her checked out when I wanted her to stay in there forever."

Kaone: "I know she is not your favorite person. But Raphael...."

Raphael: "No buts, you find her. And if at all in her twisted mind she thinks she can come back here and hurt my family. Not only will I kill her but I will send her back you in a bloody body bag. Nvla!"

(I hung up and walk to Inathi.)

Inathi: "Everything okay?"

(I look at her wondering if I should tell her what psycho is out. But she already has much to deal with. I will not add on to her stresses and get her panicking with unfolded stories. For all we know Mel might have found latest man to obsess with.)

Raphael: "Everything is good my love."

(I smile at her as I guide to the car. But my gut feeling tells me everything is far from being okay with that psycho out there.)

BINDED

Insert 56

“My mother was my first country. The first place I ever lived.”– “lands” by Nayyirah Waheed, Poet & Activist

I walk into the room and stare at the frail little woman in the bed. My mama in fact whole of my family has a the fat gene yet its disheartening to see what this disease has done for her. Gone is her african figures. There is not much difference between her and the mattress she is laying on.

Raphael is behind me. His hands is around my waist giving me the strength I dont have.

Just having here is enough. Basadi is standing by Mama's bed her hands on her hips and her nose all up not hiding the judgement.

My eyes shift from her to the woman laying on the bed. And my heart feels sore all the sudden, it feels constricted, it feels like someone is squeezing it causing a great heartache. While I have been living my life as the outcast the woman who has been my first love has been suffering in pain. My heart shouldn't feel anything for her but it swells for her. This dead old beating heart swells in pain for the woman not worthy even called mama.

Basadi: "Well look what the cat dragged in.

Mama the prodigal daughter finally returns."

Gloria: "Basadi!"

(She warns her before she lift her hands and looks at me. I can read the shame and guilty behind them.)

Gloria: "Come child, come Jessie."

The nickname my dad used to call me with, it unhinges so many emotions. I cant find the courage to walk towards her. Instead I turn and run back outside to the car. I hear Raphael murmur a sorry before swings around. Before I can reach the car, he

catches me. In his arms I let loose and let the pent tears have their way. I cry for the relationship we never had but wished we could have. I cry for the longing of her mother I always had, I cry for our ruined relationship. Mostly I cry because it too late now to fix the wrongs of the past. I cry for her loss. Raphael does not say anything he just hold me and let me soak his t-shirt.

Once I am done, he bends down and kisses the remaining tears away, soothing it better.

Raphael: "Just say the word and I will have you out if here in a second."

Inathi: "No! Its time I face my demons.

Thank you for your support. I have to do this alone now. I will call you in once I am done talking to her."

Raphael: "Are you sure?"

(I nod my head as I stand on my toes and kiss his cheek before I stride to the house with my head held high. When I stand in the doorway they turn to look at me. I look at them again and sigh.)

Inathi: "Basadi, please excuse us."

Basadi: "No you can say whatever you want in front of me."

(I am about to reply her when mama taps her twice on the hand. And she groans before she pushes me out of the door and walks out. I sigh as I walk to the chair that she occupied. I sink down and stay rigid in my chair looking at Gloria Poloko.)

Gloria: "Thank you for coming Ina."

Inathi: "I didn't do it for you mama. I did it for me. I wouldn't have lived with myself if you died before"

(I trail off because I honestly dont know what to say. Before I talk to her? Before I forgive her? Before I make peace with her?

Those questions all come at me once.)

Gloria: "Still you came and thats all that matters."

Inathi: "(i stubbornly relax back in the chair)
I am here now mama."

(She smiles at me.)

Gloria: "You did inherit his stubbornness."

(I dont know to ask who she is referring to.
My dad.)

Gloria: "I have wronged you so many times I don't even know where to even begin apologising."

Inathi: "Its okay, you did what you had to do to survive. I can't hold it against you anymore."

Gloria: "Listen Nathi, what I did was no excuse. I know Sorry can never give you back the years you had to suffer in the hands of Tumelo or your stolen dreams. But I am sorry my child. I have been selfish mama to you."

Inathi: "Its okay ma."

Gloria: "Please let me talk Inathi. I know I made you believe you all those years you were married to Tumelo that is your father's wishes and the only way to keep me from going to jail. But it was all a lie Jessica."

Inathi: "What do you mean?"

Gloria: "Yes your father might have wanted you to marry into the Modise family at first but he changed his mind. He wanted you to choose your own path, your own partner. The thing is Jessy, there was never any debt that would have landed me in jail. Tumelo wanted you the minute he had his eyes on you. When I told him that your father was not going through with the arranged marriage. He said he knew your

father was dying soon and we will soon suffer with no breadwinner. He said if I let you marry him then we will be set out to life. Basadi would have never have to worry about scholarship or I worry about what I was going to feed you girls. I sold you Inathi, I sold you to an abusive monster so I can remain well taken care of."

(I stare at her speechless. She has rendered me speechless. All those years I suffered in the hands Tumelo thinking I was keeping my mama out of jail was a lie.)

Gloria: "I married your father when I was young. I never got a chance to experience things other girls did. Soon I was pregnant with you. Your dad was never an

affectionate person when it comes to me. But when you were born you could see you meant the world to him. You could see his love for you. I have been so desperate for his love and thought that maybe after you were born he will share his love with me. But you stole his love and attention. You became his whole world while I just became the mother."

(She pauses)

Gloria: "For the longest time I despised this little girl who came to steal my husband's love and attention. As years went by I realized he would never love me not the way he loved his precious child. So I set out to hurt the only person he seems to care

about. I turned my wrath to you. To make the daddy's princess suffer like he made me suffer. It never worked his love for you remained constant, my last straw at hurting him was getting pregnant by another man and making him believe it was his. The day he got his heart attack he found out Basadi was not his. But even in his death bed he wanted you well taken care of and happy. To give him the last straw of pain I made sure you I discard his wishes and make you marry Tumelo. There was never a debt it was just to make you suffer like your father made me. A pawn in getting back at him."

(She closes her eyes but the tears escape from the corners of her eyes.)

Inathi: "Are you sure I am your daughter?"

Gloria: "With no doubt. I carried you for full 9 months. Bitterness and resentment makes the heart nasty and full of poison."

(My heart feels heavy.)

Inathi: "Why are you telling me all this?"

Gloria: "Because you deserve the truth. I know you longed for motherly love all your love I guess I felt its better you know why you never got it from me."

Inathi: "Thank you for telling me."

Gloria: "I don't deserve your forgiveness Inathi. But don't harbour hate, bitterness and resentment in your heart, they are like cancerous cells, they will steal your joy and happiness."

(I stand up and go sit by the window looking outside but my mind is miles away. It raises with everything she just revealed. I don't know if I am capable of forgiving her and making peace with everything she just told me. She coughs and I walk back to her I hold her hand, she seems to be in so much pain. Without second thoughts I get into bed and hold her into my arms.)

Inathi: "Its okay mama. I forgive you Kwena. I forgive you for everything. I forgive you because despite everything my love for you is greater than everything. You can rest now Gloria. You can take your rest I am here."

(Tears run down my face. Basadi walks into the room. Silently she sits down and hold her hand. Mama take my hand and Basadi's joins them. She smiles weakly.)

Gloria: "My girls. I love you both. Ina."

Inathi: "Mama"

Gloria: "You will be here when I wake up. I

am tired I just want to close my eyes two minutes. My eyes are heavy I just need to rest two minutes. Promise me you will be here when I wake up."

Inathi: "I will be here Mama. I will be here. Robala mokwena. I will be here when you wake up mama. Robala, robala MmaInathi."

(She smiles as she closes her eyes. My heart feels heavy, it beats erratically against my chest. We hold her hand as she takes her final breath. Tears fall from our eyes silently, not wanting to disturb her sleeping. After what feels like eternity, I check her pulse and there is nothing.)

Inathi: "She is gone."

(Basadi is in a frozen state. She is out in the cold. I move my hands from hers but she continues to hold mama's hand. I get up from the bed and walk upto her.)

Inathi: "Sadie, you need to let go she is no more."

(I gently get her hand and thats when she cracks. Her empty cries fill the house. I draw her in my eyes and give her comfort as she weeps for our mother. Raphael walks into the room, seeing him sets me off also.)

Inathi: "She is gone."

(I tell him before I fall down with Basadi weeping. I thought I knew what love was.)

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Gloria was not everyone's favorite cup if
Americano with Ginseng. But still it was
hard to prepare this insert. It had me
weeping especially today.

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Happy mothers Day! We remember those
mama's who are no longer with us, may
their souls rest in peace. And we cherish,
honour and love those mamas who are still
alive.

Dedicating: Maverick City Ft Amanda

Lindsey-- Lean on

Love

Author S Mods

(I will start paying for last week inserts with this one.)

BINDED

INSERT 57

"Be gentle with yourself you are doing the best you can." - Unknown

Inathi

It is tradition that the first born be the one lay on the mattress for grieving in the absence of a partner. However in this case Basadi is the one who claimed that role and to be honest I was relieved not to be doing the role.

She has been with Gloria when she got diagnosed and has been taking care of her

ever since. And she was more closest to her than me.

However I did move to the village to be there for the whole of the week to prepare for burial. Raphael, AJ and the kids joined me on Wednesday. They booked into a guesthouse not far from my mother's house. Well at least Gloria did have a funeral policy. It one of the things I must applaud her for. It is nice to know that she did at least do something with the money she got from Tumelo and not blow it all.

There is someone whom I thought I would never see, who made it to the funeral. My other mother by marriage, Pogiso Modise. She arrived on Thursday two days prior to

the burial, I guess she wanted to pay her last respect to her scheming partner. It seemed like she has been through so much and was hanging on a thread. I wondered how she is surviving ever since Tumelo's passing.

Inathi: "MmaTumelo this is a surprise."

Pogiso: "Indeed! But what kind of mother in law would I be if I did not come to pay my last respect."

Inathi: "I am sure Ma would have wanted you here. Thank you for coming."

Pogiso: "It is the least I could do. How have you been? I am sorry about your mother's passing. "

Inathi: "thank you. All good, can't complain. How about you? I passed by your house in months back but I was told you have sold it."

Pogiso: "I am well. I have moved back home."

Inathi: "Ohh! Home as in Gabane?"

(She nods her head but drops her eyes to the ground embarrassed. Making me

wonder what is the story there. I open my mouth but to respond her but Landon and London coming running towards me.)

Landon: "Mommy."

(I swing around and smile at them.)

London: "Mommy , daddy said we must come say bye. We are going to go with him and Uncle AJ to our house to freshen up."

Landon: "Mommy you should come with us. Daddy and I will give you a massage."

(I brush my hand over their heads.)

Inathi: "I would love to Thami more than anything but I still have to make tea and wash the dishes. Tell you what, once I am done I will come there. Then you can give me that massage."

Landon: "Okay."

(Pogiso clears her throat.)

Inathi: "Thami, Nami I want you to meet your grandma."

London: "But you said Grandma went to heaven and is not coming back."

Inathi: "I know baby, but this is the other grandma. You are lucky to have 4 grandmas, including this one. This is grandma Pogiso. Now go on and greet her."

(I watch as they take steps to her and extend their hands.)

London: "Hello, I am London Sparkles Nami Modise. This is my twin brother Landon Raphael Jr Thami Modise."

(I keep my eyes on Pogiso. She blinks away tears as she kisses their tiny hands.)

Pogiso: "I am pleased to meet you Nami and Thami."

Landon: "Why are we only meeting you now? did you also hurt mommy thats why she kept us away from you?"

Inathi: "Landon!"

(I keep forgetting this guys always have endless questions. Recently when I told them about Gloria's passing they asked why they did not know her if she was their grandmother. Raphael came to my aid by telling them that Gloria hurt me thats why they had not yet met her.)

Pogiso: "Its okay. Yes I also hurt your mommy."

London: "Did you apologise? Daddy says when we hurt people we love we have to apologise so they forgive us."

Raphael: "Pogiso!"

(I look over my shoulder to find Raphael looking at his stepmother. His eyes burn with rage and hatred but he is hiding it beneath his mask. Mask that I now know how to read very well. Pogiso looks surprised to see Raphael. She looks at him and me back and forth.)

London: "Ohh daddy,come meet our other grandmother."

(He throws me a "WTF" look as his daughter drags him. I give him a fake smile.)

London: "Grandma, this is our daddy Raphael Hudson. He recently asked mommy to marry him. When they marry we are going to be one big happy family."

(I put a hand over my face. Where did I get this talkative babies?)

Landon: "Come on daddy, dont be rude shake Grandma's hand."

(he rolls his eyes and shake Pogiso's hand giving her a tight smile.)

Raphael: "Come on munchies, Uncle Aj is waiting for you."

Landon: "Okay. Grandma we will be back."

Pogiso: "Okay you will find me right here. I wont move."

(They turn to run to the car.)

Inathi: "(screaming) Hey! No running."

(Raphael put his hand around my waist.)

Raphael: "Walk me to the car Sugar."

Inathi: "I am coming."

(I tell the ladies I am making tea with.)

Raphael: "I am taking the twins to the Guesthouse to go refresh."

Inathi: "So I have been told."

Raphael: "Now tell me why my kids are

calling that woman, Grandma?"

Inathi: Lala, can we not do this right now?"

Raphael: "Fine, but its not over."

Inathi: "I know."

Raphael: "We miss you, come to us today."

Inathi: "Okay daddy. I will be there. Plus I look forward to the massage you and London are going to give me."

Raphael: "I know."

(He brushes his lips over mine as we reach his car but I put my hands around his neck and stand on my toes as I kiss him.)

Bontle: "Nyaa guys, you will make the villagers to speak."

(I let him go and swing around, Bontle and Rose are standing behind us all smiles. I smiling embarrassingly and blushing at Rose as we chant greetings.)

Raphael: "Sugar, I will see you later. Ma its nice to see you again even under such sad circumstances, B later."

(We watch as he drives away. Following AJ who has already left with the twins.)

Bontle: "You horny rabbits, even at a funeral you are all over each other."

Inathi: "Can you please behave? I was soothing him after he saw Pogiso."

Bontle: "Holy shete! She-devil is here."

Rose: "Bontle!"

Bontle: "Ija! Come let me take you to other gradma so I can chat with my bestfriend"

without any interference."

(I smile at her as we walk into the yard.)

On Friday, I realised how lucky I am to have friends that I have. The ghetto crew came well they can a bit dramatic, I mean who makes a Jeep Wrangler convey to a funeral. None apart from my snobs. What matters is that they came in style to support me. It's a pity Lerato and Leo could not make it because of her condition. But everyone else was here including even the king and queen on Schaefer.

Inathi: "Ahh! You guys you are making me

emotional. You shouldn't have come."

Landa: "Suka! We are not the the fun times friends only but also the sad times friends. Right my people."

(They nod their heads.)

Thelma: "We are here for you. Now let us be here for you."

Kevin: "To add more, we decided to show the villagers especially your ex mother in law that you are no longer scared little Inathi but now you run and play for big leagues."

Miguel: "Go shota Derry boy ka chopper hela. Then we would be solid."

(We all crack up)

Nana: "So show us what is needed where. The labourers are here now."

(She said as she pulled an apron from the car. And all the others followed suit. The men jumped into blue overalls and we got busy. We prepared lunch for our diphiri (men who went to dig the grave) as call them in setswana also for the people who went to get ma's corpse from the mortuary.)

Bontle: "Bathong! A go ta nako ya magadi kopa le hokoletse Raphael. Poor thing has been working tirelessly."

(I turn and look at my man. Wearing his blue overalls and white converse sneakers that are no longer and have no chance of ever being white. His overalls are dirty, he looks greasy but yummy greasy. His skin is a little bit sun burnt but making his dark olive skin even more beautiful. He has not shaved and the beard makes him look all kinds of yummy. I trust him to keep swag on with a watch however gone is the banker bae and his Armani suits here right now stands a yummy domesticated African man and he is all mine. He comes and stands by my side.

Taking off his bucket hat , he greets the ladies but his eyes never leaving mine.)

Raphael: "MmagweThami ke kopa metsi for borre ba diphiri."

(This is the first time he has ever called me MmagweThami. It gives all kinds of goosebumps.)

Inathi: "Ee rra, we are coming to serve you in a bit."

(I notice soil in his eyelids.)

Inathi: "Close you eyes, let me remove

something."

(He obeys and I move close to him. Gently I remove the soil.)

Inathi: "(whispering) You look exhausted lala, please take it easy."

Raphael: "Don't worry you are going to reward me nicely for my hardwork."

(He winks at me before he walks back, cocky bastard!)

Nana: "Ohh! Bathong the sun did no justice to Miguel, Ethan, Xavier and AJ."

Kath: "I told them to put some sun screen on but they refused."

Landa: "Ahh! They will soak themselves after this."

Hudson holds me as the casket goes down. I am not crying I think I have exhausted all my tears. I am tired. Basadi is crying none stop. I told them to let her be, she needs to cry in order to let the pain out. Holding it inside is just going to hurt her more.

But we finally laid her rest. We gave her the

final goodbye she deserved.